Sustainability

Top 50 Women in Engineering 2020
Women’s Engineering Society
Sally Sudworth, BSc FICE FIAM FWES MCIWEM

This year’s Women in Engineering award has the theme of sustainability because of the Climate Emergency. This award is about recognising the amazing role models that we have working in industry and academia, who inspire, motivate and excite others to follow in their footsteps.

With nearly 300 applications only the very best made it to the top 50.

Head Judge Sally Sudworth (FCRM Sustainability Lead) said “The submissions of these wonderful role models were simply inspirational. Amy Johnson was one of the founder members of the Women’s Engineering Society and we celebrate the 90th anniversary of her solo flights this year. Our winners are equally remarkable in their field.”

I am passionate about engineering and sustainability having worked in the field for more than 30 years. The field of engineering has evolved from the first government construction strategy in June 2008 to the current ambition to achieve net zero carbon ambition by 2030.

When we choose to act together, to unite to face a global threat, it’s incredible what can be achieved. We’ve proved that with COVID-19. And we can do it with the climate change emergency too.

Elizabeth Donnelly, MSc FRSA MRAeS MINCOSE

We have a Climate Emergency: there is the chance to act now to keep temperatures below the line and flatten the curve, where society can cope with the impact (much like the exponential curve associated with COVID19).

The Paris agreement commits us to a maximum of 2°C increase in global temperature with an agreement to aim for 1.5°C. If all the plans that are in place across the world deliver, that would still give us 3.4°C increase in temperature. The reality is that global temperatures have already risen more than 1°C. We need to do so much more to be able to hit this target to prevent communities across the world experiencing significant life-threatening change.

The UN’s global Sustainable Development Goals provide an excellent framework that is widely recognised and helps facilitate more sustainable decision-making and outcomes. Engineers, as clients, consultants and contractors, have a role in providing integrated infrastructure and sustainable solutions. Spatial planning is also key to unlocking the potential we have to provide truly sustainable developments (addressing things like environmental net gain and the circular economy). This means building the right development, in the right place and at the right time.

That’s why in 2020 WES has chosen to celebrate Sustainability. The numbers of women working in engineering are too few with women making up only 12.4% of all engineers.

The diverse leadership provided by this cohort of WESO in sustainability professionals is helping to shape the world and so we put our hopes in them.
Ann-Christin Andersen, CEO 4ADA; Board Member & Chair ESG Committee, Rotork, Board Member for Maersk Drilling, Glitre Energi and Quantafuel.

Ann-Christin Andersen is an executive with more than 30 years' industrial experience. She has worked in Shell, ABB, Kongsberg Group, FMC Technologies/Technip FMC, and served as chair and non-executive director of several boards. Currently Ann Christin works as strategic advisor in her new start-up 4ADA and serves on the Boards; Maersk Drilling, Rotork, Quantafuel and Glitre Energi. Ann-Christin has a BEng Offshore Electrical Engineering (1st Class Honors) Heriot Watt University, UK and an Executive MBA (Honors) IMD University, Switzerland.

Andrew Conway, MBA Meng CEng FIET

Andrew Conway is Director of Engineering at BAI Communications Europe, based in London. BAI is a leading provider of communications infrastructure for customers in major cities across the globe. Andrew’s core interests include designing shared networks to deliver connectivity in hard to reach places, 5G and the societal impact of mobile communications. Andrew has a Master's degree in Communication Engineering, an MBA and is a visiting professor at the University of Surrey. He is a Chartered Engineer and Fellow of the IET.

Richard Coackley, CBE

Richard Coackley is a Chartered Civil Engineer, former President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Honorary Life President of the European Council of Civil Engineers, Chair of the UK Reservoirs Committee and UK representative at the World Federation of Engineering Organisations. He is keenly interested in the delivery of UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Louise Kingham OBE FEI, Chief Executive, Energy Institute

Louise has worked with energy professionals around the world for 26 years. She is a board member of the POWERful Women initiative and non-executive director on the board of Energy Saving Trust. She has received a Global Leadership in Energy Award, an OBE from HM Queen for services to the energy industry and an Honorary Science Doctorate from the University of Bath.

Davide Stronati, MPhil FICE

Davide Stronati is the Global Sustainability and Climate Change Leader of Mott MacDonald. Prior to this he was seconded to Anglian Water (UK) and was instrumental in leading their low carbon strategy.

Davide chairs committees at the World Federation of Engineering Organisations and the Institution of Civil Engineers and is a Committee Member for Global Infrastructure Basel, the UN Global Compact Network and Imperial College Business School.

Davide holds a Degree in Environmental Engineering, summa cum laude from the University of Trieste; MPhil Engineering for Sustainable Development from the Cambridge - MIT Institute; and attended the High Potentials Leadership Programme at Harvard Business School.

Joanna Wood, Group Engineering and Quality Director at BAE Systems

Joanna is the Group Engineering and Quality Director for BAE Systems, responsible for providing strategic leadership for all business units across the company, and for driving strong Engineering standards in process, integrity, delivery and capability.

Prior to this, Joanna was the Deputy Engineering Director for BAE Systems Naval Ships, enabling BAE Systems to deliver complex warships and combat systems. Before joining BAE Systems Joanna developed through a number of key leadership roles within engineering management in the Defence industry, including Raytheon UK and AWE.

Joanna holds a BSc in Physics and an MSc in Nuclear Physics from the University of Kent.

Elizabeth Donnelly, MSc FRSA MRAeS MINCOSE

After an early career in IT, Elizabeth graduated from the Open University, specialising in systems thinking. She was awarded Membership of the Royal Aeronautical Society because of her work with Rolls-Royce and went on to lead skills policy in the aerospace industry. Elizabeth was a founder member of the RAeS Women in Aviation and Aerospace Committee and founded the RAeS Amy Johnson Named Lecture. Later, Elizabeth established her own consulting company, graduated with an MSc in Systems Thinking in 2017 and in 2018 was appointed CEO of the Women’s Engineering Society. In 2020 she was invited to become a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Sally Sudworth, BSc FICE FIAM FWES MCIWEM

National Programme Manager for Asset Management & FCRM Sustainability Lead (Net Zero Carbon Programme), Environment Agency Sally is a chartered engineer and chartered environmentalist. She is the sustainability lead and net zero carbon programme manager for Flood & Coast at the Environment Agency. Sally is a Fellow and Trustee of WES and is also Head Judge for the Karen Burt award.
The Top 50 Women in Engineering: Sustainability

The Women's Engineering Society (WES) has chosen the winners of its Top 50 Women in Engineering awards (WE50) for 2020. This year the awards focus on female engineers working on sustainable strategies and solutions in the industry and allied sectors. The judging criteria included their commitment to address the challenges of the climate emergency, net zero carbon and delivery of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). All WE50 winners are also advocates of women in STEM, they promote women's role in tackling the climate crisis and are using their experience of sustainability to inspire and influence others. It is their work training, mentoring and sometimes employing other women to work with renewable technologies that will ensure female engineers play their part in a sustainable future.

Yasmin Ali
ENERGY INNOVATION PROJECT MANAGER, DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY (BEIS)

As a chartered chemical engineer, Ali currently works within government to help the UK reach net zero emissions by 2050. She is leading a £30 million programme which funds the development of solutions for a decarbonised future, focusing on heavy industry and advises teams on shaping their sustainable energy policy.

Laura Bishop
DIRECTOR, INFINITAS DESIGN LTD

Bishop's interest in climate and the environment began in the 1980s when her engineer Dad introduced the family to recycling before it became mainstream. Her engineering skills and her Dad’s ideals have shaped the ethos of Bishop’s company, which provides design expertise and advice to the renewable heat industry.

Laura Brown
ENERGY RESEARCH PROGRAMME MANAGER, NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

A chartered engineer with 25 years' experience, Brown's focus since 2011 has been decarbonisation challenges within the energy sector. Her current work at Newcastle University's National Centre for Energy Systems Integration involves co-ordinating the energy research programme between industry, government and academia to map out the transition to net zero emissions.

Rhiannon Evans
TECHNICIAN, AECOM

Evans joined Atkins as a Civil Engineering apprentice in 2017 and moved to the transportation team at Aecom in January. A keen cyclist, this role has given her experience on cycleways and bus lanes and an insight into the creation of sustainable cities and communities to meet SDG11.

Carla Denyer
COUNCILLOR, BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Denyer is a renewables engineer and became a Green Party Councillor in 2015. In 2018 she wrote Europe's first Climate Emergency motion, committing Bristol to become carbon neutral by 2030 and starting a wave of similar motions across the country. She contributes to decarbonisation planning in Bristol and beyond.

Dr Pamela Dugdale
ENGINEERING TEACHER, INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTRE, LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

Dr Dugdale is a United Nations TeachSDGs ambassador, with a remit to develop links between engineering education and the 17 global SDGs. Her doctoral research project investigated materials to improve solar power efficiency and she has since worked on several industrial and academic sustainability science research projects, often including her students.

Dr Ellie Cosgrave
LECTURER, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON

Dr Cosgrave teaches undergraduate and postgraduate students and the focus of her work is gender justice in engineering design. She led research for the C40 Cities Women4Climate programme, investigating the gendered implications of climate and co-authored a research paper exploring the interconnectedness of the SDGs, published in Nature and Nature Sustainability.

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Dr Barnali Ghosh  
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, MOTT MACDONALD

An experienced seismic engineer, Dr Ghosh focuses on developing seismic resilience in infrastructure, using the UN's SDGs. She was seismic lead on a sustainable water project in Dhaka, which will supply drinking water to 4 million people and has undertaken research into the effects of climate change on anti-seismic devices.

Dr Rachel Gomes  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, CHEMICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING, UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Dr Gomes is a researcher in the circular economy of water, developing solutions to ensure water and food security for all and resource resilience, two of the UN’s SDGs. Her internationally recognised research focuses on wastewater treatment and reuse in the urban water cycle, specifically pollutants, water quality and waste valorisation.

Professor Deborah Greaves  
HEAD OF SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING, COMPUTING AND MATHEMATICS, UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

A world authority in marine renewable energy, Professor Greaves leads the Supergen Offshore Renewable Energy Hub, providing industry focused research on sustainable offshore power generation and supply, combining the offshore wind and marine energy sectors. Her major engineering achievements include analysis methods for wave energy farms and tidal turbines.

Professor Sandy Halliday  
DIRECTOR, GAIA GROUP LTD

Professor Halliday established Gaia Research (now Gaia Group) in 1995 to develop sustainable solutions for the built environment. It currently includes research, design, evaluation, dissemination, training and capacity building. Her own research covers solar air conditioning, the circular economy, zero waste, future proofed, low allergy housing and urban design.

Caireen Hargreaves  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR PRODUCT SUSTAINABILITY, ASTRAZENECA

A chemical engineer within pharmaceutical manufacturing, Hargreaves currently leads the Product group within AstraZeneca’s Global Sustainability function. This involves setting and executing the strategy for Product Environmental Stewardship to ensure the effective environmental management of pharmaceuticals throughout their life cycle. Hargreaves’ work also involves understanding carbon emissions across pharmaceutical value chains.

Kelly Harrison  
ASSOCIATE, HEYNE TILLET STEEL (HTS)

Harrison has been widely involved in the research and delivery of sustainable strategies and is an advocate of sustainable methods of construction. She champions the use of engineered timber to improve the quality and speed of construction, reduce carbon emissions and enhance wellbeing and has significantly expanded HTS's sustainability portfolio.

Martha Hart  
SENIOR CONSULTANT, ARUP

A chartered mechanical engineer and senior energy consultant, Hart helps clients to understand and reduce their energy use, to improve the cost, resilience and security of their energy supplies, and to lower their carbon emissions. She specialises in the development of low carbon energy strategy and infrastructure projects.

Laura Hepburn  
DIRECTOR, GREENOLOGY

Hepburn’s Tees Valley business is working with manufacturers to perfect the technology of depolymerisation to process non-recyclables. Greenology’s scalable model, with a redesigned kiln to process waste at different vapour temperatures, will come into full production later this year. An entirely emission free process, it produces energy, and valuable by-products.

Katherine Ibbotson  
PROGRAMME CARBON AND COST MANAGER, ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EA)

Ibbotson’s focus is on embedding and prioritising carbon reduction within the EA and its supply chain. Her maturity reviews of how the organisation is aligning to PAS 2080 have established clear evidence of the improvement of its systems, processes and behaviours, proving its commitment to net zero by 2030.

Michelle Johnson  
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, WOOD

Johnson’s main role is as Design Programme Manager for Water Infrastructure with Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL). Wood’s longest-standing water sector client in the UK. She is responsible for around 30 projects at any one time, all concerned with waste and wastewater infrastructure design and achieving sustainability development goals defined by NWL.

Jennifer Kelly  
ASSOCIATE, ARUP

Kelly leads on carbon and climate change across the north for Arup and she supports clients to address the climate emergency and clean air agendas. She contributes her climate change expertise to the UK’s major cities and engineering projects, to set and deliver their commitments to net zero carbon.

Eftychia Koursari  
CIVIL ENGINEER, AMEY

Koursari’s speciality is scour, soil erosion surrounding a bridge foundations, and she has helped to design advanced solutions that protect both the environment and infrastructure, working towards more sustainable techniques and watercourse restoration. Her research interest is river processes and existing river engineering techniques at the Water Engineering laboratory in Glasgow.
Clare Lavelle  
ENERGY CONSULTING LEADER – SCOTLAND, ARUP  
A mechanical engineer, Lavelle, has grown Arup’s multi-million pound Scottish Energy Consulting business from the ground up, advising global clients and governments on decarbonisation. In 2019 her team was nominated for a Scottish Green Energy Award for outstanding service to renewables. Lavelle is involved in many sustainable engineering innovation projects.

Professor Claire Lucas  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR (READER), UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK INCOMING PROFESSOR IN ENGINEERING TEACHING AND LEARNING, KING’S COLLEGE, LONDON  
Dr Lucas has re-developed and re-launched programmes in General, Biomedical and Systems engineering at Warwick to incorporate holistic systems thinking skills to give students the ability to solve engineering problems in the context of wider systems (people, the environment, infrastructure). She uses the SDGs to demonstrate systemic issues.

Dr Xuanli Luo  
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM  
Dr Luo has undertaken cutting edge research into the development of safe, economic and efficient storage options for hydrogen offered by nanomaterials. Hydrogen has a multitude of applications as a low carbon fuel and the hydrogen economy will form a key component of a strategy to address and mitigate climate change.

Brogan MacDonald  
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER, RAMBOLL  
MacDonald is the Circular Economy Lead in the UK Structures Network and has delivered an ‘Introduction to Sustainability in the Built Environment’ presentation to several clients, influencing them to establish sustainability strategies for their buildings and businesses. She is currently looking into the use of reclaimed steel in construction.

Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer  
CHAMPION UK INDUSTRIAL DECARBONISATION RESEARCH AND INNOVATION CENTRE (IDRIC), HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY  
Appointed to her current role in January, Professor Maroto-Valer works with industry and leading experts to decarbonise the UK economy by 2050. She is tasked with taking the UK’s six biggest industrial sites, responsible for around 40 million tonnes of CO2 per year on a path to net zero.

Dr Kerry Mashford OBE  
NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PORTFOLIO  
Dr Mashford’s career focus has been on improving material and energy efficiency and she received an OBE in 2017 for services to the energy industry. She has been Lead Technologist at InnovateUK, delivering two major research programmes on low impact buildings and Chief Executive of the National Energy Foundation.

Senamiso Mathobela  
DELIVERY MANAGER, TRANSMISSION NATIONAL CONTROL CENTRE, NATIONAL GRID UK  
Mathobela has worked to develop innovative solutions for more efficient and speedy connections of battery storage and medium scale windfarms which focus on sustainability and reduction of the carbon footprint of all grid connections. She currently manages teams that ensure efficient and sustainable operation of the power system.

Mhairi McCann  
FOUNDER & CEO, YOUTH STEM 2030  
McCann founded her organisation so that young people can, through STEM, be at the forefront of progress towards the UN’s SDGs. She project manages Youth STEM 2030’s work with young people and provides them with opportunities, support and platforms to use their interests in STEM to make a positive difference.

Gill Nowell  
DSO LEAD, ELECTRALINK  
Nowell has 20 years’ experience across sustainable energy, utility, and environmental technologies sectors, including six years working on electric vehicle-grid integration projects at EA Technology (My Electric Avenue, Smart EV, Electric Nation). She has founded electric vehicle and energy and environmental industry networks, with a novel approach to collaborative partnership engagement.

Professor Rachel Oliver  
PROFESSOR, DIRECTOR OF THE CAMBRIDGE CENTRE FOR GALLIUM NITRIDE, CSO OF PORO TECHNOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
Professor Oliver is a pioneer of new technologies for LEDs. Those commonly used in lighting are based on gallium nitride and she has made several important discoveries about the nanostructure and composition of gallium nitride including the development of a new way to integrate a mirror into the LED itself.

Jo Parker  
DIRECTOR, WATERSHED ASSOCIATES  
Parker’s entire career has been dedicated to water engineering. She initially designed sewage works and then managed the supply of potable water and the reduction of leakage from water networks. She received an MBE in 1996 and now specialises in helping utilities in developing countries provide water supplies efficiently.

Sally Povolotsky  
LOW CARBON BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT, STRAIGHT 6 DESIGN LTD  
Povolotsky is a self-employed prototype engineer working with low carbon engineering in transport. She was responsible for the delivery of the eco-friendly electric E-Type Jaguar prototype used as the wedding car for Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in 2018. She promotes sustainable strategies for low carbon growth in Oxfordshire.
Philippa Ross
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, ATKINS
Ross is a chartered engineer with a passion for sustainability who has worked across the world. She has designed and constructed water systems in Guatemala, managed a project in Sri Lanka to improve climate resilience in river basins and led the water elements of urban development plans for Kenyan towns.

Anusha Shah
DIRECTOR - RESILIENT CITIES, ARCADIS
A Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), Shah supports organisations to meet net zero targets and become climate resilient. As Environment Agency (EA) account leader, she is supporting it to achieve its net zero target by 2030. She uses many different platforms to constantly raise climate change awareness.

Sandra Šlihtė
HEAD OF ENGINEERING, VATTENFALL HEAT UK
As heat accounts for over a third of the UK’s carbon emissions, Šlihtė is paving the way to a zero carbon future. She has engineered lower temperatures across developments of up to 10,000 homes, making it possible to integrate fossil free and zero carbon heat sources into heating systems.

Holly Smith
CIVIL ENGINEER, SKANSKA UK
Recently selected as an Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) Future Leader, Smith is Steering Group member for the ICE’s annual State of the Nation policy report, conducting industry-wide research and recommending interventions enable the infrastructure sector to achieve net zero by 2050 and contributes to ICE’s preparation for COP 26.

Chitra Srinivasan
REAL TIME CONTROL SOFTWARE ENGINEER, UK ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY
Srinivasan has worked on SDGs related to poverty eradication and solving climate crisis. Her work at the UK’s Atomic Energy Authority involves using research to produce zero carbon energy and work towards environmental sustainability. Srinivasan says her team ‘makes the sun’ on earth and tries to tap into its fusion energy.

Dr Alisa Stratulat
INNOVATION MANAGER
Dr Stratulat’s career focus is solving engineering problems related to sustainability. She is currently working to improve and develop heating products to increase efficiency and reduce CO2 emissions using sustainable materials. She is also looking at the skills needed to reach the government’s net zero emission targets by 2050.

Judith Sykes
SENIOR DIRECTOR, EXPEDITION ENGINEERING
Sykes has 20 years’ experience in sustainable infrastructure design and delivery, on projects such as the Olympic Park Water Strategy and other urban regeneration projects and garden village developments. She is currently working with the city of Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan, to achieve zero carbon targets and other circular economy initiatives.

Dr Petra Szilágyi
LECTURER IN FUNCTIONAL MATERIALS, QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
Dr Szilágyi is an academic who develops sustainable materials for energy and environmental applications. Her research includes the production of hydroxide-ion conducting membranes for alkaline fuel cells, the development of solid-state electrolytes for all-solid-state batteries and the design and optimisation of thermoelectric materials for waste energy harvesting.

Dr Elizabeth Tennyson
MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS FELLOW, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Dr Tennyson’s research focuses on increasing the efficiency of emerging solar photovoltaic technologies while reducing their costs to meet SDGs 7, 11, 13 and her goal is to transform energy networks, particularly in developing countries. Dr Tennyson leads the Affordable Perovskite Solar Irrigation Systems project for small-holder farmers in Ethiopia.

Dr Camilla Thomson
CHANCELLOR’S FELLOW IN ENERGY, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
Dr Thomson’s research focuses on the effectiveness of sustainable energy innovations to address climate emergency challenges. She is committed to ensuring that the changes being made to energy systems aren’t just achieving a net reduction in carbon, but doing this as quickly, cost-effectively and sustainably as possible.

Dr Mi Tian
LECTURER, UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
Dr Tan lectures on low carbon engineering at the University of Exeter and leads research in engineering composites for sustainable hydrogen energy. She has published over 25 papers on the subject of sustainability and engineering and pioneered research leading to composite development for hydrogen energy application, particularly in lightweight vehicles.

Annie Stapley
ASSISTANT ENGINEER, WSP
Stapley believes that engineers can make a difference designing safe, sustainable engineering solutions for our global society. When she became a CSR Champion, she identified key environmental issues and encouraged others to act on them. She was asked to help formulate WSP’s first Low Carbon Day now rolled out nationally.
Professor Valeska Ting
PROFESSOR OF SMART NANOMATERIALS, UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Professor Ting leads a research group working on the development of materials for sustainable applications and is developing new systems for on-board storage of hydrogen as a low-carbon energy vector. Her key contributions to the field include evidencing that exceptionally high densities of hydrogen can be stored within specially-tailored porous nanomaterials.

Kusum Trikha
SENIOR ENGINEER, WSP

A Chartered Mechanical Senior Engineer, Trikha specialises in multi-million-pound low-carbon energy projects. She managed the multi-disciplinary design team for the 10.3 MW electric Birmingham Bio Power Plant renewable project, a biomass gasification plant in the UK, which effectively captures all the carbon dioxide it produces to generate clean electricity.

Jana Marie Weber
PhD CANDIDATE, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

A second year PhD candidate, Weber has already has her work published in the journal of the Royal Society of Chemistry. She is finding sustainable alternatives to tackle the environmental impacts of fuel, pharmaceutical products and food, so that the production of consumer products can still drive the circular economy.

Laura Williams
HEALTH, SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY (HSEQ) ADVISOR, KELLER

Williams has set up a number of environmental sustainability initiatives both at Keller and outside. She organised a gardening club project to rewild the lawns around Keller’s yard with minimum use of raw materials and has established a link between Keller and the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust where employees help plant hedgerows.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL 50 WINNERS

THANK YOU

Thank you to the Trophy Sponsor, the UK Association of Professional Engineers, for their kind donation which made the trophies possible.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the generous sponsors supporting International Women in Engineering Day 2020.