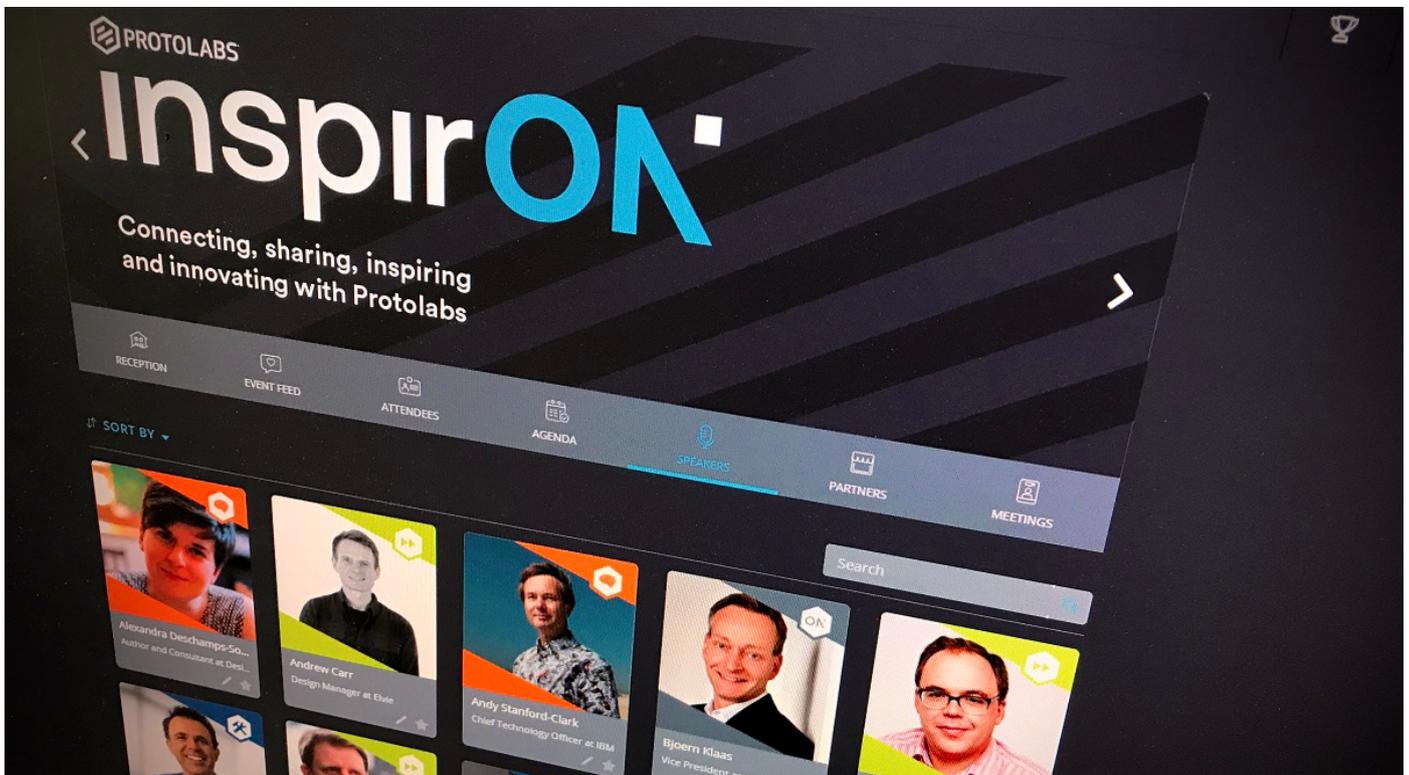


IET updates



The IET and Protolabs worked together on 'the great engineering challenge of tomorrow'

The IET recently partnered with Protolabs in the creation of the InspirON Sustainability Series: a tour de force in knowledge sharing and a resource that helps fast-forward design engineers through the growing urgency of climate change mitigation.

IET updates

If you'd like to partner with the IET on a special project or activity, please contact Louise Hall on **+44 (0)1438 767351** or advert@theiet.org

Design engineers have been designing with sustainability in mind for generations. But with sustainability increasingly becoming a matter for industry to contend with, fast evolving global environmental crises must be met with a more coordinated response. So, it's vital now more than ever that we consider what the practical steps must be for design engineers.

Ambitious carbon targets have been set by governments for the years ahead, and more and more businesses are signing up to climate change agreements. But how can the targets and agreements be translated into action? What framework is there for design engineers and their employers to plot their journeys to a more sustainable future?

There are in fact answers to these questions and the required expertise is out there! When Protolabs approached the IET with the idea of a curated and comprehensive resource of global knowledge for design engineers to become more sustainable in their work, we thought this was an important step along the road to sustainability. With Protolabs' initiative, along with their background in supporting innovation in key industries that could turn the tide on global carbon emissions, combined with our own expertise in engineering, technology and manufacturing, we knew this partnership could potentially make a real difference.

The InspirON Sustainability Series consists of video presentations and round table discussions with the involvement of experts and thought leaders in the various fields of sustainability, including circular economy, life-cycle analysis, materials technology, renewable energy, government legislation and consumer culture. Delivered 'live' in April and May 2021, and with recorded content continuously available on-demand on Wistia, the series is in response to the growing urgency around climate change mitigation and how design engineers are key to this endeavour.

The experts and thought leaders who currently live and breathe sustainability are in a unique position to share their knowledge and insight to prepare others for this challenge. Their presentations are vital to the quality of the content and they include plastics expert Vanessa Goodship from University of Warwick, author and public speaker Alexandra Deschamps-Sonsino, Chris Grantham from IDEO, Sophie Thomas from Thomas Matthews and 'innovation

warrior' Simon Lockrey PhD. Simon Lockrey bridges the gap between technical, commercial, creative, and sustainability fields. He is currently a Senior Lecturer at RMIT, Australia, in sustainability and design and sits on the board of International Sustainable Development Research Society. He commented:

"We face grand challenges this century, such as climate change, resource limits, food security issues and water shortage. Increasingly, designers and engineers need to be cognizant of the impact the products and services they create have on the world in light of such problems. Life cycle assessment is one way to understand these issues, and the InspirON series helps illuminate this world's best practice method so that it can be applied on projects of the future."

The video presentations delivered by the experts are grouped into four themes to help viewers navigate through the variety of content: Inspire to Change; Technical Tools; Go Faster; and Thinking Big. There are also round table and Q&A sessions that form discussion-based presentations around the key topics of sustainability in design engineering and manufacturing.

The IET's own James Robottom (Sustainability and Climate Change Lead), Jeremy Hadall (robotics and automation consultant and Chair of the IET's Design and Production Sector Executive Committee) and John Patsavellas (Senior Lecturer at Cranfield University and member of the IET's Design and Production Sector Executive Committee) were directly involved in several of the presentations and discussions that make up the series. Allan Rennie Professor in Manufacturing Engineering and member of the IET's Design and Production Sector Executive Committee was involved in the first discussion on this partnership, and his contribution was invaluable.

The InspirON Sustainability Series has so far supported around 1,000 design engineers from across Europe and will continue to support the community for years to come. With this suitable framework in place, design engineers are now better placed to meet the regulatory and consumer demands of the future – for themselves, for their employers, for society and for the natural environment we all inhabit.

Find out more:
inspiron.hubilo.com



We engaged with the Protolabs team on the topics of digital data for sustainability and carbon footprint reduction, underlining the need for data sobriety. Design for disassembly was another topic that we explored in the genre of sustainable product re-manufacturing. Our involvement in the InspirON series added a different perspective on the topics discussed, grounded on research outcomes and multi-sector practical knowledge. The initiative generated interest and we hope the shared knowledge enhanced understanding and facilitated fresh insights.



John Patsavellas Senior Lecturer
Manufacturing Management,
Cranfield University



Representing the IET, it was clear to me that the professional engineering institutions have a significant part to play in supporting these types of initiatives, engaging with industry, educators and learners alike with an agenda to ensure that the very best sources of knowledge can be pulled together for the benefit of all those participating.



Allan Rennie, Professor in Manufacturing Engineering and member of the IET's Design and Production Sector Executive Committee

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Connecting, sharing, inspiring
and innovating with Protolabs