

A-STEP 2030 research outputs at Global Engineering Deans Council Industry Forum

Representatives from the A-STEP 2030 project joined the GEDC-Industry Forum community to present results from the project and to hear experiences, perspectives and expectations from the next generation of students and recent graduates.

More than 120 global experts in engineering and technology connected virtually at the fourth edition of the Global Engineering Deans Council (GEDC) Industry Forum, hosted by McMaster University's Faculty of Engineering in partnership with the GEDC and Petrus.

Ishwar K. Puri, McMaster's Dean of Engineering highlighted the importance of connecting educators and industry "This is an exciting opportunity to get great minds to come together and explore solutions to real-world challenges facing engineering education,". The attendees represented 25 countries and five continents and the theme of this year's event is "Transformation Engineering: Developing the Next Generation of Engineering Innovators, Experts and Leaders for a Changed World."

"Each edition of the Industry Forum has enabled valuable exchanges to take place, creating a meaningful dialogue between leaders from the corporate world and academia," says Kirsten Williamson, Founder and CEO, Petrus Communications.

Una Beagon representing TU Dublin and Riitta Lehtinen representing Metropolia University of Applied Sciences as partners on the A-STEP 2030 project took part in a panel discussion on the skills engineers need to solve the SDGs and outlined the results of the first activity in the project. The panel members included current students and a recent graduate representing 3 different continents and discipline areas:

- Felipe Gómez Gallo, President, Student Platform for Engineering Education Development ([SPEED](#))
- Lianna Genovese, Biomedical & Mechanical Engineering, McMaster University, Canada & CEO & Founder of [ImaginAble](#)
- Sam Presley, Lead Inspiration Engineer, RS Components; member of IET and in current role is part of the 'Grass Roots' team whose mission it is to address the skills gap between university and the workplace

The panel presented views and advice to the academic and industrial attendees on what they can do to assist students in the current pandemic and the move to teaching online. The most thought-provoking quote came from Lianna Genovese:

“As leaders, educators, and as humans it is imperative that we look after the student’s mental health especially during the isolation of virtual school during the Pandemic. The Universities have done an incredible job of pivoting during this hard time, and as a student, we appreciate it. However, even if the most strategic education plan is created and executed, it will go without success if we do not support the students' mental health and well being”.

The presentation of the skills required for engineers to solve the SDGs highlighted the need for engineering faculty to prepare students not only for the technical aspects of being an engineer for life skills such as adaptability and flexibility and as Lianna put it “the human aspect of everything we do”.

A summary of the event is available [HERE](#).

Notes:

The **Global Engineering Deans Council** (GEDC) was created on 9th May 2008 in Paris as a recognition of the global need for a world-wide forum of engineering deans and rectors. The main goal of the GEDC is to provide engineering deans and rectors with ideas, tools, and “best practices” necessary to become innovative leaders of engineering education.