

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

# School of Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering Community

Part of  
THE EPS COMMUNITY



## Winter 2014

### Greetings,

Welcome to another alumni newsletter. The items in this edition are drawn from the wide range of activities that are thriving under the banner of our new School title.

We have some impressive figures to celebrate from 2013/14, including: graduate employability, maintained at over 90%; NSS overall student satisfaction, increased by 5% to 93%; research grants and contracts, increased to £4.5M; and a top ten position in the Guardian league table.

We aim to continue our improvements in all of these aspects in the current academic year, and we continue to seek whatever help you are able to offer. Are you in a position to help our students to improve their employability by talking to them about your work and your career path? Are you in a role where you would be able to set up a work placement to help a student to build up vital workplace experience? Would you be able to join the mentoring scheme that we launched this year to help to focus and motivate some of our students?

It is clear from information we receive from numerous sources that there is a shortage of skilled electronic, electrical and systems engineers in the professional job market. In that context, it is not surprising that by turning out well prepared graduates, we can achieve high employability figures. A much bigger challenge that we face is in attracting more school and college leavers into the subject. We are running activities such as taster days, workshop sessions in schools and the First Lego League. Any suggestions or help that you can offer in this endeavour would also be very welcome.

If you are able and willing to help in any of these ways or in any other way, please get in touch with the EPS College Alumni Relations team at [eps-community@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:eps-community@contacts.bham.ac.uk).

With best wishes,

**Dr Peter Gardner**

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Head of School  
Electronic, Electrical and Computer Engineering

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## News from the School of Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering

### University to play key role in training of HS2 engineers



The University of Birmingham is to play a key role in the training of engineers working on the HS2 rail link, following the announcement that the National College for High Speed Rail will have its headquarters in the city. [Read more.](#)

### Protecting UK infrastructure from the unpredictability of space: Professor Paul Cannon leads the way in radio science development



Paul Cannon OBE, Professor of Radio Science in the School of Electronic Electrical and Systems Engineering, has been appointed President of the International Union of Radio Science (URSI) and also a member of the Defence Scientific Advisory Council. [Read more.](#)

### Future of electro engineering student group shaped at Birmingham



Representatives of more than 15 student branches of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) have gathered at the University of Birmingham to plan the future of the prestigious association in the UK and Ireland. [Read more.](#)

### UBRacing update



The 2014/15 year looks to be a busy but promising one for UBRacing. Iestyn Stead, Director of Media and Head of the Powertrain Team [tells us more.](#)

### Rocketry Society launch Project Chamberlain



The University of Birmingham Rocketry Society (UBRS) is the newest student society within the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences. The group are embarking on the significant task of launching their own liquid fuelled rocket into the upper atmosphere in a challenge known as Project Chamberlain. Terry Moorton, President of UBRS and Director of Project Chamberlain, [tells us more.](#)

### College of Engineering and Physical Sciences at the British Science Festival 2014: Highlights



The College shone at the British Science Festival in September with over 30 contributions to the Festival's main scientific events and workshops, and the Young People's Programme. From new robot technology to HS2 and the big bang, our scientists and engineers addressed the big debates and offered interactive activity to engage young people in STEM futures. [See more.](#)

### Information Age: EESE provides expertise for ambitious new Science Museum exhibition



The School of Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering has contributed to an ambitious new Science Museum exhibition opened in October by the Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh. [Read more.](#)

### International conference on High Speed Rail



The School of Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering will be holding an international conference '1964-2064 High Speed Rail: Celebrating Ambition' from Monday 8 to Wednesday 10 December 2014 at the University of Birmingham. This is an important initiative of the Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education, intended to cement the long-standing friendship between the staff of the railways of Japan and the UK. [Read more.](#)

### Drones are fun toys until you get hit in the face by one



Mini drones are not yet appearing in our skies on a daily basis but they certainly are a rapidly growing trend. People can and do get hurt so we really need to help amateur pilots learn how to fly their new toys safely. [Read more.](#)

### DC will win the battle of the currents thanks to new DC fault management system



The final barrier preventing energy suppliers making the switch from AC power grids to faster, more efficient DC systems could now be removed, thanks to research carried out at the School of Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering. [Read more.](#)

### Dr Ronjon Nag awarded the Mountbatten Medal



Congratulations to Dr Ronjon Nag (BSc Electronic & Electrical Engineering, 1984) who has been awarded the Mountbatten Medal from the Institution of Engineering and Technology in partnership with the Royal Academy of Engineering and British Computer Society for his pioneering work on smartphone componentry. [Read more.](#)

## Freshers reunited



They first met as freshers in 1964 and 50 years later, a group of alumni returned to the School of Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering to see how things have changed. [Read more](#).

## Giving back



Did you know that College of Engineering and Physical Sciences graduates make up approximately 22% of the University's alumni population and are among the most generous donors to the Circles of Influence campaign? [Read more](#).

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## New staff in 2014

There have been a number of appointments in the School this term. [Read a summary of our new staff online here](#).

## Your School needs you...

Would you be able to share some of your time, expertise or connections to help our students to succeed?

We're currently looking for help and support from alumni with the following:

- Work experience placements are invaluable for our students, allowing them to learn about the world of work first-hand and apply their knowledge in a real-life setting. If you work in industry and think you could offer a work experience placement to our undergraduate or postgraduate students, please [email us](#)

There are many ways in which you can give a little back, from providing a career profile, to mentoring a student. Please [email us](#) if you would like to get involved and we'll be happy to talk to you.

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## Events taking place shortly...

### College and School events

#### EPS Inaugural Lecture Series

Thursday 27 November 2014

[Professor Jeremy Wyatt, Professor of Robotics and Artificial Intelligence, School of Computer Science](#)

*Robotics is reaching a tipping point. The intelligence and robustness of robots increased hugely in the past fifteen years. This has allowed them to leave the lab and carefully controlled environments like the factory floor and enter our world. In this public lecture, aimed at the non-specialist, Professor Jeremy Wyatt will explain the achievements of intelligent robotics to date. He will also highlight some of the challenges we must meet to bring robots into our everyday lives. Finally, Professor Wyatt will highlight some of the work carried out at Birmingham over the past decade, particularly breakthroughs in robot planning, robot learning and robot manipulation. The lecture should be accessible to people from age 12 up.*

*Live robot demonstrations will be included during the evening.*

**Venue:** Leonard Deacon Lecture Theatre, Medical School Building, followed by a drinks reception in the Wolfson Common Room, Edgbaston Campus

**For more information on other lectures in the EPS Inaugural Lecture Series please visit**

[www.birmingham.ac.uk/eps/inaugural](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/eps/inaugural)

**Friday 28 – Saturday 29 November 2014**

**[The National Engineering & Construction Recruitment Exhibition](#)**

Supported by the University of Birmingham, this is the largest engineering recruitment exhibition in the UK and with top companies including Network Rail, Amey, Canary Wharf Contractors, The Royal Air Force, Carillion and many more in attendance, this is your opportunity to find job vacancies, find answers to all your career-related questions and meet employers.

**Venue:** NEC, Birmingham

**Monday 8 – Wednesday 10 December 2014**

**[International Conference on High Speed Rail - 8th-10th December 2014](#)**

2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the first Shinkansen high speed line in Japan. The University of Birmingham is marking this historic occasion by holding an international conference on High Speed Rail

**Venue:** Edgbaston Campus

**Tuesday 10 March 2015**

**[EPS Distinguished Lecture: Prof Dr PE Seeram Ramakrishna](#)**

Longer life has always been a dream of human beings. Except for the recent one hundred years, the average life span was below forty for the past 10,000 years. Noticeable aging effects kick in as early as mid-twenties! More than a million medical devices have been invented to improve the quality of human life. What promise do they hold for humans to live beyond 100 years healthily and perhaps happily?

**Venue:** EPS College, Edgbaston Campus

**Tuesday 9 June 2015**

**[EPS Societies' Awards](#)**

Come and celebrate with our student societies as we recognise their fabulous achievements in 2014/15

**Venue:** The Great Hall, Edgbaston Campus

**Saturday 20 June 2015**

**[EPS Alumni Reunion](#)**

As a graduate of one of the nine schools in the College of Engineering & Physical Sciences (EPS), you are invited back to campus for a Summer Reunion to get together with your fellow alumni to celebrate your experiences, accomplishments and friendships at the University of Birmingham

**Venue:** Edgbaston Campus

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## **University events**

**25 November – 3 December 2014**

**[The Edward Cadbury Lectures 2014](#)**

The theme for 2014 is 'Is the New Testament Anti-Jewish?' and will consist of a series of lectures given by Professor Amy-Jill Levine, Vanderbilt University USA.

**Venue:** Edgbaston Campus

**Thursday 27 November 2014**

**[Chaplaincy lecture - A Quaker astronomer reflects on the Universe and us](#)**

This year's Chaplaincy Lecture will be given by Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell, a prominent astrophysicist and Quaker.

**Venue:** Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building, Edgbaston Campus

**Monday 8 December 2014**

**[Festive Drinks at the University Carol Service](#)**

Organised by the University Chaplaincy and Department of Music, this is a joyful Christmas celebration for alumni, staff, students and families followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the Rotunda at 7.30pm.

**Venue:** Great Hall, Aston Webb Building, Edgbaston Campus

**Thursday 19 February 2015**

**[Alumni vs Students vs Staff Quiz, 6.30-9.00pm](#)**

Put your general knowledge to the test at an informal quiz in Joe's Bar, Guild of Students.

**Venue:** Joe's Bar, Guild of Students, Edgbaston Campus

**Saturday 12 September 2015**

**[Golden and 50th Anniversary Reunion](#)**

Alumni who graduated in 1965 or before are welcome to join for a special reunion lunch

**Venue:** Edgbaston Campus

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## Do we have the right details for you?

Please visit [your.bham](https://your.bham) or email [alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk).

**You have received this email from the University of Birmingham because we believe that it is relevant and of interest to you.** If you would like to opt-out of receiving information from your College, School or Department by email, please opt-out by visiting [your.bham](https://your.bham), emailing [alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk), or telephoning +44 (0)121 414 2773 / 2744 / 4724. In order to further tailor the communication we send, all emails are tracked and processed; further information regarding our use of data, is available by looking at our [data protection statement](#)