

From the Committee Chair

The importance of IE&D cannot be understated. Supported by a huge amount of research and evidence, the benefits of IE&D to both individuals and organisations are significant. As Engineering Designers diversity of thinking has obvious advantages including a wider breadth of ideas, greater understanding of target markets and a reduction of indirect discrimination, all leading to more successful products and services. For example, no one can deny the lives that have been saved by Nils Bohlin and his three-point seatbelt, how crash test dummies have significantly helped improve safety systems within cars or how safety standards ensure a minimum legal obligation as well as accountability. However, it is only in the last 10 years or so that car companies have started to use female, elderly and obese computational models in their simulations, acknowledging the different injuries suffered by these groups compared to a 50th percentile male, and yet there is still no legal requirement to do so. This is an area where the benefit of diversity of thinking is all too clear to see, and has been severely lacking historically, but perhaps more subtle is the benefit of IE&D to our Professional Institution (PI). Creating an inclusive PI will provide support for previously under-represented groups to become professionally registered, adding to the diversity of talent within the sector, benefitting both companies and the economy. Promoting diversity on our committees will ensure that all voices are represented and that our PI can benefit from a wide range of skills and knowledge supporting future growth. Championing equity will ensure that barriers are removed to allow all members to achieve their full potential, irrespective of their background or circumstances.