

# IST

Supporting the technical workforce in the creative, digital, engineering and science technologies



**Visibility**



**Recognition**



**Career Development**



**Sustainability**

**SUPPORTING THE  
TECHNICAL WORKFORCE**



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PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE  
Technician Commitment

## Supporting the technical workforce since 1948

The IST has been supporting the technical workforce across the UK and overseas since 1948, across all sectors and disciplines, and has a proven track record for delivering support for and promotion of the excellence of our technical communities.

The Technician Commitment initiative provides a vehicle for higher education and research institutes to enhance and celebrate their technical workforce, and this initiative has wholeheartedly been endorsed by the IST since its inception.

Technical staff are often the unsung heroes working across many sectors. Through the continuation of existing IST projects the introduction of potential new and exciting collaborations which we are currently exploring, we will step-up our commitment to the development of a professional technical workforce, dedicating our time, enthusiasm and expertise to our members and the wider technical community.

The IST's action plan aligns to the four pledges of the Technician Commitment - **Visibility**, **Recognition**, **Career Development** and **Sustainability**.



The below shows the IST's Action Plan for each of the 4 pledges.

## VISIBILITY

We will continue to offer awards and prizes for staff working across the technical sector, e.g. Annual Conference prizes via which technical staff can showcase their work/interests, funding being provided from our John Robinson Memorial Fund. Opportunities to introduce new awards and prizes will be actively explored going forward.

Networking and our annual National Technical Conference – we are committed to continuing to deliver our Conference, which is tailored specifically for technical staff, and which encourages those staff to not only help organise the event but also make presentations about their area of interest and/or expertise. The 2020 Conference was a virtual event for which there were > 450 registrants. Future events will be tailored to accommodate the prevailing networking and security options available at the time.

The IST Strategy focuses on technical staff from all sectors and disciplines, with performance and achievements being currently highlighted via our website, publications and social media. Our delivery vehicles will be kept under constant review and new routes for interaction will be explored, eg. the development of special interest groups/networks

## RECOGNITION

The IST is one of the Science Council's Licenced Bodies, able to award to the CSci, RSci, and RSciTech, Professional Registers and active promotion of these registers will continue, both at individual and organisational level. In addition, the IST currently has an in-house Registered Practitioner Scheme which is available to technical staff for whom the Science Council (or Engineering Council) registers may not be appropriate (eg. the creative technologies), and we will be exploring in the future how we can actively support and recognise the creative technical community.

CPD is viewed as a crucial aspect in maintaining professional standards and the IST is committed to continuing to help the technical workforce showcase their CPD activities, with excellence being recognised over a number of years, both internally and via the annual Science Council CPD awards. The IST is immensely proud that it's registrants have been very successful to date in these annual awards. Routes to potential new CPD options are continually being considered, eg. developing Conference workshops and presentations.

The current Journal and the new Tech Magazine, are in-house publications which provide members with opportunities to write and publish articles (especially when individuals have not published previously) and via which the Institute can acknowledge/recognise achievement and best practice. Other media routes for recognition are being actively explored for the future eg. podcasts.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Courses – the Institute will continue to offer courses and certificates eg. Higher Diplomas in laboratory techniques, Leading your Technical Team and Building your Technical Team course. In addition we will continue to provide validation/ endorsement of external training that is geared to technical staff development. We will also seek to explore how we can develop further training packages for the technical workforce but with delivery being online, such courses being aimed at staff that struggle to get support to travel for training or for whom travel is not a practical proposition.

The IST works closely with HEATED to help technical staff take advantage of their Technical Skills courses. In future we will also liaise with them to consider how we can build new courses which can be made available via their programme.

The IST is a Partner Affiliate of the National Technician Development Centre (NTDC) and will continue to work closely with them to develop technical careers and enhance visibility and recognition. Recent joint projects with the NTDC include the build and launch of CPD Central software, which is an online tool for logging CPD activities. This tool is tailored to technical sector needs and expanding its roll-out will be a key activity in the future. Additional future projects with the NTDC will include joint activities which are focused on developing technical career pathways.

## SUSTAINABILITY

1-2-1 Mentoring – IST's membership and Fellows work across a broad range of sectors and can provide mentoring to help retain and develop the skill sets of the technical workforce. In future mentoring to support professional registration will be expanded in conjunction with the Science Council

We have been involved with various special groups e.g. Downs Syndrome Association/ Workfit in a project to develop inclusive work practises for young adults with DS to gain, develop and retain work roles in laboratories. We will continue to look for other opportunities for interactions with such projects eg. by developing bespoke certificated training courses for specific technical groups

T-Levels and Apprenticeships: The IST has worked closely with the NTDC in respect of establishment of Apprenticeship standards. Members of the Executive Board are Trustees of the Science Council and are involved in T-Levels and Apprenticeships.

As members of the Science Council's Board of Trustees and working Committees, several IST Executives have been, and continue to be actively involved with the development and the maintenance of the professional standards associated with CSci, RSci and RSciTech. In the future further interactions will be actively encouraged eg. by direct registrant participation in SC support activities.

**The IST is committed to supporting the technical community and enhancing and promoting its standing in the workplace, and it is without doubt that a strong and professional technical workforce is key. The Technician Commitment is an initiative which the IST strongly endorses and the Executive would welcome the opportunity to formally contribute to the TC Initiative by becoming a supporting signatory.**