

THE Tech Magazine

THE MAGAZINE OF THE IST

ISSN 2753-9024 • Vol 6 No 2 • Dec 25

Where the Sunlight Fades:
Voyager's Journey Into
the Unknown

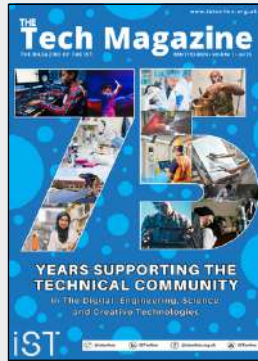
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THE Tech Magazine

The magazine for, and made by, the technical community.

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The Tech Magazine continues to grow as a dynamic platform for the professional technical community. With its fresh design and evolving content, the magazine celebrates the contributions of professionals across a wide range of sectors. It's more than a publication; it's a space where voices from the STEMM, Creative and AI workforces are heard, recognised, and valued. We're committed to keeping the magazine relevant, engaging, and impactful; supporting your professional growth and career development every step of the way. Your insights help shape what we do, so we always welcome your feedback and ideas for future content. We hope you enjoy this edition of the Magazine on all-things technical.

IST members can contribute with articles of interest / opinion pieces or research and information blogs. Members can advertise their projects, awards, or even advertise or offer an advert for their organisation. Below are some of the contents topics in our magazines:

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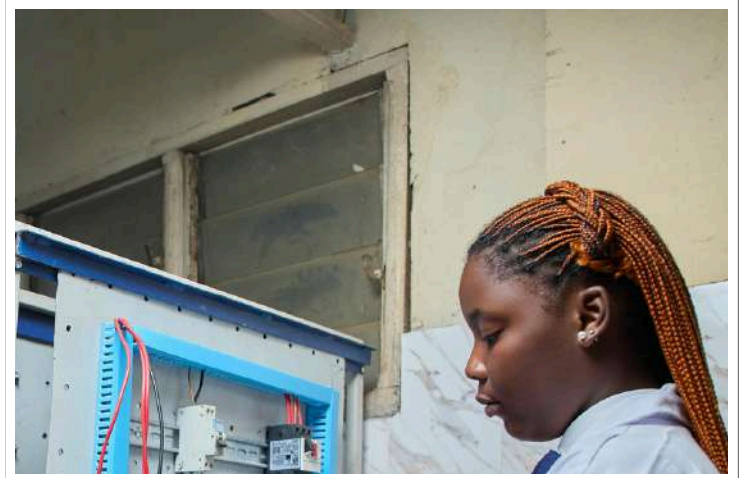
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Volume 6 Number 2

Dec 2025

This magazine is made for, and made by, the technical community.

CALL TO MEMBERS:

If you would like to publish an article or are interested in joining the team, contact us at the office, we would love to hear from you.

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Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editorial Board or the Institute.

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Cover image: Voyager takes its next steps into the Deep Unknown, Article Page 6.

Thank you for everyone's contribution to this edition of the magazine.

We would love to hear your views on the Magazine and learn more about what you would like us to include in the future. Please feel free to send us your thoughts via office@istonline.org.uk.

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A Landmark Celebration of Technical Excellence in Birmingham The IST Annual Technical Conference 2025

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This year's IST Annual Technical Conference at the University of Birmingham was nothing short of spectacular! Bringing together technicians, researchers, creatives, academics, and industry innovators from across the UK, the event reminded everyone why it's the must-attend conference for AI, Creative Industries and STEMM professionals.

Professor Adam Tickell stated,

“It was a privilege for us to host the Technical Meeting of the IST (Institute of Science and Technology) in the Teaching and Learning Building. We have been working with the IST – a professional body covering all sectors from science to medicine, to creative arts – for thirty years, particularly in their work to support the professional development of the technical workforce. I went along to the opening session and there was a real sense of a national community coming together to learn from one another.”

Keynotes That Wowed the Room

The conference's keynote line-up was truly top-notch. Each talk left the audience buzzing with ideas and inspiration.

Professor Tracy Harwood – “Navigating the Inflection Point: Creativity, AI and the Future of Innovation”

Professor Harwood kicked things off with a thought-provoking dive into the exciting intersection of AI, creative computing, and rapid innovation. Delegates explored how technical professionals can lead through disruption, embracing adaptability, ethical foresight, and cross-disciplinary collaboration. From generative AI to immersive design tools, Tracy showed that emerging technologies aren't just changing the tools we use; they're changing how we think, create, and solve problems. By the end, everyone left with practical strategies to tackle the future with confidence and curiosity.



Figure 1: Delegates wandering around the Exhibitor Space.

From the moment delegates arrived, there was a buzz in the air. The event kicked off with a warm welcome from Natasha Russell, the University of Birmingham's brilliant Technical Manager and a key member of the conference team. Then, we were officially greeted by Professor Adam Tickell, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Birmingham, alongside IST President and Conference Chair Helen Sharman CMG OBE and IST Chair Terry Croft MBE, who kept everything running like clockwork alongside members of the Conference Team. Their combined enthusiasm set the tone for a day full of energy, learning, and connection.



Figure 2: Dr Helen Sharman with Professor Kit Windows-Yule after his artificial intelligence keynote.

Professor Kit Windows-Yule – “Artificial Intelligence: The Good, the Bad, and the Grey Area”

Next up, Professor Windows-Yule gave a fascinating look at AI in the real world, from its most brilliant applications to its trickiest pitfalls. Drawing on his experiences with industry, academia, and his own AI start-up, he shared lessons learned across eight industrial sectors. The audience gained invaluable insights into ethical, practical, and sustainable AI adoption, all delivered with clarity and a dash of humour.



Figure 3: Dr Raj Persaud with Helen Sharman and Terry Croft after his keynote talk on surviving the workplace.

Dr Raj Persaud – “Workplace Survival Skills: Managing Your Manager Because Adulthood is Hard”

Dr Raj Persaud closed the keynote programme in style, delivering laughs and life lessons in equal measure. Speaking from years of experience as a psychiatrist and life coach, he gave delegates practical tools to survive, and thrive, in high-pressure work environments. His anecdotes had the room in stitches, but behind the humour were serious lessons in resilience, wellbeing, and sustaining a fulfilling career as a technician, scientist, or researcher.



Figure 4: Workshops delivered throughout the Conference to inform and advance technical skills.;

Workshops That Made You Think (and Act!)

The workshop programme was equally impressive, giving delegates hands-on experience and practical takeaways across AI, Creativity, Safety and Career Development to bring back to their workplaces.

Session 1 Highlights:

- ACCES: An accessible evolutionary framework for optimising just about anything
- Using AI to enhance immersive learning across devices: from tablets to XR headsets
- NTDC HETT: Introducing the new National Education Technical Professional Pathway
- Upskilling Through Apprenticeships: Taking control of your technical career

- Inventory Management: Smarter, safer ways to store and use equipment
- Innovative Sustainability: Bridging science and the arts for a greener future

Session 2 Highlights:

- StageLinc: Linking technical skills to regional challenges
- The Accreditation Edge: Stories from Creative Tech Trailblazers
- Career Alignment in a Changing World
- Chemical and Safety Sheet Management
- Selling Unwanted Lab Equipment with UniGreenScheme
- What is Deep Learning?

Delegates left buzzing with new ideas, skills, and strategies, praising the breadth, quality, and immediate usefulness of the workshops. Thank You to all our fantastic speakers.

Celebrating Outstanding Talent

No IST conference would be complete without recognising technical excellence:

New IST Fellows: Dr Gayle Calverley and Graeme Shaw

Poster Competition (Sponsored by Sim&Skills):

1st Place:

Jonathan Fulwood - University of Sheffield

2nd Place:

Emma Aitken - University of Edinburgh

3rd Place:

Jaswant Kaur - University of Birmingham

The competition's theme, Outreach, really captured the creativity, innovation, and impact of technicians across the UK.

Special mention goes to IST Fellow Allison Hunter, who was awarded the Lifetime

Achievement Award for Lab Sustainability by MyGreenLab (USA) - a remarkable international recognition!

Congratulations to all award receivers.



Figure 5: Helen Sharman awarded the 2025 prizes to the Poster competition winners.

A Big Thank You to Our Supporters

We couldn't pull off a conference like this without our key sponsors, exhibitors and career zone supporters. Huge thanks to SiSo, UniGreenScheme, LabCup, and Academia, whose support ensures that the IST Conference remains accessible, inspiring, and invaluable to the technical community.

2025 Exhibitors



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Looking Ahead to 2026

The energy, creativity, and collaboration we saw in Birmingham this year were incredible. The IST Conference continues to grow in impact, ambition and excitement.

We're thrilled to announce that next year's conference will take place on:

**Tuesday 15 September 2026
University of Liverpool**

We can't wait to welcome you back, or meet new delegates, for another day of learning, networking, laughter, and inspiration.

That's a wrap – see you in Liverpool

The 2025 conference proved, once again, that technicians are the heart of innovation, creativity, and excellence; and that together, we can push boundaries, solve problems, and build a brighter, smarter future.

From Your IST Conference Team:

Dr Helen Sharman OBE CMG (Conference Chair), Terry Croft MBE (Conference Co-Chair), Lucy Hudson/Ian Tidmarsh (Secretary), Joan Ward (Finance Lead), Arthur Nicholas (Sponsorship Lead), JP Ashton-Kinlin (Marketing Lead), Richard Saldanha (AI Lead), Graeme Shaw (Creative Lead), Sarah Youde (Science Lead), James Fox (Competition Lead), Natasha Russell (Host University Representative) and John Dwyer (Previous Host Representative)



Feedback:

“The talks gave me a much clear understanding of AI and the guidelines that should be applied due to potential safeguarding and ethical issues.”

“Thoroughly enjoyed all speakers, their delivery, storytelling, jokes - excellent”

“**Fantastic choices of keynotes. Engaging and relevant.**”

“World class.”

“The workshops I went to were certainly worth attending.”

“Great selection of topics.”

“Really enjoyed engaging with the reps.”

“It is a great networking event - good blend of keynotes workshops, exhibition.”

“Excellent format this year, keep it the same. Plus all locations in one building so that was good.”

“**I thought this conference was brilliant. I cannot wait to try and attend Liverpool next year.**”

97% of all delegates who gave feedback rated the Conference as either Excellent or Very Good.

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