

13. Institution of Engineering and Technology

13.1 Aims and policies

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) is a large professional organisation with about 170,000 members. [1] The IET was formed in 2006 from the merger of Institution of Electrical Engineers and Institution of Incorporated Engineers. The institution dates back, through a number of different formations, to The Society of Telegraph Engineers which was founded in 1871. [2]

Statement of purpose and values

The IET's vision, mission, strategic priorities and values are stated on its website [3] and in annual reports. At the time of writing, these were as follows.

- Vision:
"Working to engineer a better world."
- Mission:
"To inspire, inform and influence the global engineering community, supporting technology innovation to meet the needs of society."
- Strategic priorities:
 - *"Support the transition of students and young professionals into engineering careers*
 - *Engagement with professional development to ensure and demonstrate and grow engineering competency*
 - *Deliver user-centric knowledge solutions for rapid access to relevant content and services*
 - *Demonstrating the public relevance of engineering to society and as a positive career choice*
 - *Working across disciplinary, corporate and geographic boundaries to improve innovation and impact"*
- Values:
 - *"Integrity*
 - *Operate professionally and ethically to gain trust.*
 - *Be open and honest with each other.*
 - *Respect everyone and value each other's contribution.*
 - *Excellence*
 - *Work toward the highest level of service and satisfaction.*
 - *Use agile methods and seek innovative solutions to add value.*
 - *Continually improve and adopt best practices.*
 - *Teamwork*
 - *Encourage staff and volunteers to work together.*
 - *Recognise the value of talented individuals working in teams.*
 - *Be collaborative and partner with other organisations."*

Environmental policy

While we were unable to find a specific environmental policy for the organisation as a whole, we did identify a number of relevant documents, rules and activities on the IET's website.

Especially significant was Rule 12 of the members' Rules of Conduct – which stated:

“Members shall take all reasonable steps to avoid waste of natural resources, damage to the environment, and damage or destruction of man-made products. Lawful work undertaken by members in connection with equipment intended for the defence of a nation will not infringe this Rule 12 or Rule 11.”^a [4]

A significant example of how the IET applied this in practice was in the refurbishment of its main London office, which was assessed against the BREEAM environmental building standard and awarded a 'very good' rating. [1] Furthermore, we found environmental policies covering the institution's various premises. [5] The IET also has an Energy Policy Panel. [6]

13.2 Investments

Size and location of funds

The IET's fixed asset investments totalled over £134 million, as stated in a recent annual report. [1] A breakdown of these assets is given in table 13.1.

<i>Investment category</i>	<i>Amount in investment category (£)</i>
Investment property ^b	23,598,000
Investments in joint ventures ^c	884,000
Listed investments:	
- Equities	58,103,000
- Bonds	25,068,000
- Mixed funds	26,823,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>134,476,000</i>

Table 13.1 – Investments (fixed assets) by category held by the IET [1]

The listed investments are the focus of this study and, using the figures in table 13.1, it can be seen that these totalled £110.0m. The IET's non-property investment portfolio was managed by BlackRock. Unfortunately, the level of detailed information about the portfolio provided in its public accounts was not sufficient for us to determine the corporations in which these listed investments were held. The institution did not respond to SGR's request for more information on its investments.

^a Rule 11 is “Members shall at all times take all reasonable care to limit any danger of death, injury or ill health to any person that may result from their work and the products of their work.”

^b This property is the building owned by the IET and used as its head office.

^c These were companies involved in producing publications, organising conferences etc.

General investment policy

The IET's general investment policy was stated in a recent annual report [1] as follows.

“For the purpose of attaining the aforesaid objects the IET shall, subject to this Our Charter and the Bye-laws, have powers to do any act or thing and to administer the affairs and deal with the assets of the IET in all respects without any restrictions whatsoever and, in particular, (but without limitation): (d) to invest any monies of the IET, not immediately required for any of its objects, in such a manner as may from time to time be determined, subject nevertheless to such conditions (if any) and such consents (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law and subject also as hereinafter provided.”

Ethical investment policy

We found that the IET did not have a specific ethical investment policy. In defence of this position, a recent annual report stated: [1]

“The Trustees have considered in detail the requirements of the Charity Commission’s Guidance note ‘Charities and investment matters: a guide for trustees’ (CC14) and have concluded that the IET is not invested in any asset that is detrimental to, or at variance with, the objects and purposes of the charity, being ‘to promote the general advancement of science, engineering and technology and to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas on these subjects amongst the members of the IET and otherwise’, and hence no specific ethical constraints are applied to the investment policy.”

13.3 School education programmes

The IET is involved in a range of school education activities, with recent sponsors and partners of the largest programmes listed in table 13.2. The LEGO event is for children aged 9 to 16, and has quickly grown to involve a wide range of corporate sponsors and academic partners. At the time of writing, **Bechtel [A]**^d played a prominent role as ‘National sponsor’. The Faraday Challenge Days are aimed at pupils aged 12 to 13.

In summary, of the almost 90 organisations listed as recent sponsors and partners of the IET's school education activities, only one we classified as part of the arms sector, and none were fossil fuels corporations.^e However, that one corporation – Bechtel – appeared to play an especially prominent funding role, although the level of funding was not publicly available. It can be argued that a majority of Bechtel's activities are civilian in nature, working as it does internationally across numerous areas of engineering. However, its annual military sales are very large – more than \$3 billion, putting it in the world's top 30 corporations in this sector – and it is a contractor on nuclear weapons programmes (see

^d [A] indicates companies which, in this report, are categorised as being part of the arms industry. [F] indicates companies which, in this report, are categorised as being part of the fossil fuel industry.

^e The caveat here is the significant links that one of the education partners, the Big Bang Fair, has to the arms and fossil fuel industries (see note 'g').

appendix 21). Hence our classification and related concern about its prominent role in school-related work.

<i>Programme</i>	<i>Sponsors</i>
FIRST LEGO League International Open Championship	National: Bechtel [A] Headline: RS Components Regional partners and sponsors: 60 smaller organisations [7]
Faraday Challenge Days	Bosch, Science and Technology Facilities Council, Queen Mary University, Motorola Solutions Foundation, CRAY, Kitronik [8] ^f
'Education Partners'	The Big Bang Fair, ^g The Design and Technology Association, Science made simple, Go4Set (EDT), The Year in Industry (EDT), Fun Kids Radio, F1 in Schools, Land Rover 4x4 in Schools, Greenpower, Leaders Award for STEM, Primary Engineer, The Scout Association, Smallpiece Trust, Arkwright Scholarships Trust, Teach First, Young Engineers, Scottish Council for Development and Industry, Engineering Education Scheme Wales, Sentinus [9]

Table 13.2 – Sponsors and partners of the IET's school education activities, 2017-18

13.4 Events and sponsorship

The IET organises a large number of events. While sponsorship packages are offered for many of these, it appears that most are limited to a small number of the larger, more prestigious events. We carried out a short survey^h and those events found to receive sponsorship are listed in tables 13.3a-b.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Organisation</i>
Platinum Guests	Edif ERA [A] , TLI Group, Freedom Infrastructure Services, Roke [A] , Morgan Sindall, Burns McDonnell, Arup, Reach Active, BMT Defence Services [A] , EA Technology, FirstCo, Babcock [A] , Peak GEN [10]
'Other Guest Bookers'	Acrastyle Limited, Airbus Defence and Space [A] , Elmeridge Cable Services, Energy Networks Association, General Electric Energy, GRID Power, Global Substation Solutions, Huawei, Joint Industry Board, Mass [A] , MBDA [A] , National Physical Laboratory, Network Certification Body, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Prysmian Group, Ricardo [A] , Siemens, Sterling Power Group, UK Power Networks [10]

Table 13.3a – Sponsors of the IET Annual Dinner, 2017

^f Organisations listed as supporters rather than sponsors.

^g It should be noted that The Big Bang Fair (BBF), organised by EngineeringUK, has strong ties to arms companies, fossil fuel companies and the armed forces. For more information, see appendix 7.

^h Due to the large volume of events listed (over 200 at the time of our brief survey, in mid-2017), we only surveyed the larger events and a selection of the upcoming events.

<i>Event</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
New Challenges in Tribology	Taylor & Francis Group [11]
International Conference on Radar Systems	BAE Systems [A]
Loughborough Antennas and Propagation Conference	CST [A], ANSYS
Churchill Medal ⁱ	BAE Systems [A] [12]
'Previous Sponsors'	ABB, Accenture, Alcatel Lucent, Alstom, Ansaldo STS, Arqiva, Arthur D Little, EADS Astrium (now Airbus) [A] , Atkins, BAE Systems [A] , Belden, Cambridge Consultants, Cobham [A] , Converteam, Computer Simulation Technology, Delta Rail, Doble, Dyson, EA Technology, GE [A] , GM Rail, ICS Consulting, Kapsch, Lloyd's Register, Logica, Lucy Switchgear, Mathworks , Megger, Morrison Utility Services, National Physical Laboratory, Omicron, Power Plus Communications, Phaedrus Systems, Praxis, Rolls-Royce [A] , RuggedCom, SAIC [A] , Selex Communications [A] , Smarter Grid Solutions, SCS, Variable Message Signs (VMS) [13]

Table 13.3b – Recent sponsors of other large IET events

The only data we found on the IET's income from event sponsorship were the package rates for the Annual Dinner in 2020 – which ranged from £3,575 up to £15,000.^j [14]

In summary, of the 80 organisations we found listed as IET event sponsors, 18 (23%) were within the arms sector, with none in the fossil fuel sector.

13.5 Corporate membership

The IET has a large number of 'corporate partners'. We carried out a brief survey of the over 100 partners listed on the website in early 2019. [15] Among these, there was significant representation from the military industrial sector, including some of the world's largest and most controversial arms corporations such as **AWE [A]**, **BAE Systems [A]**, **Boeing Defence UK [A]**, **Leonardo [A]**, **Lockheed Martin [A]** and **MBDA [A]**. There were also some from the fossil fuel sector including **Shell [F]**. [15] Further details about the activities of these corporations can be found in appendix 21. We estimated that 21% of corporate partners were part of arms industry and 4% were involved in fossil fuels.

The corporate partnership benefits, as listed on the IET website [16] at the time of writing, were:

ⁱ This is an award for individuals or a team for "outstanding achievements and contributions to engineering and technical advancement in support of military operations." [10] The medal is awarded jointly by the IET, the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology, the Royal Aeronautical Society, the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, the Institution of Royal Engineers, the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Society of Operations Engineers.

^j VAT not included.

- *“networking opportunities across industry, academia and the MOD [Ministry of Defence]*
- *a benchmark for professionalism and industry standards*
- *support for your employees through their professional development and with our Company Based Registration Support scheme*
- *a bespoke package designed to meet your needs, an Account Manager to improve your engagement with the IET and provide access to our five key sectors resources, engineering intelligence and local communities*
- *invitations to our annual partnership event*
- *marketing opportunities to the partnership community, made up of engineering and technology professionals, through different media channels including Partner News, magazines and newsletters*
- *access to the well-established Academic Partners*
- *a formal relationship through our partnership agreement, and*
- *a bespoke annual activity plan*
- *access to the Corporate Partner Toolkit, including the use of the IET Corporate Partner logo, IET literature, text to promote your partnership to your employees, marketing guidelines, etc*
- *a 20 per cent discount on room hire in our London and Birmingham venues.”*

Information on Partner News [17] and a list of the institution’s academic partners [18] was available on the IET website.

So, in addition to the usual promotional and public relations benefits of corporate membership offered by many other professional engineering institutions, the IET offered one which, in our study, was unique: networking opportunities with the UK Ministry of Defence. The apparently close relationship between the IET and the UK military is of concern for reasons discussed further in the main report and appendix 21.

We found no publicly available information on the fees paid by each of the IET’s corporate partners, nor the total income for the institution.

13.6 Other corporate links

According to its annual reports, the IET receives sizeable donations and legacies from a number of sources, including major corporations. In 2017, these totalled £1.3m. The 29 organisations and individuals providing the largest donations were listed. Three (10%) were arms corporations: **Airbus [A]**; **BAE Systems [A]**; and **Thales [A]**. [19] In 2018, this income totalled £0.5m. Of the 33 largest donors that year, three (9%) were arms corporations: **BAE Systems [A]**; **Chemring Group [A]**; and **Thales [A]**. [20]

Like most professional bodies, the IET runs a magazine for its members. This is called *E&T* (engineering and technology) magazine. It offers advertising space. However, we were unable to access copies of the magazine during this study to survey the extent of industry uptake of advertising space.

13.7 Overall assessment

Reviewing the information in this case study, we have given The Institution of Engineering and Technology the assessment as shown in tables 13.4a and b.

We found that the IET was less transparent than many of its contemporary organisations in key areas of concern to this study. For example, the information it published about its investments was insufficient for us to determine in which corporations it held stocks. While it was open about the sponsors of its school education programmes and its events, as well as its corporate partners, we could find limited publicly available information on the level of funding that it received from these activities.

	<i>Investments</i>	<i>School education programmes</i>	<i>Events</i>	<i>Other</i>
Involvement with arms corporations	Medium	Medium	Very high	Very high
Involvement with fossil fuel corporations	Medium	None	None	Low

Table 13.4a – Corporate involvement ratings for the Institution of Engineering and Technology

	<i>Ethical issues covered in this study</i>
Positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of financial links with fossil fuel industry in school education programmes or event sponsorship • Efforts to reduce its environmental impacts
Negatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive financial links with arms industry across the areas in this study • Significant investments in fossil fuel companies likely • No ethical investment policy • Limited transparency in all areas relevant to this study

Table 13.4b – Positives and negatives for the Institution of Engineering and Technology

We found some mention of environmental responsibilities within the IET’s guiding documents, and evidence of significant efforts by the organisation to reduce its environmental impacts. However, the organisation lacked an overarching environmental policy. The only mention of an ethical investment policy was a brief justification for why the institution did not need one. Given that the organisation was the largest in terms of membership and second largest in terms of investments of the 20 case studies which we examined, this was of particularly deep concern.

We found financial links between the IET and the arms industry in all areas of relevance to this study, and much of it extensive. Nearly a quarter of large event sponsors and a fifth of corporate partners were part of the arms industry. It also received large donations from major arms corporations, including BAE Systems, the largest such corporation outside the

USA. The lack of an ethical investment policy, coupled with a lack of public data on its investment funds, meant that significant links were likely to be present in this area also. Within school education programmes, the involvement seemed more limited.

We found no direct financial links between the IET and the fossil fuel industry in its school education programmes or in event sponsorship. The proportion of corporate members in this category was relatively low. However, the lack of an ethical investment policy, coupled with a marked lack of public data on its investment funds, meant that significant links to fossil fuels were likely to be present in this area.

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