

A Word from Our President



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Since 2019, in my capacity as President of the SCTE, I've led the organisation through some troubled times. I've been part of the executive team since 2017 and a member of the SCTE for over a decade. My journey with the SCTE has been defined by navigating the pandemic, as well as championing modernisation while respecting our long-standing history. This in times collides with the present, where social media has become more of a reality than real life. Ensuring the continuation of the now 79-year-old SCTE is a balance between tradition and the future, which has been challenging and rewarding in equal measure. The SCTE is now entering its new future as you will have seen from the Broadband Journal which has received a significant makeover; this has also been part of a longer process where we surveyed the members to see where they want the SCTE to go and we have listened.

ANGA COM 2024 will be pivotal for the SCTE as well; we are introducing something that I know will add more value to the members. More about this at ANGA COM.

Looking into the crystal ball there are important elements to consider for learned societies like the SCTE; these, like many other institutions look likely to be shaped by some key trends and challenges.

Digital Transformation is something the SCTE has embraced, from the way we disseminate knowledge to conducting meetings, from engaging with members to hosting events. Virtual conferences, webinars and digital publications; all of these will become more prevalent, which I see as a clear benefit in order to expand the reach and inclusivity of the SCTE. Breaking down boundaries and advancing knowledge further than we are able to in a meeting in a lecture theatre, and our members increasingly expect it. Digital tools are becoming more relevant and access to these has become a natural part of many organisations; the SCTE has been developing some digital tools and we will be presenting one of these at ANGA COM. Our Managing Editor Melissa has focused a lot of attention on these, so

we are anticipating an interesting week at ANGA COM, and we welcome any and all feedback of course.

Open access publishing is growing at a rapid rate and will change our approach to information in ways we haven't fully grasped yet. It will potentially affect the subscription model that defines the SCTE, as well as its flagship offering, Broadband Journal. It may affect how members regard the membership benefit of a quarterly publication. Such existential questions will give us much to consider over the coming years as we navigate an uncertain, if fast-paced future.

Collaboration, and especially interdisciplinary collaboration, are global challenges becoming more complex over time and involving different disciplines. There is a growing need to nurture collaboration and break down silos, enabling engineers to cross boundaries that have always existed and open the world to them. The SCTE has a pivotal role in identifying and encouraging such collaborations agnostically, and enabling the opportunity to learn about the more complex sides of communications. Working with organisations like the IET, INCA and the SCTE, a subsidiary of CableLabs will be a start to breaking down those silos. Training has always been part of the SCTE's role and helping engineers to be better. Training in areas other than technical has been part of the SCTE's training strategy since late 2023, and we are delighted that some have used the opportunity to break down those silos and learn more about themselves and others around them. I know that we will be announcing more course dates soon and again improving opportunities for engineers.

As a learned society there is one area where things are made possible; that is in research and engaging with public and policymakers. Demonstrating the value and relevance of our fields of expertise has never been more important. Outreach education programmes and efforts to influence policy based on our expertise will feature in a big way, and this ensures the relevance of the society.

In a society it is a natural instinct to flock with other, like-minded people. This is definitely an area where things will evolve as we embrace the changes open access brings. As digital transformation and collaboration increases, the Society must continue to strive towards greater inclusivity and diversity; not only demographic diversity but also diversity of thought, encouraging a broader range of perspectives and voices.

Expanding lectures to include other topics has resulted in some interesting discussions in areas where elements such as work-life balance, ensuring everybody is included, consideration for others and being an open employer affects all of us. Engineering needs all types of engineers and innovation needs different ideas to thrive, which sometimes means being outside of one's comfort zone. With the pace of change difficult to keep up with at times, the future needs engineers and innovation to maintain the high tempo of new technology and innovation. I would like to thank the graduates from VMO2 that took the opportunity to be part of the SCTE; I will be in contact with you shortly to ensure we are including all members in the future of the SCTE.

A key factor affecting all our lives now is sustainability and the awareness of environmental issues. Sustainable practices in the context of events and operation will be a considerable element, not only for the Society's sake but for the future generations. The use of printed paper and waste management is a serious consideration for the SCTE and

we are investigating various options. We have only one world.

At 79 years of age, as a learned Society there is a substantial legacy to consider; admittedly at times this has been something of a hindrance in the face of fast-paced, global challenges. The need to be agile, open and responsive to change is an absolute necessity. In the last few years alone we have endured pandemics, climate change and geopolitical shifts, all of which have affected the Society. The Covid-19 pandemic forced the SCTE to halt nearly all activity and change our approach; without a responsive Executive at the time I am afraid the SCTE would be in a very bad place by now. Webinars, podcasts and keeping Broadband Journal running became nearly the only way to continue the SCTE during the two years we lived through Covid-19. This had such an effect on the agenda, priorities, and the way in which we could mobilise the SCTE into supporting, informing and helping members; we are only really back on track now. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

The SCTE is inescapably defined by the past. It weighs heavily on our shoulders at times, but we look toward a bright future, embracing all that digitisation has to offer. With a galvanised team on the Executive Committee and a passionate, involved membership, tackling disrupters that will inevitably challenge us along the way we will lean on the experience gained from our long history; we will keep calm and carry on. The Executive of the

SCTE is in a good place to ensure that the SCTE continues the same relevance it has enjoyed for the last 79 years, but the changes that are around the corner will also require some changes to the SCTE itself. Evolving with the times comes pretty naturally to us after all; we have managed to evolve successfully since the early days of the Society of Relay Engineers. I look forward to the next few years ensuring the relevance and the continuation of the SCTE well into the future; another 79 years would be a lot to aim for, but only through ensuring that the SCTE remains relevant and valuable to members and the wider world will this be possible.

As President of SCTE, I'm privileged to witness and contribute to our society's remarkable journey. Over the past few years, we've faced unprecedented challenges and seized the opportunity to evolve, ensuring that our legacy of excellence endures. Our transformation is not just about embracing digital innovation but also about deepening our commitment to inclusivity, collaboration, and sustainability. I invite each of you to join us in shaping a future where SCTE continues to be a beacon of knowledge, innovation, and community in our field. Together, let's forge a path that honours our history while embracing the endless possibilities of tomorrow.



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