

**For Immediate Release**

**ASME Announces Launch of Idea Lab, Celebrates Award Winners  
at Fifth Annual Impact.Engineered Event**

*Impact.Engineered Awards Recognize Innovators and Influencers in the Sustainable Development Ecosystem Who are Helping to Improve Life in Underserved Communities*

**NEW YORK (Dec. 2, 2021)** – The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)’s Engineering for Change (E4C) today hosted its fifth annual Impact.Engineered, a celebration of the sustainable development ecosystem that convenes leading engineers, philanthropists, scholars, and social entrepreneurs who are working to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and improve the quality of life globally. Event highlights included the launch of the [Idea Lab](#) incubator, extending the reach of the ASME Innovation Showcase (ISHOW) hardware accelerator platform, and the announcement of the winners of the 2021 [Impact.Engineered Awards](#).



With the addition of the Idea Lab incubator, ASME moves “upstream” to aid budding social entrepreneurs in developing and implementing their social impact hardware concepts from the pre-prototype stage and filling the pipeline for future ISHOW participants. The prestigious [ISHOW](#) international accelerator of hardware-led social innovation has enabled over 180 startups from more than 30 countries to solve critical quality-of-life challenges for underserved communities worldwide. The 2021 ISHOW cohort exhibited their innovations in the event’s virtual [Tech Gallery](#).

Keith Roe, former president of ASME and current chair of the philanthropy committee, made the Idea Lab announcement and, with his wife Elizabeth “Brownie” Roe, donated \$100,000 to help launch the program. They invite others to [join them in investing in Idea Lab](#), “so life changing innovations don’t get stalled on the drawing board.” Applications will open in April 2022 and interested individuals and teams, as well as potential partners and mentors, can learn more at <https://thisishardware.org/ideas>.

[Kara Miller](#), *The Boston Globe* columnist and former host of public radio’s “Innovation Hub,” emceed the Impact.Engineered virtual awards ceremony featuring the “best of the best” in five categories. This year’s winners are:

- For the *Ecosystem Builder* award:  
Bahaa Eddine Sarroukh, healthcare innovation lead at the [Philips Foundation](#) and senior advisor on innovation and technology to the UN Development Programme in Kenya – With the Philips Foundation, he explores health technologies such as telehealth, point-of-care diagnostics, and dedicated solutions for low-resource settings, with the aim to build the evidence and insights that can help create a platform from which healthcare solutions can scale to larger impact in a sustainable way. Sarroukh serves on the ASME Engineering Global Development Committee, ISHOW Steering Committee and has been an ISHOW judge since the program’s inception in 2015. He has lent his expertise to social ventures in the Climate Innovation Center network and

connects his UN Habitat colleagues to the E4C Fellowship program to advance their sustainability goals.

Dr. Beatrice Murage, senior manager of global sustainability for [Philips](#), presented the award to Sarroukh.

- For the *Woman Champion: Powering Impact* award:  
Carol Dahl, former executive director of [The Lemelson Foundation](#) – whose mission is to use the power of invention to improve lives. Under her leadership, the Foundation focused on enabling the next generation of inventors and invention-based enterprises to develop products and businesses that underpin the economy and solve big problems in the U.S. as well as for the poorest populations in low- and middle-income countries. In addition, the Foundation's Oregon regional initiative strengthened the invention ecosystem in the state by providing K-12 invention education programs and resources for emerging entrepreneurs.

Carlotta M. Arthur, director of [The Henry Luce Foundation](#)'s Clare Booth Luce Program for Women in STEM, presented the award to Dahl.

- For the *Academic Ally* award:  
[The Pennsylvania State University College of Engineering](#) – an acknowledgment of the important role that partnerships play in the future of engineering and the next generation of leaders and the visionary academic institutions like Penn State that are pushing the boundaries of pedagogy and research. Through its continued partnership with ASME and E4C programs and a shared mission to train the future workforce together, the Penn State College of Engineering has demonstrated a commitment to social innovation with meaningful programs and faculty that is encouraged and supported. The [latest Impact Project between E4C and Penn State](#) assesses the barriers preventing effective application of housing solutions for improving flooding resilience for housing within the context of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Kendra Sharp, head of the [National Science Foundation's Office of International Science and Engineering](#), presented the award to Justin Schwartz, the Harold and Inge Marcus Dean of Engineering at Penn State, and Esther Adhiambo Obonyo, associate professor of engineering and director of the Global Building Network.

- For the *Impact Driver* award:  
[The Autodesk Foundation](#) – supporting the innovators and entrepreneurs tackling the world's most pressing challenges through design and engineering. The Autodesk Foundation's investment in the E4C fellowship helped double the cohort from 25 to 50 fellows. Recent projects include designing homes in Rwanda to mitigate poor ventilation, cataloging water tower designs for relief sites around the world, and designing greenhouse airflow for converting organic waste into insect-based protein for animal feed.

John Wain, senior shelter cluster coordination officer for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), presented the award to Joe Speicher, executive director of The Autodesk Foundation.

- For the *Change Maker* award (nominated and selected by online vote of event participants):  
[Curabit](#) – a startup company leveraging technology to change the way mental health is addressed in India, providing exposure therapy via virtual reality to those affected by mental health disorders under the supervision of mental health professionals. Their innovative use of virtual reality allows for the customization and personalization of each treatment plan, provides complete control to the therapist, and allows for interactivity with the simulation. Its cost-effective VR-based therapy can be more stimulatory than traditional therapeutic techniques and provides biomonitoring through the data generated.

Neil Yeoh, CEO and founder of [OnePointFive \(opf.degree\)](#), presented the award to Rishabh Nanawati and Aman Sariya, co-founders of Curabit.

The awards ceremony capped off a two-hour [program](#) that included a variety of presentations examining progress toward and opportunities for achieving the UN SDGs and “acknowledging that global challenges from climate change to COVID-19 and economic downturn require technical solutions, workforce development, resilient infrastructure, and public, private and nonprofit involvement to drive implementation,” says Iana Aranda, director of engineering global development for ASME, who hosted Impact.Engineered.

Keynote speaker Austin Alexander, vice president of sustainability and social impact for [Xylem Inc.](#), delivered remarks about the connection between water scarcity and affordability, water system resilience to climate change, and the role of engineers in Xylem’s efforts to solve global water challenges.


The Impact.Engineered 2021 [program](#) also included a session on “Engineering Global Development: Field Insights” in which E4C fellows and partners shared their experiences and lessons learned, followed by remarks from Kathleen Knight, executive director of [Siegel Family Endowment](#), which recently pledged \$100,000 to fund a cohort of five cross-sector engineering fellows in 2022 and conduct a longitudinal impact evaluation of the program.

Impact.Engineered is made possible by sponsors and partners including [The ASME Foundation](#), [The Resolution Project](#), [Siemens Stiftung](#), and [Wingu](#).

For more information, visit [impact-engineered.org](#).

#### **About Engineering for Change (E4C)**

Now celebrating its tenth anniversary, [Engineering for Change \(E4C\)](#) is a knowledge organization dedicated to preparing, educating, and activating the international engineering workforce to improve the quality of life of underserved communities worldwide. E4C provides access to resources, talent and platforms that accelerate the development of impactful solutions and infuse engineering rigor into global development. Our diverse, global community of more than one million people comprises engineers, technologists, social entrepreneurs, and development practitioners. Jointly founded by ASME and other leading engineering societies, E4C has attracted the support of a variety of [partners](#) and sponsors ranging from industry, academia, non-profits and multilateral organizations, and corporations.

 @Engineer4Change #IE2021

#### **About ASME**

ASME helps the global engineering community develop solutions to real world challenges. Founded in 1880 as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, ASME is a not-for-profit professional organization that enables collaboration, knowledge sharing, and skill development across all engineering disciplines, while promoting the vital role of the engineer in society. ASME codes and standards, publications, conferences, continuing education, and professional development programs provide a foundation for advancing technical knowledge and a safer world. In 2020, ASME formed the International Society of Interdisciplinary Engineers (ISIE) LLC, a new for-profit subsidiary to house business ventures that will bring new and innovative products, services, and technologies to the engineering community, and later established the holding company, Global Knowledge Solutions LLC. In 2021, ASME launched a second for-profit subsidiary, Metrix Connect LLC, an industry events and content platform to accelerate digital transformation in the engineering community and an agent for the Mechanical Engineering® brand of media products. For more information, visit [www.asme.org](#).

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