

Your guide to the IET Futures Fund and Foothold

**Helping you champion
support, share stories,
and spark change.**

As a volunteer, you play a vital role in bringing our mission to life. You're often the face of the IET and can inspire others to get involved and give support, or seek it when they need it most.

We've created this guide to explain a bit more about the IET Futures Fund and Foothold (two charitable efforts that sit at the heart of our community), and to help you feel more confident talking about them throughout the great work you do.

It'll help you:

1. Understand the purpose of each entity

Start by familiarising yourself with what the IET Futures Fund and Foothold do. You'll find short summaries, impact examples, and key messages to help you describe their work clearly and accurately.

2. Use the key messages in your conversations

Each section includes simple, adaptable messages you can use in conversation, presentations, or written communication. Use them as talking points to help connect people with the stories and purpose behind both charities.

3. Share stories

Real stories bring our work to life. This guide includes examples of the lives changed through the IET Futures Fund and Foothold – feel free to use these when talking to colleagues, members, or the public.

4. Know where to signpost people

You don't need to have all the answers. This guide includes links and contacts so you can direct people to the right place – whether they want to support, get involved, or access help.

5. Keep the conversation going

Every conversation you have helps build awareness, offers support, and makes a meaningful difference to the work we do.

Thank you for your continued support. Together we can keep building a community where every engineer can thrive and feel supported, because at the IET – better never stops.

Foreword

The engineering sector is an exciting and vital industry to be a part of. Every year I meet individuals who help shape and develop it, and I've relished my role in building new networks and connections amongst engineers.

I've toured the UK, encouraging young people to choose a career in engineering, a cause passionately shared by the IET's Futures Fund. The team works with young people to help ignite a spark and interest in engineering and supports them in reaching their full potential.

It's wonderful to always think about a positive future, but things like disability can come to anyone at any time. I've seen first-hand how valuable the support of Foothold (the IET Benevolent Fund) can be when life becomes difficult.

Foothold works to build resilience for engineers, helping them improve their physical and mental wellbeing. They provide essential support throughout an engineer's career, including into retirement, to ensure no one in the sector must face life's challenges alone.

Having served as an IET Trustee, I know that for our sector to thrive we need to support emerging talent in choosing a career in engineering. Not only do we need to support them on the road to engineering, but along the way too, so that personal challenges, which can affect any one of us, don't lead to engineers leaving the sector.

Local Network members play a role in helping our sector to thrive. Your collective efforts can make a significant impact on the engineering community, most notably by helping to support the work of the IET's Futures Fund and Foothold.

At some point, there is every chance your fellow engineer, or a potential future engineer, will need a supportive hand.

Let's work together to lend that hand when the time comes and ensure all engineers and aspiring engineers reach their full potential.

Together, we can do great things for people just like you.



Katy Deacon BEng MEng CEng FIET
Vice President,

The Institution of Engineering and Technology

Creating better futures - two causes, one engineering community

We promote and raise awareness of two causes, which our members and the wider engineering community may consider donating to and supporting.

Support for the next generation of engineers and technicians

The IET Futures Fund is committed to working to engineer a better world.



Because the world faces unprecedented challenges and engineers are needed to solve them.



We raise money to inspire the next generation of engineers and technicians, supporting them to reach their full potential so they can help find solutions to our biggest global challenges. Donations help us offer more children and young people these essential opportunities and inspire them to pursue a career in the sector; a better future starts early – and together, we can keep it moving forward.



Support for the global engineering community

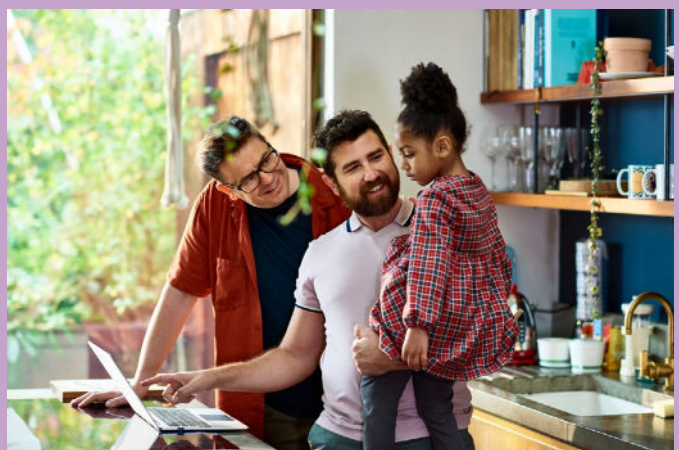
Foothold are an independent charity that supports IET members and their families to improve their financial, emotional, and physical wellbeing.



Life doesn't always go to plan, but you don't have to face its challenges alone.



Whether it's a financial grant to help pay the bills, funded counselling sessions during a difficult time, or our range of self-service resilience building tools to help people cope with life's challenges – we have been helping people in the engineering community through life's most difficult challenges since 1890.



Introducing the IET Futures Fund

As a registered charity, we rely on the help and generosity of our members and the engineering community to ensure we can keep investing in and growing our education and award programmes.

FIRST® LEGO® League is one of our flagship education programmes and has been proven to spark children's interest in engineering from a young age.

Our renowned IET Faraday® Challenge Days are an annual STEM competition, which enable young people, aged 12 to 13 years, to really experience what it's like to work as a team of engineers tackling a real-world challenge.

And, our scholarships have been specifically created to provide financial reassurance to students, apprentices and degree apprentices from a wide variety of backgrounds and circumstances to help them achieve their potential.

The IET Futures Fund enables young people to experience an engineering journey from primary school through to university. Many children start this with *FIRST*® LEGO® League Explore around aged eight, working in teams to solve problems with basic coding in a supportive, fun environment. These early experiences build both technical skills understanding and teamwork.

Engineering skills put to the test

When children reach Year 8 (aged 12-13 years), they're perfectly positioned for our IET Faraday® Challenge Days, where teams race against the clock to solve industry-inspired engineering problems.

This intense one-day STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) competition tests their growing abilities and builds confidence in their engineering skillset.

Navigating the next stage of innovation

With this experience under their belts, students often move into the more demanding *FIRST*® LEGO® League Challenge, a global STEM competition that develops key skills for future careers, including coding, design and real-world project work.

Nurturing talent, building futures

As these young engineers consider their next steps beyond school or college, our Future Talent Awards provide the final bridge to the profession. Supporting aspiring engineers to reach their full potential, the scholarships are awarded to students and apprentices on IET accredited degree courses, who face financial or personal challenges.

Beyond financial support, successful applicants gain access to the IET's professional network and development resources. This continuous pathway doesn't just build technical expertise – it nurtures passion, confidence, and professional awareness, transforming curious minds into the engineering talent of tomorrow.



Find out more at

theiet.org/what-we-do



When Jasmine Brittan was 13 years old, she first discovered engineering through an IET Faraday® Challenge Day, where she built and raced a model car.

This sparked her passion for the subject, leading her to participate in engineering programmes and competitions, ultimately confirming her decision to pursue an engineering degree.

While studying at the University of Warwick, Jasmine came across the IET's scholarship opportunities and was thrilled to receive the IET Future Talent Awards – Launch Scholarship. This award provided financial relief, allowing her to focus on studies and extracurricular activities which expanded her engineering knowledge and networks. She also won an IET Travel Award to help her study in Peru.

As part of her scholarship, Jasmine also received IET student membership which has helped her grow professionally, offering mentorship and networking opportunities. Inspired by these experiences, she is now exploring postgraduate studies at top universities and preparing for a research placement in Singapore.

Her aspirations lie in aerospace engineering and sustainable transport, with a future goal of founding her own robotics-based startup. She is also committed to achieving Chartered Engineer (CEng) status and applying for IET Young Woman Engineer of the Year.



**MY IET SCHOLARSHIP AND
MEMBERSHIP HAVE HAD
A HUGE IMPACT ON MY
CONFIDENCE AND CAREER.**

**I HOPE TO INSPIRE OTHER
YOUNG WOMEN TO
EXPLORE ENGINEERING
PATHWAYS AND FIND THEIR
PLACE IN THE FIELD.**

Read more inspiring stories here:

theiet.org/stories

IET Futures Fund Impact 2024-2025

FIRST® LEGO® in the UK and Ireland (6-16 years)



66,605

of which



18,300

students
(41% of participants were girls)

received funding to enable
them to take part

IET Faraday® Challenge Days



740

schools



10,152

students participated, of which:
47% were girls
35% were underrepresented pupils
2 were SEND pupils

IET Future Talent Awards 2024



69

scholarships awarded



46%

are the first in their family
to go to university



71%

come from households
with an income under
£25,000



1%

were actively
seeking employment



27%

are from single
parent families



17%

went on to postgraduate
study in engineering and
technology



10%

have caring
responsibilities



79%

are employed in the
engineering and
technology sector



16%

are on benefits

Ways to donate and support our work

A donation, small or large can make a meaningful difference: There are a number of ways individuals and organisations can support the work of the IET Futures Fund.



Donate online

It's quick and easy to donate online. You can make a one off or monthly donation or donate in memory of someone special.



Leave a gift in your will

Leaving a gift in your will to the IET Futures Fund is a great way to share the joy your profession has given you with others.



Philanthropy and corporate impact partnerships

We work directly with major donors, trusts and organisations to support their goals and maximise their impact.



Find out more

If you'd like any further information, please contact the IET Fundraising team:

T +44 (0)333 049 9123 then press 0

E fundraising@theiet.org

W theiet.org/futuresfund

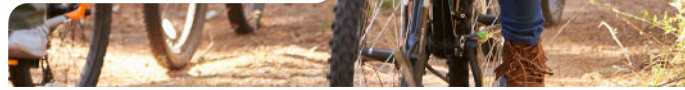


Foothold

We're Foothold, the IET benevolent fund. We're a charity that's been here for members since 1890.



Support for IET members and their families



We support IET members and their families for life, including in retirement. We can offer a range of means-tested support:

- Disability, illness and care support
- Specialised neurodiversity support
- Financial grants
- Counselling grants



We also offer free online support for the whole engineering community:

- Legal and financial advice sheets
- Debt and benefits advice
- Differently Wired Hub (neurodivergence)
- Wellbeing Hub
- Mental Health Check-In tool
- Monthly webinars
- Sleep support



Here to make sure that no engineer has to face life's challenges alone.



Get support
myfoothold.org/iet

Foothold's impact

2024–25



£1.2m

spent
delivering



1,257

instances of
direct support



to **1,226**
people



in **47**
countries



226

new people applied
for support



108

people received one
or more grants



603

hours of volunteer support



23,002

digital wellbeing
sessions delivered



2,245

sign ups to webinars
and online support



Tristan's story

Foothold has supported Tristan for over 10 years. Two of his family members have been IET members. Tristan's mum Pauline shares their story.

“We heard something that no parent ever wants to hear about their child.”

“Tristan was 14 when he first got sick. He has very high care needs, so I gave up my full-time job to care for him. Tristan suffers from long-term chronic illnesses including a debilitating heart condition.

In the first few years after diagnosis, we felt that as a family, we were just surviving rather than living. Being told by doctors that there is no cure for my son is a hard reality to face.

There has been a ray of hope throughout all this. I've never been one to ask for help, even when things are really tough. But I knew we couldn't keep on providing all of Tristan's care needs on our own.”

How Foothold has supported Tristan

“Foothold has supported us with a monthly grant, so we can continue giving Tristan the care he needs. This regular payment to Tristan makes the world of difference to not only his life, but to mine as well. Foothold have been a godsend to us and helped give Tristan a bit of freedom back in his life.”

“It feels like we are actually living, not just surviving.”

Foothold's history



Foothold
Supporting engineers

We're an independent charity, but our history is closely linked to the IET.

1890

Members of the IEE (now the IET) set up a benevolent fund to give financial help to those in need. Some of the era's most influential engineers were among the first donors, including Tesla, Kelvin and Siemens.



1900

The fund awarded its first grant – £20 (about £2,500 today). Early grants often supported people out of work, covered funeral costs, addressed hardship caused by disability or illness, and helped families with essentials such as rent.

1944

An appeal was started for a homes fund for engineers returning from war. Charles Speirs offered his house and estate to engineers returning from the war. 26 homes were built on the property.

1990

We turned 100!



1977

Charles Speirs gifted the charity the funds to purchase his estate, continuing its use to support engineers.



1962

The benevolent fund became a registered charity in its own right.

2000s

We expanded our support to meet the community's needs beyond financial support. One example is our employment support programme, which launched in 2007.

2010

Charles Speirs' house was sold and the proceeds used to create the Speirs Fund, which still supports engineers with care and respite needs today.

2019

After consulting with the community, we renamed ourselves 'Foothold' and launched our new strategy of expanded support.

2024 – today

Growing our range of online support for the whole engineering community.

Help engineers in need

Our work is powered by engineers like you.
Here are some ways you can support our work,
so we can support those who need it most.



Spread the word

Tell your colleagues and networks about the support that Foothold can offer.



Volunteer

We have a range of ways you can get involved, such as presenting videos.



Donate

Whether a regular or one-off donation, whatever you can give will make a difference.



Take on a fundraising challenge

We'll support you in an event of your choice. If running is your thing, we have places in many sell-out races!



Leave a gift in your Will

Support engineers for decades to come. You can write your Will for free with our trusted partners.



Play the 'make a smile' lottery

An exciting way to help us raise vital funds. Only costs £1 per play. (18+, GambleAware)



Keep in touch



Hello Foothold



@YourFoothold



@hellofoothold



contact.us@myfoothold.org



+44 770 6313 213

Support Foothold
myfoothold.org/get-involved



Thank you for helping us
make sure no engineer has to
face life's challenges alone.