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Trust

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Talent, awards, and the future

The Douglas Bomford Trust's secretary Alan Plom reports on recent meetings and looks forward to future activities supporting the agricultural engineering sector:

Cranfield's **'Talent Forum and Industry Insights'** event in May brought together industry professionals, academics, alumni and students from Cranfield's Water, Environment and Agrifood, Energy and Design theme courses with representatives of the Trust.

Back to Cranfield (virtually) a month later to 'present' the Trust's Annual Prizes to their students who 'best demonstrated the application of engineering and technology for sustainable agriculture' on Environmental and Agriculture Theme courses. The former was awarded to **Luke Waterman** (thesis entitled 'A mixed methods

investigation into barriers for sharing geospatial and resilience flood data across key stakeholders in the UK') and the latter to **Grace Jepkosgei** (MSc in Future Food Sustainability, for her thesis on 'Modelling avocado water use and productivity in relation to climate and drought risks in South Africa').

Into the Dragons Den

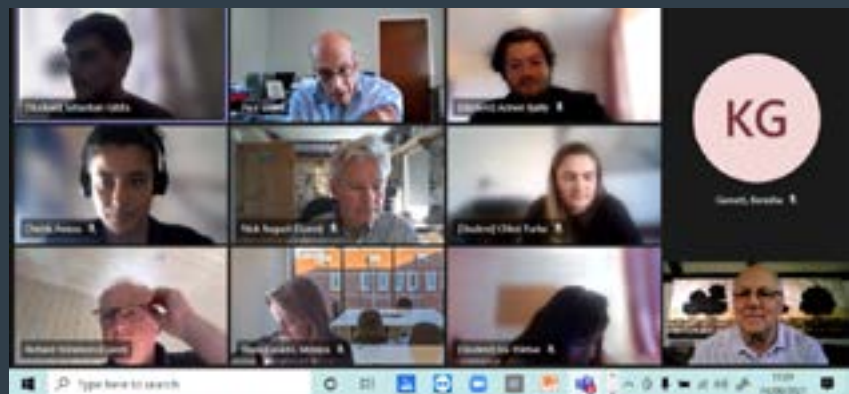
Also in June, the second group of (multi-national/multi-discipline) Cranfield MSc students presented their 'Strategic review of support for Agricultural and Environmental Engineering Research and Development' to Trustees.

Focused on food traceability, greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency, they produced alternative socio-economic scenarios in relation to innovation and development, based on a detailed literature search and a limited survey of 'experts' to identify likely drivers of change in UK agriculture over the next 5, 10 and 15 years as well as potential areas for collaboration between agricultural and environmental engineering.

The team aimed to help 'understand our world in constant transition and evolution toward sustainability and environmental-focused policies' and contribute to the fulfilment of the Trust's stated objective.



Activities in the agricultural engineering supported by the Douglas Bomford Trust



“to advance knowledge, understanding, practice, and competence in the application of engineering and technology to achieve sustainable agricultural, food and biological systems for the benefit of the environment and mankind.”

The Douglas Bomford Trust

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Student successes

We are pleased to report that a number of PhD's are about to be completed or have recently been awarded to DBT-funded students, some at universities not traditionally associated with 'agricultural engineering'. Novel applications are challenging our broad mission statement, and many do not realise that they are 'ag engineers', but reflect the sector's diverse nature eg:

- desalination (Birmingham), soil erosion (Worcester), flood protection (Reading),
- machine vision to detect disease and plant stress (Imperial),
- computer vision to identify and manage cattle (Nottingham)
- 'Virtual sheep fencing' (Liverpool John Moore's).

Looking to the future

The Trustees will be discussing the latest project proposals face to face for the first time in two years, at our combined AGM and Board meeting in mid-November. Funds are limited so hard choices have to be made to meet the core objectives.

We have also continued to explore potential collaboration with Agri-EPI Centres, to provide evaluation and analytical support for research projects supported by the Trust.

Focus on Students - The Future of the Profession

To encourage students with an interest in agricultural engineering or technology to enhance their studies and personal development and to enable them to go on to successful careers in the industry, we provide:

IAgrE Student membership -

Funded by the Trust for decades, we are exploring how we can increase the number of students staying as members of IAgrE on completing their studies. We would welcome comments from students on what information and assistance they wish to receive.

e: enquiries@dbt.org.uk

or comment via

@BomfordTrust



Student Prizes –

The Trust has traditionally awarded prizes recognising excellent performance at Harper Adams University and the Royal Agricultural University, as well as Cranfield. Others may be considered.

(Please write to the Trust Secretary).

Studentships -

Student Members of IAgrE (ie registered on a relevant course of study in UK or Ireland) may apply for awards (typically up to £1,500) for purchase of materials, equipment, computer hardware/software, or

other (ideally costed) proposals. They are awarded to those who best demonstrate how their sponsorship will be used to enhance their studies and personal development.

The Trust's Secretary must receive applications by;

31st October 2021

All are assessed and those 'short-listed' will be interviewed by a panel, during November. - See:

<https://bit.ly/3h4nfaw>

Travel Scholarships –

For groups to attend technical events, study tours, etc within the UK and beyond, for personal and professional development. Full details including what will be achieved in terms of personal and professional development must be provided in ample time for it to be considered.

Apply any time, via email.

e: enquiries@dbt.org.uk

'Major' Awards (ie applications exceeding £5000) -

Typically for postgraduate research, around 10 major projects being co-sponsored with other charities, industry, etc each year.

Trustees consider applications in mid-April and mid-November, and must be received by the Secretary by

1st March and 1st October.

Additional details and justification is obviously required - follow the briefing notes and use the form at:

www.dbt.org.uk/over-1500

Trustee Mentors monitor progress and work with project teams to help achieve agreed outcomes. The Trust again expects recognition of our support, eg. in reports, presentations and conference papers.

THE DOUGLAS BOMFORD TRUST



The Trust provides a range of student awards to support relevant projects

'Minor' Awards (less than £5000) -

Includes individual travel, attendance at conferences, project work, etc. Although requests obviously tailed off during the pandemic, that hasn't stopped us supporting participants participate in online Conferences 'worldwide'. For example, two HAU Graduates (both former DBT Scholars) **Amy Boothby** and **Will Hook** presented their degree projects to the EurAgEng AgrEng2000 Conference:

'New Challenges for Agricultural Engineering towards a Digital World'

4-8 July 2021, see:

<https://ageng2020.com/>

Unfortunately this was held online instead of in Portugal, but was still an interesting and character-building experience.

Golden Anniversary 2022

The Trust celebrates its 50th Anniversary in 2022 and we are planning a special celebration event in September. Over the years, hundreds of students have been sponsored, supporting research at PhD and Masters level, travel to events and conferences, study tours, and other educational activities. We would like to compile examples illustrating how the Trust has helped individuals, so please send your 'testimonials' to the email below. This event will not just be retrospective – we will also be looking to the future.

For further information, contact the Trust

e: enquiries@dbt.org.uk

t: 07951 527051

@BomfordTrust