

IEEE Foundation

Reflecting on 50 Years of Impact

A RETROSPECTIVE



IEEE Foundation

Reflecting on 50 Years of Impact



The IEEE Foundation works side by side with donors and IEEE to unleash exciting, thoughtful and impactful programming that advances technology for the benefit of humanity, and has done so since it was founded in 1973.

The need to establish a separate yet related public charity - IEEE Foundation, Incorporated - emerged during the early 1970's. Driven by growing desire to focus on the professional needs of electrical and electronic engineers and the standing of the profession, the IEEE Board of Directors proposed a change to the IEEE constitution that would broaden the Institute's role to include non-technical activities. This proposed amendment, which passed by an overwhelming 89 percent of voters in 1972, led to IEEE's tax status changing to a 501(c)(6) organization in the United States¹.

The change in tax status meant IEEE could no longer accept tax deductible charitable donations and bequests and so on 10 January 1973, the IEEE Board of Directors voted to create the IEEE Foundation ***"to enable IEEE to have a receptacle for non-taxable bequests and contributions to further the objectives of the Institute, particularly in its Awards Program."***

One month later on **16 February 1973**, the IEEE Foundation was founded in New York City. According to the Certificate of Incorporation, the sole purpose of the IEEE Foundation is to ***'further the scientific and educational purpose of IEEE'***. Fifty years later, this purpose remains unchanged.

Setting the Stage

1973 to 1982

The first meeting of the IEEE Foundation Board convened on 29 March 1973 at the United Engineering Center, New York, NY. The top priorities were establishing a strong infrastructure and developing the process to accept and administer donations in support of IEEE programs. The IEEE Life Members Fund² was moved into the IEEE Foundation and became an integral part of the organization.

Funds in support of IEEE Awards were quickly established. The first donor-designated fund established was the IEEE Jack A. Morton Award Fund, which supported the presentation of the IEEE Jack A. Morton Award, an IEEE Technical Field Award, recognizing individuals for “outstanding contributions in the field of solid-state devices.” This award was presented from 1976 to 1999. Additional donor-designated funds were quickly established to support other awards such as the IEEE Alexander Graham Bell and Edison Medals and the Tesla and Steinmetz Awards.

Preserving the history of technology was added to the IEEE Foundation portfolio when, in preparation for the IEEE Centennial, IEEE created the Center for the History of Electrical Engineering³ and a Fund to accept donations in support of the Center was established. By the early 1980’s, IEEE societies such as IEEE Computer and Vehicular Technology Society were working with the IEEE Foundation to establish Funds for their awards, scholarships and fellowships.

As of 31 December 1982, the IEEE Foundation managed \$606,449 in net assets across 26 donor-designated funds. The per annum investment in IEEE programming averaged \$65,000 during this decade.

Exponential Organic Growth

1983 to 1992

Throughout the second decade, the IEEE Foundation expanded its focus to include educational initiatives. The growth was thanks in large part to principle and planned gifts received from IEEE leaders including Myron Zucker and Gertrude & Alfred Goldsmith. Zucker's support enabled the IEEE Industry Applications Society to create a suite of activities designed to advance the education of students. The Goldsmith's generosity exponentially increased the IEEE Foundation's ability to support IEEE's philanthropic and educational activities.

Preserving and promoting the history of technology, the profession and IEEE grew in prominence during this decade. Support was centered on growing IEEE History Center's public outreach activities through its newsletter, oral histories program and publishing activities.

By the end of the 1980's, electronic publishing began to take hold across the world and the IEEE Foundation provided IEEE with funding to research the current and future environment for publications, thus helping IEEE chart its course for electronic publishing in the 21st Century.

By the end of the decade the growth in activity, scope and impact of the IEEE Foundation resulted in the need for dedicated IEEE Foundation volunteer leadership, separating those responsibilities from those of the IEEE President⁴.

As of 31 December 1992, the IEEE Foundation managed \$7,418,907 in net assets across 65 donor-designated funds. The per annum investment in IEEE programming averaged \$411,000 during this decade.

Honing the Focus

1993 to 2002

After two consecutive decades of organic growth, the IEEE Foundation adopted a strategic plan calling for increased and focused expenditure of philanthropic dollars to further the scientific and educational purposes of IEEE. This prompted the Board to increase the number of Directors from 9 to up to 18 members, expand its committee structure, hire professional staff dedicated to raising funds, create the first web presence and launch the *IEEE Foundation Focus* newsletter.

Throughout the decade, the IEEE Foundation support of educational programming grew. Investments were made in GOLD (Graduates of the Last Decade, now known as Young Professionals) activities, accreditation activities, career resources, STEM initiatives and a journalism intern at *IEEE Spectrum*.

The IEEE Power & Energy Society initiated a successful fundraising campaign to endow its suite of awards. IEEE Educational Activities established and worked to endow the IEEE Presidents' Scholarship. The IEEE History Center launched the Virtual Museum⁵ thanks in large part to seed funding provided by the IEEE Foundation.

In 1998, the IEEE Board of Directors gifted its share of the sale of the United Engineering Center (UEC)⁶ to the IEEE Foundation. The gift dramatically increased the IEEE Foundation's ability to support IEEE philanthropic activities - with an emphasis on enhancing the IEEE Awards Program.

To honor our **Forever Generous** legacy giving donors, who commit to supporting the IEEE Foundation after their lifetimes, and in recognition of the extraordinary support from Gertrude and Alfred N. Goldsmith, the **IEEE Goldsmith Legacy League** was founded in 2001. The **League** recognizes people who name the IEEE Foundation as beneficiaries in a will, life insurance plan, retirement account, donor advised fund, trust or other after-life giving vehicle.

As of 31 December 2002, the IEEE Foundation managed \$20,141,697 in net assets across 90 donor-designated funds. The per annum investment in IEEE programming averaged \$1.1 million during this decade.

Refining the Focus

2003 to 2012

The IEEE Foundation continued to grow and make operational improvements throughout its fourth decade. During this time the IEEE Foundation helped preserve the historical legacy of one of IEEE's iconic publications, *Proceedings of the IEEE*, by partially funding the digitalization of the 1963-1987 issues for inclusion in the IEEE *Xplore* digital library.

Humanitarian technology programming became a mainstay of the IEEE Foundation, first through the investment in the inaugural IEEE Humanitarian Technology Challenge Conference (from which IEEE Smart Village evolved). Subsequently, the IEEE Humanitarian Technology Fund was established to support projects that implement or disseminate replicable, sustainable, technology-based solutions in underserved and underprivileged areas to improve the quality of human life.

As the IEEE Foundation grew, recognizing and celebrating donors continued to grow in importance. In 2008, a second significant donor recognition group, the **IEEE Heritage Circle**, was created to honor donors for their cumulative philanthropic giving to IEEE during their lifetime.

When IEEE and Eta Kappa Nu (HKN), IEEE's honor society, merged in 2010, the new IEEE-HKN joined the IEEE Foundation portfolio of programs.

To address the critical shortage of power engineers, the IEEE Power & Energy Scholarship Plus Initiative was launched in partnership with the IEEE Foundation to encourage students to pursue careers in power engineering.

By the end of the decade, Leah Jamison was the first female elected to serve as IEEE Foundation President.

As of 31 December 2012, the IEEE Foundation managed \$35,311,683 in net assets across 186 donor-designated funds. The per annum investment in IEEE programming averaged \$2.2 million during this decade.



Realizing the Full Potential of IEEE

2013-2022

The fifth decade ushered in a period of rejuvenation and partnership with donors and IEEE designed to bring relevance, focus, scale, impact and alignment with IEEE through philanthropic giving. Four categories, called Pillars: Illuminate, Educate, Engage and Energize, were created to bring structure, hone our purpose and report impact. IEEE Smart Village, EPICS in IEEE, IEEE PES Scholarship Plus Initiative and IEEE REACH received BOLD investment when adopted as the centerpieces of IEEE Foundation fundraising and program investment activities.

The first IEEE-wide comprehensive campaign - *Realize the Full Potential of IEEE* Campaign - was launched and successfully exceeded its fundraising goal, raising \$32.1 million. The campaign's success drove new levels of technological access, innovation and engagement which impacted 1.2+ million lives.

With the help of the resilient, generous and creative people that make up the IEEE community, the IEEE Foundation responded to the unprecedented worldwide COVID-19 pandemic by establishing the IEEE Foundation COVID-19 Response Fund. This supported a variety of IEEE's educational and technological projects that responded to imminent needs worldwide during the pandemic.

Proudly joining IEEE in its commitment to advance diversity in the technical professions, IEEE Foundation worked more closely with IEEE Women in Engineering (WIE) through a collaboration to advance the careers of WIE members and nurture female engineering students to pursue their dream careers.

To better acknowledge, herald and highlight the diversity of the IEEE community, during 2022 six new giving levels were added to the *IEEE Heritage Circle*. Each new level is named after a previously under-recognized, accomplished professional.

As of 31 December 2021, the IEEE Foundation managed \$70,093,441 in net assets across 242 donor-designated funds. The per annum investment in IEEE programming averaged \$4.5 million during this decade.



The Future

2023 and beyond

The IEEE Foundation celebrates 50 years of working together with IEEE. In celebration of our 50th Anniversary, a fifth pillar “Future” has been added to join our original four pillars.

“Future” looks at the years beyond our lifetimes.

Together, these five pillars guide our philanthropic focus.



Illuminate



Educate



Engage



Energize



Future

Looking forward with experience, confidence and optimism, the Foundation will proudly continue its work to deliver opportunity, innovation and impact where philanthropy and technology intersect to advance the IEEE mission across the globe.

Thanks to the thousands of supporters, leaders and partners through the decades, the IEEE Foundation is poised to support IEEE programs for years to come. Please join us as we craft the future of philanthropic support for IEEE – your professional home – and ensure creativity, strength and efficiency as we develop, discover and direct technology for the advancement of humanity.

IEEE Foundation

445 Hoes Lane

Piscataway, NJ 08854, U.S.A.

Phone: +1 732-562-5349

Email: donate@ieee.org

¹ IEEE tax status is subsequently revised to 501(c)(3)

² Originally established in 1943 by AIEE as the Members-for-Life Fund

³ Later renamed the IEEE History Center

⁴ Until 1991 the IEEE President also served as President of the IEEE Foundation

⁵ The Virtual Museum evolved into the Engineering & Technology History Wiki (www.ethw.org) in 2015.

⁶ IEEE’s net proceeds from the sale of the United Engineering Center were \$7.6 million