

Round Table on Women in Engineering

Organizers:

- **Elvira Popescu** (University of Craiova, Romania)
- **Eva Dulf** (Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Abstract: Engineering is a male-dominated STEM field, with women working in technology still a minority. Furthermore, various surveys and interviews with women in tech reveal discouraging experiences and perceptions within the industry. The role of the panel is to trigger a fruitful discussion on the importance of attracting more women to the engineering fields and how the various stakeholders can address issues women are facing in the science and technology workplace. Several panelists from various backgrounds will join us and share their experience, statistics, support initiatives, solutions for diversity and inclusion problems, as well as methods for inspiring and encouraging women in engineering.

Panelists:

- **Eva Dulf** (Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Title: Empowering Innovation: Women Shaping the Future of Engineering

Short bio: Eva Henrietta Dulf (Senior Member, IEEE) is the head of the ADAPTED research group (<https://control.utcluj.ro>) and a professor in the Department of Automation at the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She is the vice-chair of the WIE Romanian section. She earned her PhD in 2006 and completed her habilitation in 2015. Her research interests include modern control strategies, fractional-order controller design, and the modeling, simulation and control of biochemical and medical processes. She has authored over 150 scientific publications, holds an h-index of 26 with more than 2,500 citations, and has a cumulative impact factor exceeding 200. She is listed in the Stanford World's Top 2% Scientists database. She has received 46 awards at international invention exhibitions. She has led or contributed to 38 research projects and has organized special sessions at major international conferences, as well as guest-edited special issues in leading journals.

- **Elvira Popescu** (University of Craiova, Romania)

Title: Opening the Conversation: IEEE Women in Engineering Overview

Short bio: Elvira Popescu is a Full Professor at the Computers and Information Technology Department, University of Craiova, Romania. Her research interests include technology-enhanced learning, adaptive educational systems, learner modeling, computer-supported

collaborative learning, learning analytics, and intelligent and distributed computing. Prof. Popescu also serves as the Chair for the IEEE Women in Engineering Romania Section Affinity Group and is a board member for the IEEE Technical Committee on Learning Technology and the International Association of Smart Learning Environments. She is also a Distinguished Speaker in the IEEE Computer Society Distinguished Visitors Program. She is actively involved in the research community by serving as editor-in-chief for the Smart Learning Environments journal, associate editor for two other journals and serving as a conference chair, program committee chair and track chair for over 20 conferences.

- **Iulia Stamatescu** (National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania)

Title: Women in Engineering: Driving Innovation

Short bio: Iulia Stamatescu is currently an Associate Professor with the Automation and Industrial Informatics Department, Faculty of Automatic Control and Computers, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania. She obtained in 2012 the title of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in System Engineering. Her PhD thesis covered the field of energy efficiency modelling and optimization for datacenters, being partially carried out within an international project at Grenoble Institute of Technology, Grenoble, France. Her research activity revolves around the management and optimization of energy systems and data modelling algorithms based on computational intelligence techniques. Current research interests span the areas of electric vehicles. Since 2009 she is a member of IEEE, currently serving as the Young Professionals Affinity Group Vice-Chair, within the Romania Section.

- **Iulia Ștefan** (Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Title: Mental Representations and Choices

Short bio: Iulia Ștefan is a lecturer at the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, where she teaches courses in technical and engineering disciplines with a focus on innovation and student engagement. She is a recipient of the ANIS Scholarship for Digital Education and a core member of ELARA (The European Laboratory for Pedagogical Action – Research and Student-Centred Learning). She is also an active member of Women in Tech UTCN, promoting diversity and inclusion in engineering and technology.

- **Denisa Șteț** (Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Title: AI Bias and Women's Representation in Engineering

Short bio: Denisa Șteț is full professor at the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca (TUCN), Faculty of Electrical Engineering (FEE), and a senior researcher at the Energy Transition Research Center (EnTReC). Holding a PhD in Electrical Engineering, her research interests lie at the intersection of electromagnetic interference assessment and energy-efficiency technologies for the energy transition. She implemented as a coordinator or team member more than 20 national, European and industry projects focused on decarbonization and innovative energy-efficiency solutions. Recognizing the importance of continuous learning, she designs and leads ECTS-accredited postgraduate programs within TUCN's Long-Life Learning Department (DECIDFR), developed in collaboration with international consortia to upskill energy professionals. Beyond teaching, she has long supported students as student advisor and as FEE's Career Advisor, driving initiatives that improve academic integration, reduce dropout and provide robust career guidance. As a member of the IEEE Women in Engineering and TUCN's "Women in Tech" working group, she advocates for gender equality in engineering by facilitating mentorship, resources and networking

opportunities, striving to create a more balanced and inclusive technology community that benefits everyone.

- **Elena Valcher** (University of Padova, Italy)

Title: Women in STEM: Some Statistics and a Personal View

Short bio: Elena Valcher is Professor of Control Theory at the University of Padova since 2005. Her current research interests include social networks, Boolean control networks, multi-agent systems, and consensus problems. She is (co-)author of approximately 100 journal papers, 18 book chapters, 120 conference papers and 3 textbooks. She served as 2015 IEEE Control Systems Society President and she is currently EUCA President (2024-2025). She is the Founding Editor in Chief of the IEEE Control Systems Letters (2017-2024). She served as Program Chair of the 2012 IEEE CDC, and co-General Chair of the 2022 IEEE CDC. She is an IEEE Fellow (2012-), IEEE CSS Distinguished Member (2011) and IFAC Fellow (2022-). She served as Program Chair for ICSTCC 2023-2025.