



Permanent Mission of  
Montenegro  
to the United Nations  
New York



# STI FORUM

Science, Technology & Innovation for  
the Sustainable Development Goals

Virtual Side Event of the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science Technology  
and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

## Fostering STI Ecosystems for Impact: Enabling Technologies advancing Human infrastructure

May 3, 2021 9:30– 10:45 am EST / 15:30 – 16:45 CEST

[Registration page](#)

**Co-Organizers:** Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the United Nations, the International Telecommunication Union, American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), Engineering for Change, United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth

### Background:

Many of the world's greatest challenges—poverty and hunger, clean water, climate change, among many others—can be powerfully addressed by engineering and technology. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), present tremendous opportunities for radical leaps forward, allowing humans everywhere to thrive and lead healthier and safer lives. New means of communication and data gathering in real time has been empowering community health workers, improving the curriculum in isolated schools, and enabling quicker responses to global health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. As Jeffrey Sachs writes in the Earth Institute's report *How Information and Communications Technology can Accelerate Action on the Sustainable Development Goals*, "ICT has immense potential to speed up and scale—or increase the rate of diffusion of—a very wide range of cutting-edge technologies, applications and platforms across the economy, helping low-income countries to leapfrog to achieve key development milestones while contributing to a growth economy."

The social sector and engineering fields are in a state of evolution and rapid growth fueled by digital connectivity. Solution development and delivery increasingly spans technical disciplines, cultures,

and socio-economic conditions. With the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets less than a decade away, engineers equipped with the necessary training and high-quality information are now, more than ever, needed on the frontline of social change. Mounting evidence, especially during global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrates the critical role that digital platforms and networks play in activating engineering talent and accelerating sustainable solutions.

The potential enabling technology is relational, though; it works within the context of existing projects and cannot generally be delivered by any single stakeholder. Ensuring impact therefore rests on developing high-functioning partnerships with key stakeholders, particularly across the private and public spheres.

At the Sixth Annual UN Multistakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation Forum, Engineering for Change, ASME, and ITU are hosting a session designed to create a better understanding of how enabling technologies can be used to develop and deploy human infrastructure, strengthen stakeholder partnerships, accelerate innovation and contribute to building better through the SDGs.

The programme will incorporate multistakeholder speakers from business, NGOs, government, academia, and cross-sector organizations, as well as front-line entrepreneurs from the communities where projects are being implemented, the event will take an ecosystem approach, integrating lessons learned from the pandemic and yield practical insights.

Opening remarks will be delivered by leadership of the sponsoring organizations and UN advocates, including:

- ASME Executive Director/CEO - Thomas Costabile
- ITU Deputy Secretary-General - Malcolm Johnson
- H.E. Mrs. Milica Pejanović Đurišić, Permanent Representative of Montenegro to the United Nations

Confirmed speakers include:

- Autodesk Foundation, Head of Portfolio & Investment – Jean Shia
- Kenya National Innovation Agency, Chief Executive Officer - Dr. Tonny K. Omwansa
- University of Colorado Boulder, Mortenson Endowed Chair in Global Engineering – Evan Thomas
- ASME, Director of Engineering Global Development and Engineering for Change, President – Iana Aranda
- UN Major Group for Children and Youth Technical Focal Point – Carolina Rojas
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Senior Strategy Advisor to the Director of the Telecommunications Development Bureau and UNICEF Innovation, Alex Wong

**Format:** The event will be held virtually via Zoom Webinar hosted by Engineering for Change.