

## The Panasonic Trust Fellowships

These prestigious awards are tenable on the following Masters courses during 2000:

- Multimedia Technology at the University of Bath.
- Manufacturing Systems Engineering at the University of Bradford.
- Microelectronics Systems Design at Brunel University.
- Cranfield Manufacturing Masters Courses at Cranfield University.
- Environmental Sustainability at the University of Edinburgh.
- Geotechnical Engineering at Heriot-Watt University.
- Environmental Diagnosis at Imperial College.
- Water and Environmental Management at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Renewable Energy and the Environment at the University of Reading.
- Corrosion Science and Engineering at UMIST.
- Engineering for Development at the University of Southampton.
- Energy Systems and the Environment at the University of Strathclyde.
- Water and Environmental Engineering at the University of Surrey.
- Facilities Management at UVVE Bristol.
- Urban Design/Town and Country Planning at UWE Bristol.
- Virtual Manufacturing in Construction and Engineering at the University of Wolverhampton.

## Do you run a Technology Updating Course?

The Panasonic Trust is always keen to expand the number of courses it supports with its awards.

Suitable courses, either full or part-time, can cover any aspect of new technology. Suitable applicants need not be graduates but should have an engineering qualification. Please contact us for further information on funding opportunities.

## Application Information

All enquiries about the Panasonic Trust and its activities should be made to:

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# Panasonic Trust News

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## Sustainable Growth of the Panasonic Fellowships

Little did the Trustees know when they launched the Panasonic Trust Fellowships back in 1998, that they would be creating a monster, in fact something almost akin to Nessie; a scheme almost too good to be true with universal inquisitive appeal!

In fact the interest from university course providers has prompted Trustees to make the second review of the scheme in two years. This has resulted in a further five masters' courses being approved for the 2000 programme. The courses are:

- Environmental Sustainability at the University of Edinburgh.
- Engineering for Development at the University of Southampton.
- Energy Systems and the Environment at the University of Strathclyde.
- Water and Environmental Engineering at the University of Surrey.
- Facilities Management at UWE Bristol.

In announcing the news Robin Bond FREng, Trust Chairman said, "I and the other Trustees are pleased with the warm reception the Fellowship Programme has received from both industry and academia. We knew that specialist training in environmental technology was sought after, but the demand seems to be growing all the time. We have therefore decided to expand the scope of our Fellowships for the coming year by enrolling a further five courses". When questioned on the scale of the expansion to meet what is a very large demand, Bond answered "Only by keeping our application procedures simple, having focussed objectives and restricting the number of courses eligible to put forward candidates, will we be able to sustain a high quality programme".



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## First Panasonic Fellows Honoured

Mr Steve Ushimaru, Managing Director of Panasonic UK Ltd, hosted a celebratory lunch at the end of last year at the company's Bracknell headquarters, to mark the graduation of the first group of Panasonic Trust Fellows. Chairman of Trustees, Robin Bond FREng, joined Mr Ushimaru in congratulating those present with their academic achievements and wished them well as they re-enter industry with their new knowledge and skills. Each Fellow was presented with a certificate by Mr Ushimaru to mark their achievement.

Two of the Fellows present, Tamsin Tweddle and Matthew Palmer, both achieved their MSc's with distinction on the same course, Renewable Energy and the Environment at the University of Reading.

Pictured left to right are: Matthew Palmer, Robin Bond FREng, Tamsin Tweddle, Mr Steve Ushimaru and Timothy Butcher.



# Living in the Panasonic Ethos

A common question asked of altruistic companies and individuals is why do they do what they do and what do they get out of doing it? This has certainly been asked of Panasonic UK Ltd in regard to its involvement with the Panasonic Trust. To understand a company's ethos, who better than the Managing Director to set the record straight. For this issue of Panasonic Trust News, we were privileged to talk with Steve Ushimaru, Managing Director of Panasonic UK Ltd, to seek his views on the work of the Trust and to find out just why the company is so committed to this initiative.

**Q** What's the background to Panasonic's involvement with the Panasonic Trust?

**A** "The company has long understood the importance of taking a positive corporate attitude towards society. This need was first recognised by the founder of the company, Mr Konosuke Matsushita, more than 60 years ago. It's all about recognising that companies have to do more than simply employ people and pay their taxes - though it is also important! What we set out to do is an integral part of those communities in which we are based."

**Q** So where does the Panasonic Trust fit in?

**A** "We firmly believe in promoting educational opportunities and self-development as a means of helping society to progress. As you'd expect from a company like Panasonic, we're also interested in encouraging technology-driven initiatives that can be of benefit to the UK as a whole. The Panasonic Trust is a fine exemplar of this."

**Q** So how did the Panasonic Trust come about?

**A** "In 1984 the company was looking for a way to acknowledge 10 years of manufacturing in the UK. At that time it was readily acknowledged that the development of graduates for the engineering profession was one which was under invested by industry. With the encouragement of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, the company formed a strong association with the then Fellowship of Engineering (forerunner of The Royal Academy of Engineering) and through this relationship the Panasonic Trust was established.



**Q** Has the Panasonic Trust met the company's aspirations?

**A** Without doubt. We've been delighted with the success of the part-time scheme to support engineers taking modular MSc courses, which has now benefited more than 800 people. We know that the scheme has made a real difference to the job performance of the people concerned and to the ultimate competitiveness of their host companies."

**Q** What about the Panasonic Trust Fellowships?

**A** "This has been a really exciting development. When we celebrated our 25th anniversary in the UK we wanted to acknowledge this by further developing the work of the Panasonic Trust. The establishment of the Fellowships has meant that we've been able to offer a higher level of support to a number of well motivated young graduate engineers who are planning to take a full-time MSc course in key technologies linked to sustainable development.

**Q** What about the future?

**A** "For more than 15 years the Panasonic Trust has made a substantial and meaningful contribution to the development of professional engineering in the UK. The concept of continuing professional development is one that is firmly established in the UK and we're pleased that the Panasonic Trust was one of the first manifestations of this philosophy. We look to build upon the firm foundations that have been laid to date to ensure that the Panasonic Trust remains as relevant to professional engineers in the future as it has done since 1984."

We would like to thank Steve Ushimaru for his time and Andrew Clack of Panasonic UK Ltd for arranging this interview.

# Supporting Professional Development at Nottingham Trent

Industrialists Rolls and Royce, Retailers Marks and Spencer, Footballers Shearer and Sherringham, these are all examples of successful partnerships. Now, for the field of professional development, add Nottingham Trent University and the Panasonic Trust. The partnership began when the first edition of Panasonic Trust News was published. In response to an article on the availability of grants for students enrolled on part-time masters courses, John Hoppitt, the Postgraduate Programme Manager in the University's Department of Civil Engineering sent the Trust details of their courses on Construction and Geotechnical Engineering Design and Management. Within four weeks, the Trust was awarding grants to students on both courses. Now, two years later, the current tranche of students includes 16 supported with Trust awards with more applications pending.

Three of these awardees have gone on record to explain how this partnership has benefitted their professional development.

"As a practising engineer, the only realistic opportunity to gain

both academic and professional qualifications without adversely affecting my career, is to undertake studies on a part-time basis. Being run over the weekends, the structure of the course at Nottingham Trent is a great attraction, since my employer does not lose me for anytime during the year. When this is backed up with support from the Panasonic Trust, the situation is simplified further, with a lower personal financial commitment."

Mark Berriman, Principle Engineer, Dunelm Geotechnical & Environmental. (Mark is standing on the left of the picture during a laboratory session)



"As I work for a small company, it would be impossible for them to support me during my course. My options were to either fund the course myself in full or take out a

loan. The Panasonic Trust's contribution to my course fees has allowed me to continue my professional development whilst still working and not getting into massive amounts of debt."

Jane Gidden, Senior Engineering Environmental Geologist, Geotechnical Developments Ltd. (Jane is standing in the right foreground of the picture above, which was taken during a field trip).

"The financial assistance I have received from the Panasonic Trust has been instrumental in enabling me to attend the course. The course itself has been of great benefit both to me personally and also my employers. It is good to know that a fund such as this exists to help the industry in this way"

Catherine Gray, Assistant Engineering Geologist, Ground Investigation & Piling Ltd. (Catherine is standing on the left of the picture taken during a laboratory session).



## Panasonic Trust on the Internet

Congratulations to those who have been able to find us on the world wide web. The Trust's webpage can be found on The Royal Academy of Engineering's website at [www.raeng.org.uk](http://www.raeng.org.uk). In addition to information on the Trust, the page has an on-line application facility for both the Panasonic Trust Awards and the Panasonic Trust Fellowships. Panasonic Trust News is also available on the internet and is published on Panasonic UK Ltd's website at [www.panasonic.co.uk](http://www.panasonic.co.uk).