Engineering and technology are crucial to the UK's economy and the IET is actively engaged in a wide range of engineering and technology-related policy areas. Its 2015 General Election Campaign draws together the main areas of focus for our IET Policy Panels ahead of the UK's General Election. We are calling on our UK members to encourage their own prospective parliamentary candidates to support our call for these important policy changes.

ENERGY

1/ What plans do you have to cut CO₂ emissions in line with recommendations from the United Nations Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change?

Last November’s report from the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change confirmed that climate change is happening and that all major emitting countries need to significantly cut carbon emissions – typically to less than a quarter of present levels by 2050, and eventually to zero if the world is to avoid dangerous climate change.

The IET is calling for the UK to become a clear and influential global leader in climate change mitigation and adaptation, encouraging exports of new low carbon technologies and equipment.

2/ The best way to reduce energy costs is to use less energy. What will you do to improve Britain’s energy efficiency?

Energy efficiency is significantly less expensive than building new electricity generation and will help lower national and individual energy bills. Insulating homes gives people greater comfort, lower bills and energy savings. In urban areas, community heating schemes using Combined Heat and Power can benefit from waste heat from offices, for example, and this shows great potential to help us move away from reliance on gas for heating.

The IET is calling on Government to move energy efficiency up the political agenda – and also support community energy schemes that can provide heating, cooling, electricity production and heat storage, leading to greater overall efficiency and cheaper bills.

MANUFACTURING AND INNOVATION

3/ What will you do to encourage UK ideas and intellectual property to remain in the UK to benefit our economy?

The UK has an excellent science and research base but far too often the output is exploited abroad rather than in the UK. More should be done to help UK businesses – particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) – increase investment across the whole development cycle, scale up ideas for commercial success and create new high-value jobs.

The IET is calling for increased Government support for innovation – including by growing the network of Catapult technology transfer centres and by engaging SMEs.

4/ How will you help SME manufacturers to access government support?

SMEs play a major role in innovation but often lack time and knowledge to access government support schemes. To promote productivity and high-value jobs, Government needs to create local and city-based networks that can advise on support available for SMEs.

The IET is calling for simplified application processes for Government support initiatives to make it easier for SMEs to get the help they need.
The Lobbying Act limits what the IET and its members can say in the run up to the election. We’ve produced some guidance which you can find here: www.theiet.org/lobbying-act

For further information on the IET’s Election Campaign please visit www.theiet.org/election2015

The Institution of Engineering and Technology is registered as a Charity in England and Wales (No. 211014) and Scotland (No. SC038698).