

# Built Environment



## The challenge of the London 2012 Olympic Games

### *Turning students into tomorrow's Built Environment practitioners and champions of energy efficiency*

Early 2012, the IET was approached by the Energy Efficiency Association (USE EFF) and presented with a challenge.

If the Association could secure 100 building design and energy efficiency undergraduates into London during the Olympic Games, secure a venue for a Summer School in London and find accommodation for them, would the IET be able to put the infrastructure designers of the Games in front of the student to tell them how the UK delivered the Infrastructure challenges.

Well the USE Efficiency Association delivered on their part of the bargain, so the pressure was on the IET to do its part. Students from all over Europe had found a field in North London and a spare classroom in a London University and were now keen to learn from the experts.

As the IET was the ODA Sponsor of Sustainable Infrastructure and Ambassador of its learning Legacy operation, we quickly managed to secure contributions to the 2012 Summer School from the Infrastructure contractors; namely Buro Happold, Atkins Global, Laing O'Rourke, Expedition, Arup Associates, SVA, AECOM and DPSP. The students learned a huge amount from the case studies presented by the stakeholders and fed back on their perspective on the approach taken.

But being a Summer School, the contractors pushed back with their own challenge. They challenged the students to take what they have learned in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year at university and what they may have picked up at the summer school where they had to apply their knowledge.

Divided into groups, they were all give different global locations with their own environmental challenges and asked to design a stadium for that region that would be able to feature in a major international sporting event like Games. The presentation fed back by the students not only stunned the IET, they astonished the London 2012 Infrastructure contractors. The talent in the room become obvious.

[Watch the presentations](#)

It is hardly surprising that none of these European students failed to secure jobs the moment they left University last year. They are all successfully employed keeping an active online connection with USE Efficiency and their with the new student members, encouraging their colleagues in their final year.

Daniela Melandri (President of the USE Efficiency Association) said: “The partnership between USE Efficiency and the IET gave a strong added value to the project and has facilitated the interaction between young people and leading market players, allowing them to enhance the skills and expertise required in energy efficiency and the use of renewables.”

Bruce McLelland (IET Built Environment Sector Head) commented “I was astonished at the level of commitment these students possessed. Against all the odds, they arrived in London and gave every waking minute into learning from the experts and applying their knowledge into their presentation as a team. They were living in basic campsite conditions with limited access to IT, yet still pulled it off in a matter of days. Astonishing”

**Call to action:** So the process now starts again. In 2013 the Summer School will be hosted by the university Thessaloniki in Greece. Practitioners in efficient building design and infrastructure construction are invited to engage, participate and influence the Schools programme. Financial supporters of this programme will be recognised enabling the students to participate where funding has not been made available to them. Presentations from sponsors and contributors will be captured and disseminated by the IET and the Guardian Newton Channel. So now the challenge is with you – the industrialist.

For more information, contact Melandri (Director) at [useefficiencyassociation@gmail.com](mailto:useefficiencyassociation@gmail.com) web: [www.useefficiency.eu](http://www.useefficiency.eu)

### **Further Reading on the USE Efficiency Association**

The original project USE EFFICIENCY project ran from June 2009 to January 2012 and was funded by Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE), and deals with energy saving and renewables issues from an educational point of view, rather than a research and application one.

The project solely comprised young people, all under 25, a feature which provided the project with its winning factor and making it such a unique initiative - a project for students, created by students.

The USE Efficiency project has involved ten EU countries, including nine universities and four major companies, and focused on the improvement of energy efficiency in university buildings, together with the establishment of training programmes for university students.

The programme set out to train students as future leaders in energy efficiency, from the first stages of their technical development.

With plans taking shape, the IET's Head of the Built Environment Sector, Bruce McLelland, coordinated the IET's interaction with the project during the London Summer School organisation and now further on. Commenting on the collaboration,

The core of USE Efficiency has been the organisation of the international summer schools training programme, first in Valencia in 2011, under the IEE frame, and then the Summer School in London during the Olympics in 2012. Both events were a great success, providing important employment opportunities for students and giving market leaders the possibility of gathering fresh ideas together with some highly-skilled CVs from the Summer School students.

USE Efficiency today is not just a project, but has evolved into a formal, consolidated, non-profit professional organisation - the USE Efficiency Association - aiming to continue the good work initiated under the EU programme. As Daniela adds: "The Association provides a link between universities and organisations. It's a win-win situation for both sides, who can benefit from the results of the projects and the communication that the involvement guarantees."

The USE Efficiency Association works in close partnership with the IET, the Italian Ministry of Environment, the *Guardian* Newton Channel,, the European Commission and other important Media and institutions in Europe.

Looking to the future, Steve Wilkinson, head of The Guardian Newton Channel added: "The ambition of the Newton Channel is to encourage young engineers and architects to share ideas and to be inspired by real-life case studies. Working with USE Efficiency and the IET during the London 2012 Summer School was an amazing experience, giving us the opportunity to capture both the enthusiasm and inspiration of students who will be the future champions of energy efficiency."



The Summer School 2012 at their tour of the Leadenhall building project with Laing O'Rourke



A group of students from different counties, knuckle down to the challenge set by Industry



The Summer School students were not shy in questioning the industrial presenters. Would they be doing things differently when they are in industry?