

Control systems engineering must be one of the most exciting and rapidly changing industries to be involved in today. Drones, self-driving cars, intelligent robots and 3-D printing are a few applications that captured the general public's imaginations, and made control systems "cool" again. Many of these technologies are already becoming part of our daily lives, just as telecommunication, aviation, motor vehicles and electricity distribution are simply accepted to work, despite being unimaginable without modern and robust control systems, and dedicated engineers underpinning their operation.

SACAC's role in this rapidly evolving environment is to ensure that South Africa remains at the forefront of the emerging technologies in Automation and Control. We continue bringing international events to South Africa, as part of SACAC's affiliation with IFAC. The 18<sup>th</sup> IFAC Symposium on Mining, Minerals and Metal Processing (MMM2019) to be held in Stellenbosch promises to be a highlight on the 2019 conference calendar (see p3 for more details). The IFAC MMM2018 workshop held in Shanghai earlier this year, was attended by 7 South African delegates. South Africa's prominence in this field was once again confirmed, with high quality presentations delivered in plenary-, special- and regular sessions. Locally, SACAC hosted its first Hackathon, attracting a good spread of students and industry participants, and even had an entertaining evening lecture on Optimal control in F1 racing. These events are only possible because of enthusiastic members actively participating in these activities.

As my term of SACAC's president draws to an end, I wish to thank everyone who contributed to raising South Africa's profile in this space – be it through organising events, participating in workshops, interacting with international delegates, presenting papers, braving (and enjoying) foreign cultures or serving on committees. It has been a privilege leading this organisation, and working with such a diverse and enthusiastic EXCO. I wish all our members a well-deserved rest over the festive season, and trust that everyone will return next year with new enthusiasm for the exciting challenges ahead.