

# TECHNICAL STAFF CONFERENCE 2025

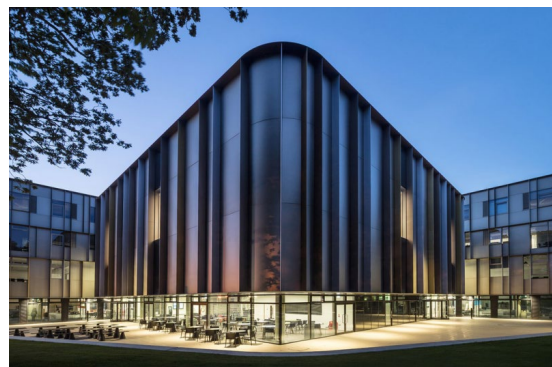


KEY SPONSOR:



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Technicians'  
Network

# Technical Staff Conference 2025

This conference is brought to you by the Kent Technician Network and the Eastern ARC Technicians' Network

**Date:** Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**Time:** 09:00-16:30

**Venue:** [University of Kent, Sibson Building, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7PE](#)

**Introduction:** The Technical Staff Conference brings together two established technical networks for a day of collaboration and networking. This full-day event is hosted by the University of Kent for technical staff from across the six universities that make up these networks (the universities of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church, Greenwich, Essex, East Anglia and Sussex).

**Audience:** This event is for IT, Technical Services, Library Services, anyone who has a technical role and interested colleagues. A warm welcome and invitation has been extended to members of the London and South East Technician Commitment Initiative Network and Norwich Research Park for this event.

**Brief:** The conference is centred around the idea that collaboration inspires innovation through diversity of the individual coming together and creating. The event aims to recognise, showcase, and celebrate the wide range of technical roles and work that enables successful and impactful education, research and innovation to take place. The day will celebrate successes and collaborations. The conference provides a forum for discussion, networking, workshops and communication between technical staff and interested colleagues.

**Thank you:** Thank you for registering for the Kent Technician Network and Eastern ARC Technicians' Network Technical Staff Conference 2025. We are delighted to welcome a wide range of professionals from across the networks and further afield.

A huge thank you to RS for being our Key Sponsor for the conference and to our exhibitors, speakers and workshop leads, whose contributions have made this event possible. A special thank you goes out to our host, the University of Kent, and its dedicated teams. Their hard work and hospitality have been crucial to the success of this event.

Thank you to everyone who has helped make this event happen. It would not have been possible without your knowledge, expertise, support, guidance, experience, services, engagement and contributions.

# Technical Staff Conference Agenda

**09:00-09:30**

Atrium (ground floor)

**Registration and Refreshments**

**09:30-09:45**

Lecture Theatre 3  
(first floor)

**Transition to Lecture Theatre 3 and Updates**

**09:45-10:00**

Lecture Theatre 3  
(first floor)

**Welcome**

Professor Georgina Randsley de Moura, University of Kent Acting Vice-Chancellor

**10:00-10:30**

Lecture Theatre 3  
(first floor)

**Keynote Speaker – Technician Commitment**

Clare Stevenson, Associate lead for the Technician Commitment and Head of Science Coordination and Research Culture at the John Innes Centre

**10:30-10:50**

Atrium (ground floor)

**Break and Refreshments**

Networking, exhibitors and posters

**10:55-11:25**

Lecture Theatre 3  
(first floor)

**Education Technical Professional Career Pathway**

Dr Ian Tidmarsh and Dr Sara Bacon, National Technician Development Centre Leads

**11:30-12:00**

Lecture Theatre 3  
(first floor)

**Technical Platform for Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (T-PIKE)**

T-PIKE Programme Manager and Knowledge Exchange Officers

**12:00-13:00**

Various locations

**Special Interest Group Tours**

**13:00-13:45**

Atrium (ground floor)

**Lunch**

Networking, exhibitors and posters

**13:45-14:25**

Lecture Theatre 3  
(first floor)

**Celebrating Success; Technical Staff Stories**

Diana Suciu and Andrew Langley (Kent), Breeshea Robinson (CCCU), Joe Munro (Essex) and Omar Dawaba (Kent)

**14:30-15:30**

Various locations

**Workshop Sessions**

Sign-up to two 30-minute workshop sessions

**15:30-15:50**

Atrium (ground floor)

**Break and Refreshments**

Networking, exhibitors and posters

**15:50-16:20**

Lecture Theatre 3  
(first floor)

**Technical Voice**

Jo Scamp, University of Kent Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)

**16:20-16:30**

Lecture Theatre 3  
(first floor)

**Announcements and Close of Day**

Phil Marsh, University of Kent Head of Technical Services

## Special Interest Group Tours

Use this time to understand how Kent technical staff work, share insights with each other about best practices, challenges faced within your areas, ask questions and network. Why not consider creating a special interest group and connect with like-minded technical staff from across all 6 universities. All buildings are a short walk from the Sibson building and have step free access, lifts and toilet facilities.

1. Library Tour and Special Collections Gallery Exhibition	Templeman Library
2. Special Collections and Archive and Special Collections Gallery Exhibition	Templeman Library
3. Electronic and Mechanical Engineering Labs and Facilities	Jennison Building
4. Facilities: Light Gas Gun, NMR, Taphonomy site & ballistics	Ingram Building, Stacey Building and Taphonomy site
5. Psychology Facilities and Labs	Keynes Building
6. Arts & Drama Facilities	Jarman studios 1 and 2, Jarman control room, Forrest studio (Elliot), Aphra theatre and Lumley theatre
7. Tour of the IT Data Centre	Cornwallis South Building

## Workshop Sessions (sessions will run twice so please choose two sessions)

1. Trusted Research (Maria Miller, Kent)	<b>Seminar room 3</b> (room 102, first floor)
2. Mental Wellbeing Session (East Kent Minds)	<b>Seminar room 4</b> (room 137, first floor)
3. Getting the most out of your NTDC and HEaTED membership (Dr Sara Bacon, N.T.D.C.)	<b>Seminar Room 2</b> (room G.22, ground floor)
4. Career Journey Discussion Panel (Facilitated by Jo Scamp, Kent)	<b>Lecture Theatre 3</b> (first floor)
5. Strategies to Future Proof Careers (Joan Ward, I.S.T.)	<b>Seminar Room 1</b> (room G.19, ground floor)
6. Breaking Boundaries for Research Technical Professional returners (Daphne Jackson Trust)	<b>Seminar Room 5</b> (room 136, first floor)
7. Interactive Creative Icebreaker Session (Josh Lithgow, Kent)	<b>MBA Suite</b> (room 101, first floor)
8. Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library (Fawn Todd, Canterbury Cathedral)	<b>Lecture Theatre 2</b> (first floor)
9. T-PIKE – How to Get Involved in the Programme (T-PIKE Operational Team)	<b>Seminar Room 6</b> (room 135, first floor)

## Keynote Speaker



### **Dr Clare Stevenson CSci FRSC**

The Technician Commitment - Delivering recognition, visibility, career progression and sustainability for technical roles.

Having worked in a range of technical roles in industry and academia, including technician, researcher and facility manager, I am passionate about the visibility, recognition and sustainability of technical careers and their importance in research institutes. In my current senior management role at the John Innes Centre (JIC), I support the Director in delivering the Institute's strategy and vision, and lead for research culture. I also have an external role as Associate Lead for the Technician Commitment.

In my presentation I will highlight how the Technician Commitment has played a key role in changing the culture for technical staff in research and higher education and highlight new opportunities for technical staff available through the Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy.

## Guest Speakers



### **Dr Ian Tidmarsh**

Ian has 10 years' experience in the development and implementation of career pathways for technical staff. He has been the National Technician Development Centre's Career Pathway Lead since the Centre's establishment in 2018. Prior to that, Ian was a Project Lead for the Technical Development & Modernisation Project (2014-2017) delivering the Higher Education Technical Taxonomy (HETT) Framework. This is regularly updated and has been used by 30 universities to date.

Ian is also Deputy Director of Technical Services at Manchester Metropolitan University with responsibility for both strategy and operations. Before moving to Manchester Met., Ian held the roles of Head of Operations (Collaborative Teaching Laboratory), College Infrastructure Manager and Technical Manager at the University of Birmingham. Ian worked in academic roles at the University of Sheffield before moving into Professional Services.



### **Dr. Sara Bacon**

Centre Manager, National Technician Development Centre

As Centre Manager for the National Technician Development Centre; Sara works with a core team and specialist advisers to help Universities to support and develop their technical staff. Including courses, CPD and networking events, career pathways framework and a bespoke skills, roles and responsibilities survey.

After completing a PhD in Bioinorganic Chemistry Sara moved into industry working for Croda Chemicals as a research chemist, then as a product manager in the research and development section. Sara then became a Data Manager where she managed a team on the implementation of a new SAP system to increase efficiency and improve productivity within the company.

Sara has also worked in consultancy developing surveys, recruitment assessment for the police, in teaching, recruitment and outreach roles across the Higher Education sector, including project management and supervision of a laboratory facility.

## Key Sponsor and Exhibitors

We are delighted to have a variety of professional bodies in attendance. They will have a table/stand showcasing the opportunities and support they have on offer. Find out about the organisations and the opportunities on offer. They can be found in the Atrium on the ground floor of the Sibson Building.

- [Key Sponsor: RS](#)

RS empowers engineers and students globally with over 750,000 industrial and electronics products in stock, access to 2,500 supply partners, and their cutting-edge technologies. Their initiatives, like the RS Student Fund support ambitious projects and foster innovation. RS collaborates with educational institutions to prepare the next generation for future challenges.

- [The National Technician Development Centre \(NTDC\)](#)

The National Technician Development Centre aims to provide organisations with the support needed to ensure the delivery of high quality and sustainable technical services across all sectors.

- [HEaTED](#)

HEaTED is a leading organisation for Higher Education and Technician Educational Development, providing opportunities for the technical workforce to engage with CPD and training, as well as delivering networking events for all specialities.

- [AdvancedHE HEA Fellowships](#)

Advance HE is a member-led charity of and for the sector that works with partners across the globe to improve higher education for staff, students and society. They are experts in higher education, with a particular focus on teaching and learning, governance, leadership development and equality, diversity and inclusion.

- **[Science Council](#)**

Through the Science Council's collective drive to uphold interdisciplinary standards they inspire and empower the science workforce to strive towards professional excellence. Their ambition is to see a diverse and growing science profession that is trusted, respected and is equipped to deliver national ambitions.

- **[Institute of Science and Technology \(IST\)](#)**

The IST reach out to provide focused support for technical practitioners, specialists and managers in the creative, digital, AI, engineering and science technologies, working across a broad range of sectors including industry, local authorities, schools, FE, HE, research/analytical/health facilities, government departments and organisations in the UK and overseas.

- **[Institution of Engineering and Technology \(IET\)](#)**

The IET inspire, inform and influence the global engineering community to engineer a better world. As a diverse home across engineering and technology, they share knowledge that helps make better sense of the world in order to solve the challenges that matter. It's why they are uniquely placed to champion engineering.

- **[The Templeman Library at the University of Kent](#)**

Come and browse our guides about the services that we provide to our Undergrad and Postgrad students and our Research staff. We are responsible for a vast collection of digital and physical resources in the library. Chat to our staff and help yourselves to some of our freebies.

- **[The Daphne Jackson Trust](#)**

The Daphne Jackson Trust supports research returners who have taken a career break for caring, health or family reasons. The Trust facilitates research and research technical professional fellowships, offers fellows individually tailored training, educates employers about returner needs, and influences policy. By empowering returners, we help them overcome the barriers resulting from a career break and reignite their careers in research.

## Posters

Posters will be displayed on poster boards on the first floor landing open areas.

Technical staff from across the Kent Technician Network and the Eastern ARC Technicians' Network have submitted posters for the conference around the theme of 'collaboration'. This is a great opportunity to see the successes and collaborations of others, network, build new opportunities for collaborations and share in best practice.

## Good to know

### Quiet spaces

We have two meeting rooms available to you on the third floor of the Sibson building (rooms 301 & 361). If you take either of the two lifts to the third floor, you will come out facing one of these meeting rooms. They are located in the corner and offer a large space to relax in, to take a call away from the hustle and bustle of the conference or for any other requirement whereby a quiet space is necessary.

### Break times, lunch and everything in between!

**Refreshments:** Refreshments will be provided throughout the day along with a buffet style lunch. Any dietary requirements indicated to us, when you registered for this event, will be catered for.

**Registration, breaks & lunch:** These times during the day are an opportunity to network, talk to our exhibitors to see how they can support you and your career, take a break, grab some refreshments, build new opportunities for collaborations and view the posters that technical staff from across the Kent Technician Network and the Eastern ARC Technicians' Network have submitted for the conference around the themes of 'collaboration' and 'successes'. This is a great opportunity to see the successes and collaborations of others and share in best practice.

**Open spaces:** The Sibson building has large open spaces with soft seating on the ground and first floor for you to relax in.



Alternatively, you can sit outside and enjoy the outdoor space that is available to you. You are welcome to take a wander around our beautiful [campus](#).

### Onsite Campus Accommodation – Bed & Breakfast:

All rooms are equipped with bed linen, towels, tea/coffee making facilities along with an en-suite. Guests enjoy complimentary free Wi-Fi, parking and a delicious breakfast served close by.

Prices:

- Single ensuite B&B = £60/night
- Double ensuite B&B = £90/night



**Booking Link:** [Book a holiday or short break in Kent / University of Kent](#)

**Contact:** E: [conferences@kent.ac.uk](mailto:conferences@kent.ac.uk) / T : 01227 828000

**Use this Event Code when booking:** tech24

## Getting Here

The Canterbury Campus has excellent transport links. We are easily accessible via the motorway network, local bus services and rail links – and we're just one hour from London by high-speed rail. [Get directions for getting here by car, rail, bus, or on foot, and to view a map of campus.](#)

## Parking

[Please click here to find out about visitor parking at the University of Kent.](#)

[For specific information about parking at the Sibson Building, please visit the Accessible website.](#) There are accessible parking bays across campus for which a blue badge should be clearly displayed.

Those who have indicated that they require onsite parking, when signing up to the conference, will be provided with instructions on allocated parking.

## Using the hashtag:

The conference hashtag is **#TechNetCon25**

Please use this hashtag in this format, using the mixed upper- and lower-case text, to ensure it is accessible for screen readers.

## Sustainability

To minimise paper waste this programme is available digitally to all delegates. A physical reference copy is available throughout the conference at the registration desk.

## Feedback

Please use our [feedback form](#) to tell us what you think about the Technical Staff Conference.

## Conference Facilities

You can find out more about who the Sibson Building was named after [here](#).

Please see [AccessAble](#) for independent accessibility information for the Sibson Building. There is a [Kent webpage](#) available showing the location of the Sibson building on campus along with room specifications. The following spaces have been booked for the conference:

- Sibson Atrium (ground floor)
- Lecture Theatres 2 & 3 (first floor)
- Seminar Rooms 1-2 (ground floor)
- Seminar Rooms 3-6 (first floor)
- MBA Suite (first floor)
- Meeting room 301 – quiet space (third floor)
- Meeting room 361 – quiet space (third floor)

### Lecture theatres and workshop session rooms

- The following spaces are equipped with hearing assistance technology:
  - Lecture Theatres 1-3
  - Seminar rooms 1-6
- All booked spaces have step free access options.

### Toilets

Male, female and accessible toilets (gender neutral) are available on all floors of the Sibson Building.

## Got a Question?

If there is anything you want to ask us about this event, that we haven't covered here, please let us know by emailing [TechnicianCommitment@kent.ac.uk](mailto:TechnicianCommitment@kent.ac.uk).