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FIEI, FIHT, FConsE**CHIEF EXECUTIVE****Martin Powell****EDITORIAL****HEAD OF PUBLISHING**  
**Lee Baldwin****MANAGING EDITOR****Robin Jones**  
t: +44 (0) 20 7201 9822  
e: robin.jones@istructe.org**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT****Ian Farmer**  
t: +44 (0) 20 7201 9121  
e: ian.farmer@istructe.org**ADVERTISING****DISPLAY SALES**  
t: +44 (0) 20 7880 7632  
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International HQ  
47-58 Bastwick Street  
London EC1V 3PS  
United Kingdom  
t: +44 (0)20 7235 4535  
e: mail@istructe.orgThe Institution of Structural Engineers  
Incorporated by Royal Charter  
Charity Registered in England and Wales number  
233392 and in Scotland number SC038263**Ed Clark** *Guest Editor***Tim Ibell** *Guest Editor*

# An unprecedented era of opportunity

**YOU MUST HAVE WONDERED**, probably increasingly, what the profession of structural engineering will look like in future. The authors of the papers in this special issue certainly have. They provide a glimpse into some of the possibilities which lie around the corner for us. These are fabulous and inspiring papers, and we encourage you to read them all. In fact, these 14 were selected from over 100 high-calibre submissions.

An overwhelming response which shows the huge strength of feeling and breadth of views around this topic. Thank you to everyone who submitted.

This eclectic array of papers maps out options for various interesting journeys of opportunity. Quite some journeys they are too. We believe passionately that we are entering an unprecedented era of opportunity for innovative structural engineering. This is a renaissance period for our profession. Seldom have our skills been more in demand than in responding to the acute embodied-carbon issues associated with our climate emergency.

Luckily, in this era of increasing carbon-related design priorities, we have extraordinary digital tools to help us. These tools, combined with new methods of construction and an expanding palette of structural materials, provide us with new possibilities at exactly the right time, when the fingers are beginning to point at us to reduce the carbon footprint of our structures.

Only we can drive an essential cultural change in structural material use, so eloquently articulated from various standpoints in many of the papers in this issue. This change will require us to adapt and to have the courage to embrace disruption. Some of the papers highlight the new skills that we will need to develop and the aptitudes and talents that we need to nurture in the engineers of tomorrow.

We're also urged to value empathy, creativity and collaboration skills as much as our technical capability. To acknowledge that a broader outlook is required to be influential in addressing the future challenges that society faces.

This sums up what this special issue is all about: articulation of a fast-

changing landscape culturally for our profession, coupled with various approaches which can help us to lead the design of a built environment which touches gently on our temporarily borrowed resources.

**Ed Clark** *MEng, CEng, FStructE, MICE* is a Director at Arup in London, UK and outgoing chair of the Institution's Structural Futures Committee.

**Tim Ibell** *BSc(Eng), PhD, CEng, FREng, FStructE, FICE, FHEA* is Professor of Structural Engineering at the University of Bath, UK and chairs the Institution's Structural Awards Judging Panel.

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