

News Release

Tribology industrialist takes the Gold Medal

Esteemed engineer presented with highest honour in his field

15 December

A Greek engineering scientist who developed a new theory in the 1980s, has been awarded a gold medal for his work by the Tribology Trust and administered by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMEchE).

Professor Eustathios Ioannides is an internationally acknowledged expert in the field of tribology, an area of science focusing on the study of friction, wear and lubrication, and his achievements have now been recognised by the Tribology Trust, part of the IMechE. Tribology is the study of what happens when bodies rub together and it is incorporated into our everyday lives, from how shoes grip the ground to designing safe car tyres. The medal is the highest accolade in the world relating to tribology.

The professor, originally from Athens and based in both the Netherlands and the UK, is best known in the engineering world for his development of a theory for 'rolling contact fatigue', which was considered worldwide as a supreme scientific achievement when it was published in 1984. The theory accurately predicts the life of machinery, including helping to stop their failure through flaws on the surfaces. The industry universally accepted the importance of this theory.

Professor Ioannides' early accomplishments include a Masters Degree in mechanical and electrical engineering at the Technical University of Athens and another in applied mechanics, followed by a PhD, at Imperial College London. In 1981 he joined SKF, a leading global supplier of products for rolling bearings, seals, mechatronics, services and lubrication systems, as a Senior Engineer. He has since risen up the ranks to Group Director for Product R&D and he regularly frequents as a visiting professor for the Mechanical Engineering department of Imperial College London, his old stomping ground.

Professor Ioannides said: "Tribology is an important area of scientific and technical knowledge, not least for the role it can play in energy-saving, the urgent issue of our times. I feel highly honoured that my peers have considered me for this prestigious award."

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Dr Jost, Chairman of the Tribology Trust and Fellow of the IMechE, commended the professor as a worthy winner: "Professor Ioannides is an outstanding person who has succeeded in combining the theory, technology and application of Tribology. In doing so he has achieved world recognition and this award honours his success."

The Gold Medal will be presented to Professor Ioannides in early 2009, at a prestigious awards ceremony.

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Notes to Editors

- The Tribology Trust Awards Committee consists of tribology experts and senior people of the IMechE, The Institution of Electrical Engineers, the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, the Royal Aeronautical Society, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and the Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR).
- The award is decided on the information contained in the nomination, together with that contained in the replied to confidential enquiries made by the Awards Secretariat from past medal winners and other distinguished experts in the area of tribology.
- The Gold Medal, the principal award of the trust, was the idea of Sir Richard Otto Clarke, then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Technology. In 1968 an anonymous donor made £10,000 available for the furtherance of tribology. Sir Richard felt that rather than his Department's tribology activities using his money, it should serve a wider purpose.
- The Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE) was established in 1847 and has some of the world's greatest engineers in its history books. It currently has around 80,000 members in 120 countries representing mechanical engineers involved in a diversity of fields such as the automotive, rail, aerospace, medical, power and construction industries to name a few. Visit www.imeche.org for more information.
- Media are welcome to attend and take photographs at sessions issued by the IMechE Press Office on 020 7304 6888 or email media@imeche.org.uk