



## SPT newsletter

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## 1. President's Column

Dear fellow philosophers of technology,

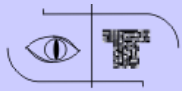
As we move into a new year, we look back to the year that passed and we look forward to the new year which is still largely unknown to us. I hope that 2010 was a good year for you, and that 2011 will bring many good things. As I look back to 2010, it occurs to me that many of its major news stories related to events that in some way threatened people's security or to efforts to improve it. These include, for example, the earthquake in Haiti, the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, the mining accident in Chile, the publication of internal U.S. reports on Wikileaks, the European sovereign debt crisis and steps to remedy it, and the Cancun agreement on climate change. Security is a major concern of ours. It is being threatened in many ways, and we work vigorously to protect it.

In many of these stories, technology plays a central role. Technology can cause or enable breaches in security, as in the Gulf spill or in the Wikileaks publications, but it may also protect our security, as in new technologies developed to combat climate change or to stop the Gulf spill. Given the importance of security in today's world, and given the central role of technology, it is only fitting that the theme of the 2011 conference of the Society for Philosophy is "Technology and Security". As I write these words, over 160 abstracts have already been submitted for it. In spite of the budget cuts facing universities all over the world (European universities are being hit hard right now), it is good to know that so many people still see a way to attend our newest SPT conference. The organizers at the University of North Texas have been working hard to make it a great success. I look forward, therefore, to seeing many of you at SPT 2011, May 26-29 at Denton, Texas.

Sincerely,

Philip Brey  
SPT president

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## 2. Announcement from Techné

Dear all,

We have a change in the editorial staff. Peter Paul Verbeek has stepped down as an Editor due to personal reasons. Ibo van de Poel has joined the staff as an Editor.

Techné, the official journal of the Society for Philosophy and Technology, welcomes submissions from all areas of research in philosophy and technology. Please consider us as a publishing outlet for your work .

Kind regards,

Joseph Pitt

PS. For scholars in developing countries who wish to augment their library's holding, 5 complete sets of the journal Perspectives on Science; historical, philosophical, social, are available gratis, first come first served. If you are interested, please contact

Joe Pitt email: [jcpitt@vt.edu](mailto:jcpitt@vt.edu)

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## 3. Techné: cfp

Techné: Research in Philosophy & Technology, the journal of the Society for Philosophy and Technology, is currently welcoming submissions of all styles and approaches in philosophy of technology. The editorial stance of Techné is ideologically neutral. There is, however, a unifying theme: a focus on technology, particular technologies, modern or traditional, worldwide, or on social and ethical problems associated with particular technologies. Techné aims at being the platform for presenting novel developments and results in academic research on this theme. We therefore seek rigorous, seminal, interesting, creative work and eagerly solicit work from those in fields outside philosophy as long as they offer philosophical perspective.

Submissions will be blind refereed by at least two readers. It is our expectation that authors will be provided with critiques, where, in the judgment of the editors they are deemed helpful. We also seek to have a turn-around time of two months, although this is subject to the cooperation of our referees. We construe philosophy of technology broadly, and we are dedicated to fostering the highest standards in what is becoming a diverse field of study. We



hope you will consider submitting your work to Techné. Submissions and questions can be directed by email to [technejournal@gmail.com](mailto:technejournal@gmail.com). If you would like to read past issues of Techné for free, please visit our Ejournal, <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/SPT/>. Techné is currently published by the Philosophy Documentation Center and can be found online at: <http://secure.pdcnet.org/techne/toc>

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## **4. Conferences, Workshops, and Lectures**

### **SPT 2011 Technology and Security**

#### **17th International Conference of the Society for Philosophy and Technology**

*May 26-29, 2011, University of North Texas, Denton, TX, USA*

*<https://spt2011.unt.edu/> [spt2011@unt.edu](mailto:spt2011@unt.edu)*

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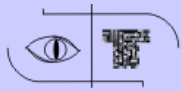
### **Computer Ethics Philosophical Enquiry (CEPE) 2011**

*CEPE/2011 is hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and will take place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, from May 31 to June 3.*

Crossing Boundaries: Ethics in Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Relations will provide an opportunity for researchers and students to discuss current ethical and philosophical issues related to information technology from an international and interdisciplinary perspective. The CEPE conference series is recognized as one of the premier international events on computer and information ethics attended by delegates from all over the world.

Papers will focus on such topics as:

- Internet Governance
- E-waste
- Intercultural Ethics
- Professional Ethics
- International Ethics, Law and Policy Issues
- Cybercrime, Cyberwarfare, Cyberterrorism and Security
- Internet Research Ethics
- Intellectual Property



- Privacy and Surveillance
- Agency, Autonomy and Trust in Computing Systems
- Accessibility, Inclusion and Digital Divide
- Bioinformatics
- Library Ethics and Intellectual Freedom
- Artificial Intelligence, Agents, Embedded Systems and Artificial Life
- Ethics, Grids and Clouds
- Ethics in Information Architecture and Design

Extended abstracts of 2000 words are due by 15 January 2011 and should be sent to [jjmauger@uwm.edu](mailto:jjmauger@uwm.edu)

For full details, please see: <http://inseit.net/cepe2011/>

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### **McLuhan's Philosophy of Media Centennial Conference** *26-28 October 2011 - Brussels*

Keynote Speakers:

Eric McLuhan, Robert K. Logan, Paul Levinson, Graham Harman, Peter-Paul Verbeek

<http://www.mcluhancentennial.eu>

Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980): media theorist, cultural critic, provoker. Undoubtedly influential. Pitching phrases like 'the medium is the message' and 'the global village,' McLuhan rose to stardom in the 1960s, only to see his fame decay during the last decade of his life. Since the early 1990s however, his ideas have been gradually rediscovered by academics and pop culture alike. The digital revolution made him, retrospectively, a quite accurate analyst of the information era, even a visionary in the eyes of some. Within communication studies, cultural studies, sociology, and philosophy, his insights remain fertile ground for anyone trying to understand the interactions of humans, technologies, and media environments.

In 2011, McLuhan would have celebrated his 100th birthday. A perfect moment to look back as well as ahead. During this interdisciplinary conference, we will discuss McLuhan's ideas from different perspectives and traditions. At the same time we wish to highlight an aspect of McLuhan that until now has been underexposed: his philosophy of media. Inasmuch as he reflected upon the workings and forms of media, McLuhan truly was a philosopher of



technology, very much in the style of contemporary Anglo-American philosophers of technology: weaving together ontology, phenomenology, critique, and cultural observations into an eclectic patchwork bent on understanding media dynamics. And “media,” in McLuhan's sense, could be anything made by humans, ranging from cars over political systems to ideas. Throughout this centennial celebration, we seek to investigate McLuhan's “media philosophy,” in particular its relation to, relevance for, and place in philosophy and media studies. More specifically, but not exhaustively, the following topics could be discussed:

- McLuhan's media theory and its relevance in the context of today's media research
- General concepts in McLuhan's theory of media, e.g., causality, rationality, spatiality, temporality, corporeality, extension
- “Is the medium still the message in the 21st century?”
- Metaphysics in McLuhan
- “Technologies-as-Extension” theories
- McLuhan's use/critique of logic
- Parallels and connections between McLuhan's media theory and other philosophical or philosophically inspired schools, e.g., phenomenology, structuralism, Thomism, idealism, linguistics
- The scope of McLuhan's media analysis
- McLuhan's interpretation and reading of philosophers and writers, e.g., Francis Bacon, Vico, Aristotle, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Shakespeare, the Bible
- The relevance and usability of the 'tetrad'

Since we aim at an interdisciplinary conference, we welcome contributions from all academic fields.

A selection of the presented papers will be published afterwards.

Individual paper proposals: please send an abstract of no more than 300 words, prepared for blind review, to [info@mcluhancentennial.eu](mailto:info@mcluhancentennial.eu).

Panel proposals should include:

- \* an appropriate panel title
- \* a general abstract of no more than 300 words, prepared for blind review
- \* an abstract from each panelist, of no more than 150 words, prepared for blind review
- \* the names and affiliations of the panelists and panel chair

Please direct proposals to [info@mcluhancentennial.eu](mailto:info@mcluhancentennial.eu).

Submission deadline: April 1st, 2011.

More information:

Yoni Van Den Eede – Department of Philosophy and Moral Sciences – Free University of Brussels - [info@mcluhancentennial.eu](mailto:info@mcluhancentennial.eu).



<http://www.mcluhacentennial.eu>

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## **33rd Annual Humanities and Technology Association Conference**

**Bowie State University, Bowie, MD**

*13–15 October 2011*

THE HUMANITIES AND TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION is an interdisciplinary scholarly society that explores the impact of technology on human life from a broad range of perspectives. We welcome papers that investigate the cultural interaction of the humanities, science, engineering, and technology.

While progress in science, engineering, and technology can benefit the individual as well as society at large, it also has the power to be detrimental. Modern technologies are capable of redefining identity, the nature of social and political bonds, as well as plundering our planet's resources. In the 21st century, survival and sustainability on all fronts require that we address the latest scientific and technological trends with an open mind so as to increase public awareness. We invite scholars from all disciplines to help us articulate a broad range of inquiries, reflections, and investigations into the interface between technology and the world at large.

Papers and panel suggestions will be arranged according to the following tracks:

**PHILOSOPHICAL, POLITICAL, AND ETHICAL DIMENSIONS:** topics focused on how technology impacts the sense of being human; the environment; political participation and democratic governance; sustainability; power and global equality

**TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL LIFE:** topics dealing with questions such as: does technology enable new/destroy old forms of social life; advance/hinder gender equality; raise/diminish standards of living and economic well-being; suggest/force human adaptations to technological environments?

**REPRESENTATIONS OF TECHNOLOGY:** the manifold interactions of art and technology; aesthetic and artistic accounts of and reactions to the destruction of old/creation of new technologies

**TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION:** topics focused on the broader interface between technology and pedagogy; technology, education, and the classroom

Please submit an abstract (not to exceed 250 words) by 31 March 2011 to: Dr. George Sochan ([GSochan@bowiestate.edu](mailto:GSochan@bowiestate.edu)) and state for which track you are submitting your paper.

The Humanities and Technology Association was established in 1978 to promote interdisciplinary interchanges among the humanities and scientific and technological domains and disciplines. The HTA sponsors both a journal, the Humanities and Technology Review ([www.htronline.weebly.com](http://www.htronline.weebly.com)), and an annual conference ([www.humanitiesandtechnology.org](http://www.humanitiesandtechnology.org)). The conference serves as a venue for the promotion and understanding of the cultural interactions of the humanities, science, engineering, and



technology and for defining how humanistic concerns interface with technological achievements and advances.

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## **Nanotechnologies : towards a shift in the scale of ethics?**

*Université Libre de Bruxelles (Brussels, 4-6 April 2011)*

Nanotechnologies are operating at the nanometre scale, which is the scale of DNA, proteins, viruses, but also atoms, which we are now capable of manipulating in order to create new materials and new objects. At this scale, living and lifeless are both involved in the same research processes. The scope of nanotechnologies is thus inevitably multidisciplinary and their fields of application are strongly diversified and open.

How do nanotechnologies influence the way philosophy and ethics are constructed in order to apprehend the specific issues at stake as well as the ones associated with the convergence of nanotechnologies with biotechnologies, information technologies or cognitive sciences? This international conference will try to answer this question through the development of four main topics.

### **1. Fundamental ethical and philosophical issues associated with nanotechnologies**

The existence of nanotechnologies in itself as well as their applications lead to renew the reflection about the notions of border and opposition – between nature and artefact, object and subject, living and lifeless. More generally nanotechnologies stimulate epistemological, metaphysical and ethical thinking as they question the relationships between freedom of research and the notions of responsibility, precaution or prudence in the Aristotelian sense.

### **2. Risks associated with nanotechnologies**

The recent development of nanotechnologies lead to question the validity of the traditional concept of technological risk. In spite of its rich complexity, it is not sure that this concept is sufficient for grasping the specificity of risks associated with nanotechnologies – particularly symbolical risks, which threaten fundamental anthropological categories. Moreover, the invisibility of nanotechnologies stimulates the imagination. Hence, the notion of risk perception is here central. The analysis of risk of nanotechnologies is necessarily associated with a reflection about expertise, responsibility, but also sustainable development and the precautionary principle.

### **3. The impact of nanotechnologies in the health field**

Public health requires a careful evaluation of positive impacts and potentially harmful effects



of nanotechnologies. Indeed, nanomedicine could be more efficient and precise than traditional medicine for detecting pathologies or for medication dosage and administering. However, we can worry about the success of posthumanist ideologies, which aim – in an elitist perspective – at transforming the body or influencing the thinking processes, the affects and the behaviours of individuals. Likewise nanoimplants appear to be ambivalent insofar as, in spite of a better medical tracking, they allow to control individuals or to use their information for non-therapeutic ends.

#### 4. The management of nanotechnologies in the European Union and at the international level

The European Union is adopting an original approach to the development of nanotechnologies. It differs from the American perspective expressed in the report *Converging Technologies for Improving Human Performance* of the National Science Foundation insofar as the European approach does not associate transhumanist ends with the development of converging technologies. Another European specificity lies in the role of the precautionary principle in the management of nanotechnologies. These are the first milestones of an ethical framework for nanotechnologies at the European or international level.

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### **14th Congress of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science** *Nancy, France, 19-26 July, 2011*

Website: <http://www.clmps2011.org/>

Special Theme: Logic and Science Facing New Technologies

For the first time, LMPS - one of the world's largest philosophy conferences - has chosen a special theme, and has devoted an entire section to philosophical issues regarding technology. As Gerhard Heinzmann, chair of the organizing committee, puts it on the conference website:

"It is our hope that devoting a series of plenary lectures, symposia and special sessions to the theme of 'Logic and science facing new technologies', will enable philosophers and logicians to help deepen our understanding of the most promising orientations in science and even help promote future advances in human civilization."



The advisors for the section, Anthonie Meijers (Eindhoven), Sven Ove Hansson (Stockholm), Wybo Houkes (Eindhoven) and Susan Sterrett (Carnegie Mellon), would like to call upon the SPT community to contribute to fulfilling this hope, by submitting their contributions. We especially welcome proposals for symposia of 3 to 6 speakers. Guidelines for such proposals, as well as for individual contributed papers, may be found at:

<http://www.clmps2011.org/en/registration.html> (scroll down to “Submission Guidelines”)

For further information about the program, financial support for participants and practical matters, please visit the Congress website.

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### **2011 HDCA conference: ‘Innovation, Development & Human Capabilities’**

*Main conference: September 6-8th, 2011, The Hague, The Netherlands*

*Amartya Sen lecture: evening of September 5th, 2011*

[http://www.ethicsandtechnology.eu/subsite/hdca\\_conference\\_2011](http://www.ethicsandtechnology.eu/subsite/hdca_conference_2011)

Bringing about human development for all is a challenge. It is not sufficient to investigate how human capabilities are expanded or diminished by our current policies, institutional arrangements, incentive structures, social practices, infrastructures and technologies. Grounded in our understanding of these realities, we also need to be creative and innovative in order to bring about change. The 2011 conference theme Innovation, Development and Human Capabilities is an invitation to discuss and reflect on this. Whether it concerns social or technological innovation, grassroots innovation or innovation policy – to make innovation truly work for human development, input from different angles is needed. We thus expect speakers and papers from a wide variety of disciplines. While innovation is the thematic focus of the 2011 HDCA conference, we naturally also welcome papers on other aspects of human development and the capability approach.

The call for papers can be downloaded [here](#).

Submissions can be entered at [www.conftool.net/hdca\\_conference\\_2011](http://www.conftool.net/hdca_conference_2011).

If you have questions, please contact us at [hdca@ethicsandtechnology.eu](mailto:hdca@ethicsandtechnology.eu).

We encourage papers presented at the conference to be submitted for publication in the Journal of Human Development and Capabilities. This HDCA-owned journal is a peer reviewed multi-disciplinary journal for people-centered development. See <http://www.hdca.org> (‘About Us’ section) for more information on the journal and on how to submit your paper.



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## **RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION 2011**

*18-19 April 2011, The Hague, the Netherlands*

Innovative Solutions for Global Issues

[www.responsible-innovation.nl](http://www.responsible-innovation.nl)

[info@responsible-innovation.nl](mailto:info@responsible-innovation.nl)

## **CONFIRMED KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

Thomas Pogge (Yale, Australian National University)

Armin Grunwald (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology)

## **CALL FOR ABSTRACTS:**

We invite you to submit abstracts for the First Annual International Conference on Responsible Innovation organized by Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). NWO has launched an interdisciplinary research program that brings together researchers from ethics, applied science and the social and behavior sciences in research projects that aim at designing solutions to urgent societal problems.

We encourage submissions from an interdisciplinary spectrum, including but not limited to philosophers, engineers, natural scientists, social scientists, and those involved in public or private policymaking.

You can submit short abstracts for a paper or a poster session using the online submission form on the conference website.

## **SCHOLARSHIP:**

We especially invite submissions from contributors from developing countries, who may be eligible for a scholarship.

## **DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSION:**

5pm on Monday, 17th January 2011 (Amsterdam time). Abstracts will be blind-reviewed and applicants will be notified about acceptance of their submission by 14 February 2011.

## **SPRINGER PUBLICATION:**

Each year, a selection of the best papers presented at the conference will be published in a new Springer series entitled "Responsible Innovation".



## SUITABLE TOPICS INCLUDE:

Medical and biomedical research  
Healthcare sector on the move / Trust and Electronic patient dossier / Telecare  
Privacy and Virtual Reality  
Surveillance society and privacy / Data mining and security  
Neurotechnology / neuroimaging  
Defence, security & military technology / Moral fitness of military personnel /  
Human enhancement and human dignity  
Responsibility and sustainable food production  
Biofuels / biodiversity / animal production  
IPR and developing countries

Values, conflicts in values & culture / Persuasive technology / Soft impacts  
Internationalization and equity  
Governance and converging technologies / Bio security and dual use



## **Rethinking Jacques Ellul and the technological society in the 21st century**

*The Conference Rethinking Jacques Ellul and the technological society in the 21st Century invites submissions of papers. The international conference will take place at the University of Lisbon, Portugal, June 17-18, 2011.*

The conference will mark the centenary of the birth of Jacques Ellul (1912-1994) and aims to serve as a forum for assessing the legacy of his contributions especially to the understanding of technological society. Since the publication of *La Technique ou l'enjeu du siècle* (1954) the century has itself changed and various actors are placing bets on globalization, terrorism, capitalism, democracy, religion, and more. The working hypothesis of the conference is nevertheless that continuing benefit can be derived from Ellul's ideas and insights, in our search for a better understanding of the issues and dilemmas of the twenty-first century.

As one result of the conference, we plan to prepare a special journal issue or book based on a selection of the papers presented at the conference.

Conference format



The conference will include invited keynote talks and contributed oral presentations. English and French are the official languages of the conference. Paper presentations will be 25 minutes, plus discussion. No registration fee is charged.

### Topics for contributions

The conference welcomes presentations on all relevant areas to which Ellul's concepts and ideas are pertinent. The goal is to show new directions in research on Ellul and a valuable contribution to core issues of the twenty-first century. The list of topic areas outlined below is suggestive of the topics under consideration, but by no means restricted to them.

Social theory and technology

Globalization

Legal institutions, politics and bureaucracy

Capitalism, economy and consumerism

Ecologism and regionalism

Religion

Mass media and propaganda

Violence and terrorism

Urban studies

### Abstract submission

Abstracts will be accepted online until 14 February 2011. The abstracts must be up to 500 words in length (references excluded) and submitted via email to Helena Jerónimo: [jeronimo@iseg.utl.pt](mailto:jeronimo@iseg.utl.pt)

The abstracts should include the name(s) of author(s), affiliation(s), contact details and the paper title. Decisions on acceptance will be communicated to authors by 10 March 2011. On acceptance, we expect the full paper to be submitted no later than 31 May 2011.

### Paper submission

Selected papers will be published in a special issue or international book in 2012. The full paper must be up to 4,000 words in length (references excluded). They will be peer reviewed and evaluated based on interest, originality and relevance to the book. Assessment and selection will be made by a Scientific Committee composed of Helena Jerónimo (School of Economics and Management & SOCIUS, Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal), José Luís Garcia (Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon, Portugal), Carl Mitcham (Colorado School of Mines, USA), Daniel Cérézuelle (director of PADES, Programme Autoproduction et Développement Social, France) and Patrick Chastenet (UFR and Université Montesquieu Bordeaux IV, France). Full texts of papers must be submitted online by 31 May 2011.

### Important dates:

Deadline to Submit an abstract is February 14, 2011.

Notification of Acceptance will be no later than March 10, 2011.

On acceptance, the full paper should be submitted no later than May 31, 2011.

Conference is on June 17-18, 2011



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## **5. Recent publications of interest**

Book launch: “Check in / check out. The Public Space as an Internet of Things”

During the international conference “Computers, privacy & data protection” in Brussels, the Rathenau Institute will present its new book: “Check in / Check out. The Public Space as an Internet of Things”. During a reception in le Grand Halles, Gérald Santucci, Head of EC Unit “Networked Enterprise and RFID”, will receive the first copy. Followed by an expert discussion led by Frans Brom of the Rathenau Institute.

Date: January 25, 2011, 6 – 7.30 pm, les Halles, Brussels.

Preorder the book via NAI Publishers:

<http://www.naipublishers.nl/architectuur/checkincheckout.html>

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## **6. Membership and Dues**

The Society for Philosophy and Technology is an independent international organization that encourages, supports and facilitates philosophically significant considerations of technology. Founded in 1976, the Society is dedicated to the pluralistic exploration of technology, and welcomes a variety of philosophical and other disciplinary approaches in both its conferences and its publications. The Society publishes *Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology* (a scholarly journal), the proceedings of its international conferences, and the quarterly SPT Newsletter.

Membership in the Society for Philosophy and Technology is open to individuals whose work is in keeping with the interests of the Society—including those who have an advanced degree (typically but not necessarily in philosophy), those who work in a technical field, and students whose work includes philosophically significant considerations of technology. More information about SPT and its activities is available at the Society for Philosophy and Technology website.



All membership levels include online access to available issues of Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology

- 1) Individual - Regular membership  
Online (Single user license)    \$65.00
- 2) Student or Independent Scholar  
Online (Single user license)    \$45.00
- 3) Members in Developing Nations  
Online (Single user license)    \$0.00

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## 7. SPT Officers

### **President:**

Philip Brey, University of Twente

### **Secretary-Treasurer:**

John Sullins, Sonoma State University

### **Executive Board:**

Peter-Paul Verbeek, University of Twente

Sven Ove Hansson, Royal Institute of Technology

Ann Johnson, University of South Carolina

David Kaplan, University of North Texas

Inmaculada (Inma) de Melo-Martin, Weill Medical College of Cornell University

Diane P. Michelfelder, Macalester College

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Joseph Pitt, Virginia Tech University

Ibo van de Poel, Delft University

Pieter Vermaas, Delft University

### **Newsletter Editor & Webmaster:**

Katinka Waelbers, University of Twente

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