

**Diversity in Action Summit, New Zealand**

by Ir. Assoc. Prof. Dr Leong Wai Yie

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The Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ) organized a summit entitled “The Diversity in Action” at Te Papa, Wellington, New Zealand, on 19 August 2016.

The Summit focused on topics relating to diversity in the workplace – gender, ethnicity, age, disciplines and qualifications, and its benefits to employees, employers and a company’s bottom line.

It is a common knowledge that diverse workforce generates more creative solutions. Global research by McKinsey shows that gender-diverse companies are 15% more likely to perform better than average, while ethnically diverse companies are 35% more likely.

The invited speakers included Lieutenant General (Retd) David Morrison, 2016 Australian of the Year known for his work on gender equality and inclusion, Dr Marlene Kanga, President Elect of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations, Susan Doughty, Industry Expert in the design of contemporary reward strategies and solutions, and Dr Michelle Dickinson, Senior Lecturer in engineering at the University of Auckland (also known as Nanogirl). More than 100 delegates attended the Summit.

Dr Leong Wai Yie, Chair of the Women Engineers Section of the Institution of Engineers Malaysia and Secretary General of Women Engineers ASEAN Federation of Engineering organizations addressed issues on diversity in Malaysia. She responded to the cases of “dearth of women in science and engineering.” The programs and the outcomes in Malaysia were highlighted. She identified the barriers for women choosing to study engineering based on the issues of flexibility and culture in Malaysia. Among others, activities and initiatives organized by IEM and WE were discussed and shared.

During Panel Discussion, many speakers touched on career motivation for women engineers. More training, recruitment and retention of women into the engineering profession must be given greater attention. The Diversity in Action Summit had successfully generated important awareness, ideas and feedbacks from various perspectives.



During the panel discussion, the speakers addressed various issues regarding workplace diversity.