

# IMS2018 Project Connect— Five Years and Counting

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Project Connect is an outreach program that currently partners with the IEEE Microwave Theory and Techniques Society (MTT-S) International Microwave Symposium (IMS), with the aim of increasing the participation of underrepresented minorities in the RF/microwave field. This goal transcends nations. In the United States, for example, the typical female enrollment in undergraduate electrical engineering/electrical and computer engineering programs is below 12%, and only ~1% and ~2% of engineering doctoral degrees are awarded to African Americans and Hispanics, respectively.

With the support of the U.S. National Science Foundation, Project Connect provides exceptional underrepresented

undergraduate and first-year graduate students the opportunity to attend the IMS. With support from the IMS2018 Organizing Committee, students from across the globe are able to participate in the unique experiences of this flagship microwave symposium as part of Project Connect.



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Being at an IMS is an awesome experience—especially for the first time—and this is one of the reasons that Project Connect works. Over 70 students have participated so far (see Figure 1).

According to one, 'Project Connect provides an incredible opportunity to interact with



**Figure 1.** Project Connect attendees over the years. (Photos courtesy of Lyle Photos, Atlanta, Georgia.)

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to bring your engaging opinions and questions to both panel sessions.

The 5G Summit technical sessions on Tuesday will provide high-level 5G overview presentations that will complement the 5G-focused RFIC

technical sessions on Monday morning. A separate registration will be required for the 5G Summit sessions.

On behalf of the RFIC Steering and Executive Committees, we welcome you to join us at the 2018 RFIC Symposium

in Philadelphia! Please visit the RFIC 2018 website (<http://rfic-ieee.org/>) for more details and updates.



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professionals in the field of RF and microwave engineering from both industry and academia. It was a life-changing moment for me and motivated me to pursue a Ph.D. degree in this field!"

Project Connect students follow a tailored conference agenda intended to expose them to new technologies and introduce them to the RF and microwave community with the hope of inspiring them to pursue a career in this vast field. The concept was first introduced at IMS2014 in Tampa, Florida. Each year since then, the program's format has expanded. At IMS2015 in Phoenix, Arizona, an industry mixer was added to allow participants the chance to interact, one on one, with people

working in industry. At IMS2016 in San Francisco, an entrepreneurial panel was added, providing students with exposure to some of the community's innovation leaders. At IMS2018 in Honolulu, Hawaii, the local committee enriched the program by including Native Alaskans and Pacific Islanders as well as by adding activities to expose participants from outside Hawaii to different local cultures.

IMS2018 in Philadelphia represents the fifth-year anniversary of Project Connect. We will continue the preconference tradition with a team-building tour of local historical sites and use the symposium's "Microwaves, Medicine, and Mobility" focus to high-

light career paths for the next-generation RF enthusiast!

The week is planned as follows:

- *Monday (11 June):* local historical tour and team-building
- *Tuesday (12 June):* Project Connect panel sessions, IMS student programs, and evening social events
- *Wednesday (13 June):* more sessions and Project Connect panels, a visit to the exhibition hall, and the Project Connect industry mixer, where participants meet industry, academic, and MTT-S leaders
- *Thursday (14 June):* student teams describe their IMS experience in a video titled "IMS Through Their Eyes."



## Moving Forward with Clarity: The Second IMS 3MT Competition (continued from page 60)

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