

## Prometheans Open Call 1 of 3 — Traditional Paper Session(s)

### *Engineers and Policy: Historical Perspectives on Authority, Regulation, and the Engineering Profession*

Engineers and policy have shaped one another throughout modern history. Policy has directed specializations in engineering fields and has determined the conditions under which engineers exercise authority and claim professional standing. Engineers, in turn, have used their technical expertise to intervene in policy debates, have served as state employees and expert advisors, and have worked to present themselves as arbiters of the public interest. At the same time, entire engineering fields have risen and fallen as political priorities shifted. This open session asks, above all: how have engineers shaped, and how have they been shaped by, policy?

We welcome presentations that address (but need not be limited to) the following:

- How policy has elevated or marginalized engineering fields, redefined engineering authority, or reshaped who counts as an engineer.
- How engineers have shaped policy — as state employees, expert advisors, and professional advocates — using technical knowledge to intervene in governance, public works, and regulatory debates.
- The relationship between engineering identity, professional licensing, technical standards, and state institutions, including how regulatory regimes and credentialing have defined the boundaries of engineering practice.
- Engineers navigating the boundary between technical authority and political action.

This call is organized by the Prometheans (History of Engineering) Special Interest Group (SIG), which aims to build and support scholarly community in the history of engineering. Depending on interest, we may organize one or more linked sessions. We also welcome other proposed topics in the history of engineers and engineering, including broader questions about engineers and politics.

Please [submit your proposal](#) by **Monday, 13 July 2026**. What we need to know:

- Your name, email, affiliation and title, and short bio or first page of your CV.
- Proposed presentation title and short abstract (350 words max).
- Your preferred time zone block (three choices: Americas UTC-10 through UTC-3 | Europe/Africa/South Asia UTC+0 through UTC+6 | Asia Pacific UTC+7 through UTC+12).
- Whether you intend to apply for the [Robinson Prize](#).

We look forward to reading your proposals.

Kind regards,

Ryan Hearty and Ellan Spero, Prometheans co-chairs

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on behalf of the [SHOT Prometheans](#) and the [Engineering Studies](#) working group at the [Consortium for the History of Science, Technology & Medicine](#) in Philadelphia