



CIHT Dubai Annual General Meeting 2025/26

In our formal Annual General Meeting held online on 6 May 2025, we reviewed our progress over the last year, re-elected existing members in their roles or new roles and elected new members to the committee. The AGM was also attended virtually by Christopher Flattery, Regional Engagement Officer from CIHT Headquarters, Britannia Walk.

Achievements

In his Chair's Review, Martin Tillman provided a summary of the group's achievements over the last year:

- There are currently 122 CIHT members registered under CIHT Dubai with almost 22% increase compared to the 2024 term.
- The proportion of female representatives among members increased from 14% in 2023 to 20% in 2024.
- Over 850 registrants were attracted to seven seminars throughout the year.
- Over 340 people registered for the STEAM+ Modelling Webinar in May 2024, delivered by modelling experts from the Integrated Transport Centre (ITC).
- Successfully organised the second inter-university student hackathon

with 12 teams from six universities within the UAE in February 2025

Key Objectives for 2025-2026

As CIHT Dubai celebrates its fifth anniversary, the institution reflects on the impressive progress made under the leadership of Martin and Jonathan. With solid foundations now firmly established, CIHT Dubai is entering a bold new phase focused on strategic growth, regional impact, and organisational independence.

Richard Lewis, the newly appointed Chair, outlines a clear vision to drive the chapter forward through the following key initiatives:

- **Implementation of a 4-Year Road Map:** A structured and forward-looking plan has been developed to guide the chapter's direction and priorities through 2029.
- **Expanding Regional Influence Beyond Dubai:** CIHT Dubai aims to broaden its footprint and engage with professionals and stakeholders across the wider GCC and Middle East region with rebranded as CIHT UAE.
- **Achieving Financial Independence:** Efforts are underway to ensure sustainable funding through partnerships with local banks and the introduction of new sponsorship

models.

- **Fostering Meaningful Membership Growth:** Focus will be placed on attracting new members while increasing engagement and value for current members.
- **Delivering Lasting Value to Members and the Industry:** CIHT Dubai is committed to offering high-quality events, knowledge sharing, and professional development opportunities that benefit both members and the transport sector at large.
- **Establishing CIHT as the Regional Leader in Transport Excellence:** Through thought leadership, collaboration, and innovation, the goal is to position CIHT Dubai as the go-to organisation for transport professionals in the region.

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Contact us:



CIHT UAE



ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com

Message from the Past Chair

By: Martin Tillman, Past Chair 2023-2025



During my two-year term as CIHT UAE Chair I've enjoyed collaborating with transport planning professionals across the region, giving our profession a clear voice and a platform to share expertise. A highlight was the launching of our annual

University Hackathon, where I had the privilege of judging bold student visions for future mobility. We delivered 15 events in the last two years from technical master classes to site visits at RTA, Abu Dhabi Mobility and Sharjah showing exactly why CIHT UAE membership matters. Through our Vice Chair Dr Steven Wilkinson we have developed a valuable partnership with the University of Wollongong, gaining a welcoming venue and a steady stream of new members

I'm deeply grateful to our dedicated committee members for their hard work and devotion to CIHT UAE over the past two years balancing work and personal commitments to keep the branch running. As I hand the baton to our new Chair, Richard Lewis, I'm excited to support his transition and to serve the committee as a member. I also look forward to meeting more of you at the events ahead. Thank you all.

Message from the Chair

By: Richard Lewis, Chair 2025-2027



It's a privilege to step into the role of Chair for CIHT UAE at such a pivotal time. I want to thank Martin Tillman for his leadership over the past two years and Jonathan Spear for his work before that and his unwavering support for me on this journey.

In advance of the AGM, my team had already developed the CIHT UAE Roadmap in advance — laying a strong foundation that allows us to move forward with purpose and clarity from day one. As we begin implementing our CIHT UAE Roadmap, we are already seeing momentum.

We've rebranded from CIHT Dubai to CIHT UAE, evolved the committee structure to better support delivery, and seen a

significant step forward in our communications — particularly across social media, where our presence and engagement have grown rapidly. A big thank you to Brindha Sankari and Rina Ricafort for driving these very noticeable improvements.

Behind the scenes, Dr Stephen Wilkinson is progressing several important initiatives. I'm personally very excited to be working with Stephen — not only one of the most interesting and knowledgeable people I've met, but also one of the hardest working.

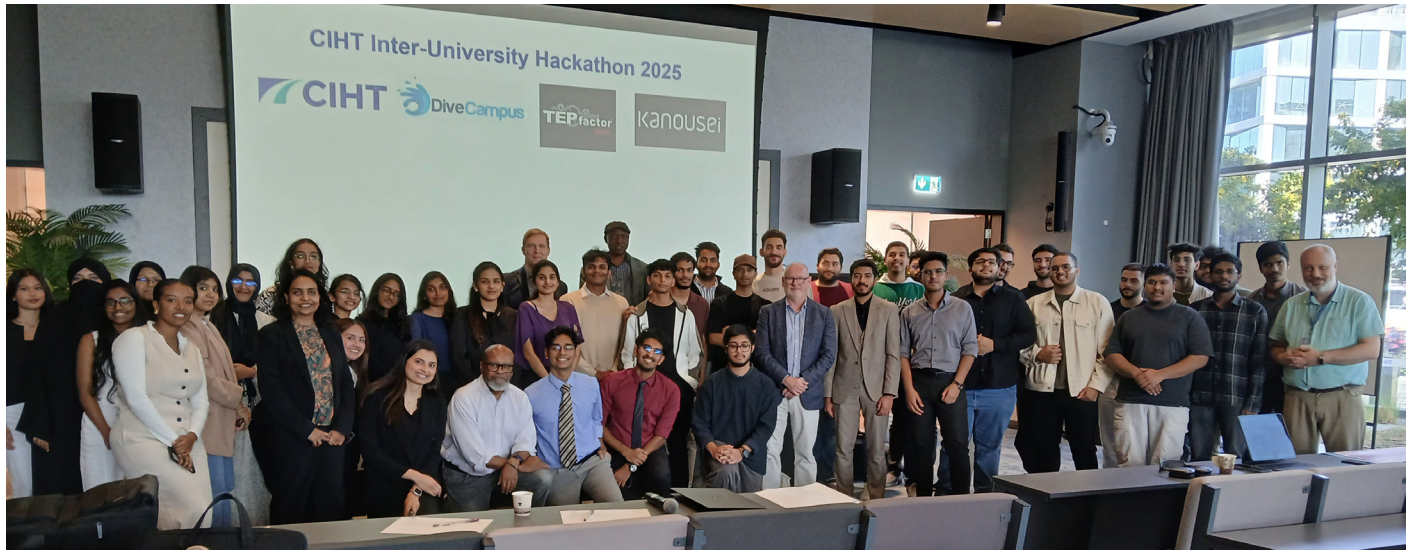
We are now developing focused subplans to underpin our overarching Roadmap strategy — from membership growth and sponsorship to regional engagement and technical insight.

Our direction is clear:

- Be a respected, data-led voice for the profession
- Deliver real value for members and employers
- Achieve financial sustainability
- Expand our regional footprint

Thank you to our new and continuing committee members for your energy and commitment. I look forward to working with all of you — and to seeing more of our members at upcoming events and initiatives.

Inter-University Hackathon



The CIHT Dubai Inter-University Transportation Hackathon brought together students from across the UAE on February 1, 2025, to tackle a real-world transport challenge in a fast-paced, competitive environment.

Teams from six universities in Dubai - University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD), Heriot-Watt University, Canadian University Dubai, University of Birmingham Dubai, BITS Pilani Dubai, and American University in Dubai (AUD) - collaborated to develop innovative solutions aimed at easing congestion in the city.

Working throughout the day, the teams developed, refined, and presented their ideas to a panel of judges, who recognized the top three teams with awards. The hackathon successfully encouraged innovation in transport solutions while strengthening the collaboration between academia and industry. Each of the winning teams responded to the challenge with a unique approach. Here's a glimpse of their ideas, shared in their own words.

1st Place - UAE Maps - Ahmet Ihlas, American University of Dubai

Efficiency - a word far more powerful than its dictionary definition. Time - the relentless force beyond human control. In the pursuit of efficiency, every second becomes a priceless asset. Introducing UAE MAPS: a predictive navigation system designed to ease traffic congestion across the UAE. Inspired by smart energy distribution projects, UAE MAPS leverages AI and real-time data from diverse sources—including IoT sensors, social media, weather reports, and government partnerships. The system predicts traffic buildup before it happens and dynamically optimizes routes for drivers, reducing delays and environmental impact.

Key features include personalized commute profiles that adapt routes based on individual behavior and preferences, incentives for choosing less congested paths, and integration with Dubai's smart city infrastructure for real-time traffic management. UAE MAPS also encourages staggered commutes and carpooling, optimizes commercial traffic flow, and enhances public transportation efficiency. This innovative approach aims to transform daily commutes, boost productivity, and support the growth of seamless smart cities across the UAE. With UAE MAPS, drivers can enjoy more efficient, stress-free journeys, bringing the vision of a smarter, more connected city closer to reality.



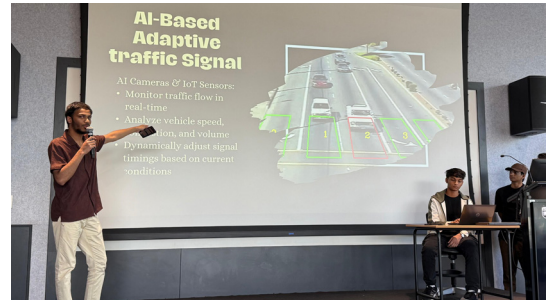
A special thank you to our sponsors for their invaluable support of this year's Hackathon!



2nd Place: AI Traffic Optimization - Future Trax (Kamlesh Kumar, Fawaz Imran, Ameen Asharaf, Taha Shaikh), BITS Pilani

We all face traffic in Dubai. On average, we spend about 2.5 hours a day just traveling, and a big part of this is due to congestion. So, we often think about and discuss how to reduce traffic, coming up with hypotheses about why traffic occurs on Dubai highways. Even before the twist was announced, we knew AI could help solve traffic problems because it can analyze massive amounts of data quickly using machine learning and predict useful information like when a signal is needed, or which route is faster.

But this depends on collecting the right data, which is why we proposed using IoT and LiDAR sensors to gather live data efficiently. If we can achieve this, we could route map users more effectively, avoid delays caused by improper traffic signals, and add lanes where needed. This could save millions of hours and money wasted in traffic, improve productivity and road safety, and lead to significant sustainable economic and societal benefits.



3rd Place: Bat-Mobile Revolution - Hackstreet Girls (Ananya Lahari Vadlamani, Muneeba Ismail Kharbey, Rina Claudia V. Ricafort, Falaq Abdul Hakeem), University of Wollongong Dubai

When our team first joked about creating a “Batman-inspired” transportation solution, we never imagined we’d place third at the CIHT Hackathon. Our Bat-Mobile concept evolved from a playful idea into a serious urban mobility innovation that could revolutionize sustainable city transport. We designed elevated, air-conditioned Bat-Tunnels above highways exclusively for e-scooters and bicycles, featuring wireless electric roads for continuous charging and solar-powered hubs. These innovative pathways replace traditional streetlights with dynamic LED strips, creating a safer, more engaging urban environment.

Our Bat-AI App complements this infrastructure by providing real-time traffic updates, intelligent route optimization, and emergency alert systems. The integrated Bat Points incentive system gamifies the experience, rewarding users with credits for choosing sustainable transport modes and encouraging eco-friendly commuting.

What began as a humorous Batman reference during a late-night brainstorming session grew into a comprehensive mobility solution. Our concept shows how playful creativity, technical skill, and a commitment to sustainability can generate groundbreaking ideas. By reimagining urban transportation through a superhero lens, we’ve demonstrated that innovative solutions can come from the most unexpected inspirations!



CIHT UAE has been named Highly Commended for the CIHT Team of the Year Award at the CIHT Awards 2025!

This recognition celebrates our work organising the Inter-University Transportation Hackathon, which brought together brilliant students from across universities to solve real-world mobility challenges.



Events Roundup

Our committee has been busy hosting a series of dynamic and insightful seminars. We've had the pleasure of welcoming esteemed speakers and enthusiastic participants, making each event informative and memorable. Here's a recap of our recent events.

Electrifying Fleets: A Practical Path to Net Zero



21 Jan

Presented by **Salman Hussain**, Co-Founder of FUSE EV, a passionate innovator and respected figure in sustainable transport solutions. With a career focused on bridging advanced EV conversion technologies and the practical demands of fleet operators, Salman has a proven track record in guiding organizations through the electrification process. His expertise isn't confined to spreadsheets or engineering labs; he's worked hands-on with diverse clients—public agencies, logistics companies, and corporate fleets—to help them achieve their climate targets and improve their bottom lines.

As cities and fleet operators grapple with the urgency of transport decarbonisation, vehicle retrofitting is emerging as a powerful, underutilised solution. At a CIHT UAE webinar held on January 21, 2025, Salman Hussain, Co-Founder of FUSE EV Conversions, shared practical insights into how internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles can be converted to electric power, reducing emissions, lowering costs, and extending asset life.

Drawing on over 27 years in the UAE automotive industry, and with eight years specialising in EVs, Salman offered both technical and strategic perspectives. FUSE focuses on converting a range of vehicles, from commercial vans and

trucks to heritage cars, using modular electric drivetrains tailored to the vehicle's operational profile.

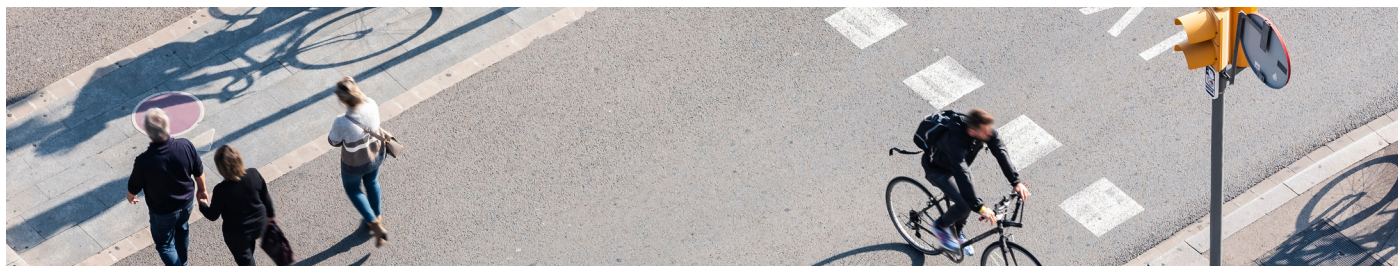
Salman outlined the key benefits of retrofitting versus replacement, noting that conversions typically cost 40–60% less than new EVs, with prices between US\$8,000 and \$20,000, and a return on investment within five years. He emphasised the embodied carbon savings and operational advantages, particularly relevant for organisations with large existing fleets or specialist vehicles not easily replaced by standard EV offerings.

Technical considerations covered during the session included battery integration,

motor placement, safety certification, and charging infrastructure. Salman also referenced supportive policy trends in France, the UK, India, and the US, where legislation and incentives are enabling the growth of the retrofitting industry.

Case studies presented included the conversion of a Toyota Hilux for off-road deployment and bespoke adaptations for classic cars, demonstrating the flexibility and scalability of the FUSE approach. The event closed with a discussion on the potential for retrofitting to play a central role in the UAE's broader sustainability and innovation agenda.

Urban Transport Street Design



25 Feb

Presented by **John Dales** (CMILT, MCIHT, HonFIHE, MTPS), a Chair of Urban Movement, a consultancy specialising in urban transport strategies and public realm design. A traffic engineer, transport planner, urban designer and writer with 40 years' experience, he was previously the independent design advisor on streets to the City of Edinburgh and the only transport specialist amongst the Mayor of London's Design Advocates. He currently has senior advisory roles for the London Borough of Ealing, Sunderland City Council, developer British Land, and The Crown Estate. John is also past Chair of the UK Transport Planning Society and a former trustee of the walking charity Living Streets. He is currently a working party member of the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety (PACTS) and a trustee of the disability charity Transport for All.

CIHT UAE welcomed John Dales on February 25, 2025, for a thought-provoking webinar on the evolving role of urban transport and the critical need for reimagining street design. In his presentation, John challenged conventional transport planning that focuses purely on vehicle movement. He argued for a shift toward 'city-making,' where transport projects are also public realm projects, and streets serve as places for people, not just conduits for traffic. Using the Movement & Place framework, he illustrated how effective street design must balance function with form, supporting walkability, safety, and social interaction

while accommodating transport demand. The session showcased successful case studies from major cities like London, Paris, and Seoul, where bold reallocation of space and people-first design have significantly improved urban quality of life. John also referenced leading design guidance such as the UK's Manual for Streets, the Global Street Design Guide, and Healthy Streets for London, encouraging practitioners in the UAE and beyond to rethink traditional metrics like vehicle throughput and instead focus on accessibility, equity, and sustainability.

Road Safety Audit TR-540 Manual Update & Common RSA Problems



13 May

Presented by **David George** (IEng FIHE MCIHT FSoRSA RegRSA (IHE)), a seasoned road safety engineer currently leading road safety initiatives for the Al Ain Region in Abu Dhabi, UAE. With experience in both public and private sectors since 1996, he specializes in collision investigation, prevention, and Road Safety Audits meeting international standards. David has investigated diverse accident locations worldwide and led audit teams on various projects, including major schemes in the Middle East and Europe. He has developed IHE-approved road safety training courses and spoken at national conferences and put forward his experiences to update the Emirate of Abu Dhabi Road Safety Audit Manual, TR-540, integrating the safe System Approach. David's expertise extends to expert witness services, collision research, and advisory roles, making him a valuable asset in advancing road safety globally.

On May 13, 2025, CIHT UAE hosted a technical seminar focused on the evolving landscape of Road Safety Audits (RSA) in the UAE. David George provided a comprehensive overview of the recent revisions to the Abu Dhabi RSA Manual (TR-540), placing these changes within the context of international best practice and the Safe System approach. He explained how the updated guidance shifts emphasis from traditional compliance checks to risk-based assessments, helping practitioners evaluate road design from the perspective of human error and injury severity.

The seminar explored common design issues encountered in UAE RSAs, such as poor pedestrian facility integration, inconsistent traffic calming measures, and roadside hazards, including unshielded obstacles and substandard lighting. David also highlighted the growing need for more rigorous auditing of

Temporary Traffic Management (TTM) schemes, noting that many fall short of requirements for safe and accessible work zones.

Key technical topics included:

- The use of risk matrices to prioritise mitigation
- Challenges in signalised intersection design and staging
- Landscaping impacts on visibility and signage compliance
- The importance of survivable speed environments, especially for vulnerable road users

Throughout the session, David stressed the importance of embedding RSA early in the project lifecycle and called for greater cross-sector collaboration to raise audit standards. The event concluded with a call to align UAE practice more closely with Vision Zero principles, particularly the introduction of 30 km/h zones and raised pedestrian crossings in high-risk urban areas.

Rina Claudia V. Ricafort

Rina is a current Civil Engineering undergraduate at the University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD). With a strong interest in infrastructure design, architecture, and computer modelling, she is passionate about continuously upscaling her skills, embracing challenges, and thriving in competitive environments. She is committed to making a meaningful impact by being a bridge between her fellow students and CIHT UAE as Student Champion.



Tell us about yourself and your undergraduate journey so far.

Currently two years into my bachelor's degree in engineering, majoring in Civil Engineering, I have developed a well-rounded academic and extracurricular experience. A typical day at university involves a mix of engaging lectures, hands-on tutorials where we apply theory through problem-solving, and immersive lab sessions where we conduct experiments such as concrete and timber testing, fluid dynamics analysis, and building modelling using BIM software like Autodesk Revit.

Beyond the classroom, I actively contribute to campus life as the Vice President and a writer for the university magazine, and as the Communications Officer for the Institution of Civil Engineers Society – UOWD Chapter. Despite juggling academics and extracurriculars, I make it a priority to maintain balance by spending quality time with family and friends, and unwinding with a good book, an engaging movie, or a captivating series.

What made you study a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in Dubai?

When we look at the various buildings and structures in our everyday lives, most would simply admire the physical aspects and the aesthetics, while some would take time and give them more than one look. I have always wondered how those structures were designed and built to achieve the final output.

Examples like the Burj Khalifa, the

Museum of the Future, Dubai Frame, and One Za'abeel only piqued my interest even more. Interest turned to curiosity, and curiosity transformed into my decision to study a bachelor's degree in civil engineering at the University of Wollongong in Dubai.

As one of the fastest-growing cities in the world, Dubai offers students like me a dynamic learning environment with access to cutting-edge projects, such as smart cities, green buildings, and world-class transportation systems. Studying in this innovative hub provides future engineers with real-world insights and opportunities to engage with some of the most ambitious and sustainable engineering projects globally.

What made you join CIHT UAE?

CIHT UAE offers a great platform for connecting with professionals, learning about innovations in transport, and accessing career-building resources. The transport industry is a dynamic environment that holds an expanding network of challenges and opportunities to keep UAE moving.

As someone who is consistently striving to learn and grow, I see being part of CIHT UAE as an opportunity to inspire engagement, share knowledge, and build a stronger student community around shared interests in highways and transport.

Could you share a vision of yourself in the near future?

While there is no certainty of what the



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future holds, I aspire to be part of an engineering workforce that envisions a sustainability-driven economy in the future. With a growing interest in structural design, computer modelling, and innovation, I see myself thriving in an environment where I can lead, coordinate, and make a difference in advancing sustainable infrastructure and systems while continuously adapting to this rapidly developing world.

Spotlight on Professional Qualifications

Since the inception of CIHT UAE, the Committee has focused on raising awareness of professional training and qualifications in Dubai and the UAE, both amongst CIHT Members and others in the local highways and transport sector.

Generally, two seminars are scheduled annually on acquiring professional qualifications: one on transport planning (Transport Planning Professional, TPP) and the other on engineering (Chartered Engineer, Incorporated Engineer, and Engineering Technician).

In addition, bespoke presentations and workshops can be delivered upon request to CIHT UAE. So far in 2025, face-to-face professional qualification presentations were delivered in Dubai to AECOM, Jacobs, Mott MacDonald, and WSP with a couple of upcoming online deliveries.

The UAE Group supports candidates through a list of experienced professionals who volunteer as mentors. The volunteers include local mentors in the region who are professionally qualified either as Chartered Transport Planning Professionals or Chartered Engineers. We would be delighted to hear from senior professionals who are professionally qualified and willing to act as mentors to others.

CIHT UAE currently have 11 candidates preparing for their professional qualifications of transport planning and engineering. Michelle would be delighted to hear from you and assist you with any queries on mentoring and support through your preparation



Not sure which qualification is right for you or the value of qualification?

Reach out directly to Michelle Wood, our Professional Development Officer, who is also a Reviewer and mentor for the Transport Planning Professional qualification. Or you can reach out to us on [CIHT UAE LinkedIn](#). More information can also be obtained on the [CIHT Professional Development page](#).

To check your eligibility, complete our quick, simple and free Online Initial Assessment so the CIHT Education Team can confirm your route:

- Chartered Engineer Initial Assessment
- Transport Planning Professional Initial Assessment

Why Become Professionally Qualified?

- National and international recognition as a professional
- Greater influence within your organisation and industry
- Assists career progression
- Recognition of your knowledge and expertise by colleagues and clients
- Evidence of your commitment to professional standards

What can CIHT Offer?

- Professional Qualifications
 - Transport Planning Professional (TPP)
 - Chartered Engineer (CEng)
 - Incorporated Engineer (IEng)
 - Engineering Technician (EngTech)
 - Road Safety Auditing Certificate of Competency (CoC)
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)



CIHT UAE Committee

The current CIHT UAE committee, reappointed in May 2025, is comprised of 25 professionals, mainly from private sector consultancies, but with additional representation from academia and public agencies. The following office bearers confirmed their commitment to their roles:

- Richard Lewis – Chair
- Stephen Wilkinson – Vice Chair
- Mohamed Al Mansi – Secretary
- Prasun Mondal – Treasurer
- Samar Nasser – Event Coordinator
- Tawab Kazemi – Membership Officer
- Mohammad Kazmi – Emerging Professional Chair
- Jonathan Spear – Policy Lead
- Brindha Sankari – Promotions and Growth Officer
- Michelle Wood – Professional Development Officer
- Rina Ricafort – Student Champion

The following members were elected for the committee member position:

- Martin Tillman
- Louay Al Hassanieh
- Khalid Nur
- Ahmed Bassyouny
- Ramakrishna Banda

The committee are appointed to represent CIHT members and is committed to doing so.



Richard Lewis
(Chair)



Dr. Stephen Wilkinson
(Vice-Chair)



Mohamed Al Mansi
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(Membership Officer)



Prasun Mondal
(Treasurer)



Jonathan Spear
(Policy Lead)



Martin Tillman
(Committee Member –
Immediate Past Chair)



Rina Ricafort
(Student Champion)



Louay Al Hassanieh
(Committee Member)



Dr. Khalid Nur
(Committee Member)



Ahmed Bassyouny
(Committee Member)



Ramakrishna Banda
(Committee Member)



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General queries: ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com

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