

Date the following information was provided: 2025/12/22

Information Sheet

Conference title: One Day Symposium (hybrid) on Design Thinking and Informal Sectors

Conference theme: Design Thinking and Informal Work

Dates: 2025/12/13

Hosting University: University of Calcutta, Kolkata, India

Hosting society: Indian Society of Ergonomics

Participated countries: India, Nigeria, USA

of delegates (on-site and virtual): 167 total (32 in-person; 135 virtual)

of presentations (and format): 8, namely 5 introductory presentations (4 in-person, 1 virtual), and 3 keynote presentations (in-person)

Keynote speakers: Profs. Pranab Kumar Nag, Anindya K. Ganguli, Debkumar Chakrabarti

Other VIPs: Profs. Somnath Gangopadhyay, Mohammad Muzammil, Prakash C Dhara, Bhaskar Bhatt

Seminars/Workshops: The seminar featured a welcome address by Prof. Somnath Gangopadhyay, Chair of the Symposium, and short introductory presentations on the history of the Department of Physiology and Ergonomics Laboratory by Dr. Rajen Haldar, Head, Department of Physiology, University of Calcutta; history of Indian Society of Ergonomics by Prof. Debkumar Chakrabarti, President, ISE; the IEA-TC Informal Work TC by Prof. Mohammad Muzammil, Vice Chair Asia-Pacific IEA Informal Work TC; and ICOH SCOHSSEIS by Prof. Somnath Gangopadhyay, Chair, ICOH SCOHSSEIS. This was followed by three keynote presentations on the theme of design thinking and informal sectors by invited presenters Profs. Pranab Kumar Nag, Anindya K. Ganguli, and Debkumar Chakrabarti. Keynote presenters were introduced by Profs. Prakash C. Dhara, and a vote of thanks offered by Dr. Amit Bandyopadhyay, Associate Professor, Dept. of Physiology, University of Calcutta. Presentations were followed by lunch, a meeting of the ISE Executive Committee and the ISE Annual General Meeting.

A recording of the Symposium presentations is available on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/-YpvfPZiUrM>

Highlights and notable achievements: Specify as many as necessary

(1) This event was the first of its kind collaboration on the topic of informal work, ergonomics and

design between the Indian Society of Ergonomics, ICOH Scientific Committee on Small Scale Enterprises and Informal Sector, and the IEA Technical Committee on Informal Work.

- (2) This hybrid event drew an audience of 167 participants from India and abroad, beyond what would be typical of a one-day in-person event.
- (3) In-person and virtual participants asked relevant questions to the speakers in Q&A session and expressed their satisfactions on answers.

Overall self-evaluation:

- The symposium was designed to share ideas on the application of design thinking in the informal sectors to improve the health and safety of workers and their working environment.
- Speakers delivered their key notes by following the abovementioned objective of the symposium.
- Prof. Pranab K. Nag in his presentation discussed the excessive duration of work in informal sector, and often exceed 10 hours a day. Informal workers used to work long hours to earn more money to make a better financial status. He also mentioned about how to design the time of work in informal organizations without disturbing the productivity.
- Prof. Anindya K. Ganguli in his deliberation talked about the standardization process on workers' benefit of formal sectors. He discussed the challenges for implementation of standard (design of machinery and work environment) in informal sectors.
- Prof. Debkumar Chakrabarti delivered primarily on design thinking and its application in informal sectors. He cited several examples of low-cost design improvement in the informal economy.
- The symposium generated a vibrant discussion and sharing of ideas on low-cost design and the application of design thinking for the benefit of mankind. This one-day symposium, moreover, made evident that the application of low-cost design in informal sectors is among the most effective means for improving occupational health in informal work settings.

Future plan: This one-day symposium was held in place of the annual HWWE conference typically coinciding with the ISE AGM. Since the HWWE Conference was not held this year, this alternative hybrid symposium format was a successful event and networking opportunity. The theme lent itself to collaborating with IEA Informal Work TC and ICOH SCOHSSEIS allowing for broader marketing and outreach and provides a template for future collaborative online and hybrid events separate from the annual HWWE Conference.

Table(s) and Figures(s) (with captions): None

Photo picture(s) – jpeg (with captions): please refer the subsequent pages containing additional event photographs and captions.



Caption: A group photograph of in-person attendees at the Design Thinking and Informal Sectors hybrid symposium held at the University of Calcutta, December 13, 2025. Seated in the front row (left to right) are Dean of the Design School UPES, Prof. Bhaskar Bhatt, ISE President Prof. Debkumar Chakrabarti, Chair of International Development Standing Committee at International Ergonomics Association Prof. Anindya K. Ganguli, Former President of ISE Prof. Pranab K. Nag, ISE Vice President Prof. Prakash C. Dhara, and Symposium Chair Prof. Somnath Gangopadhyay.

Name of persons who provided the above information: Profs. Somnath Gangopadhyay (Chair), Debkumar Chakrabarti, Mohammad Muzammil, and Clive D'Souza.

End

Additional Event Photographs.



Caption: Prof. Mohammad Muzammil is delivering online his introductory talk on the IEA Technical Committee on Informal Work.



Caption: Prof. Somnath Gangopadhyay is delivering his introductory talk on the ICOH SCOHSSEIS



Caption: Speakers and Participants of the symposium



Caption: Prof. Anindya K. Ganguli is delivering his keynote presentation.



Caption: Prof. Pranab K Nag delivering his keynote presentation.



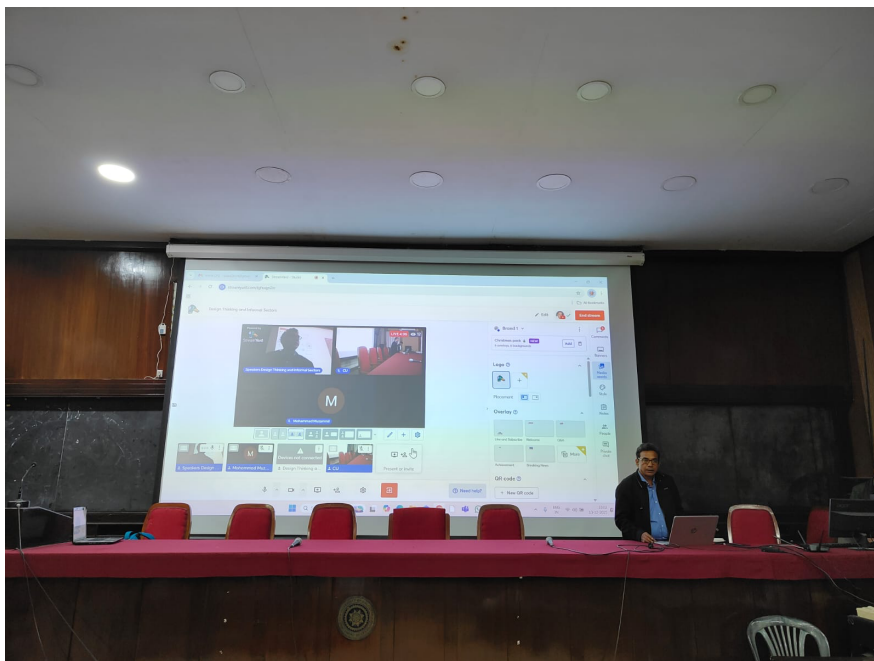
Caption: Prof. Debkumar Chakrabarti delivering his keynote presentation.



Caption: Prof. Prakash C Dhara introducing the keynote speakers



Caption: Dr. Amit Bandyopadhyay is offering the vote of thanks



Caption: Dr. Rajen Haldar is delivering his introductory talk on the history of the Department of Physiology and Ergonomics Laboratory.



Caption: Speakers and Participants (in person and virtual) of the symposium.