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## Northumbria appoints Mace Director as Visiting Professor

Dr Marzia Bolpagni joins Northumbria's Faculty of Engineering and Environment as a Visiting Professor, to improve EDI outcomes and mentor students towards achieving their career goals.

This prestigious appointment follows funding from The Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng), allowing Dr Bolpagni to join the Department of Mechanical and Construction Engineering at Northumbria University.

Dr Bolpagni has an extensive background in digital construction, notably working in various leadership roles across several initiatives focussed on the acceleration of the digital transformation of the Built Environment, including Associate Director of Building Information Modelling (BIM) International at Mace, Task Group Leader at the EU Committee for Standardization (CEN), Assistant Editor of the BIM Dictionary, Ambassador of the UK BIM Alliance, and Chair of the Modelling and Standards Committee for the European Council of Computing in Construction.

With an impressive collection of achievements in the industry, she has most recently been awarded 'Young Engineer of the Year' and received the Sir George Macfarlane Medal for her work by the RAEng. She also received 'Emerging Professional of the Year' at the 2021 Consultancy and Engineering Awards; she was listed in the Financial Times as one of the most influential women in tech by AccelerateHER in 2021, and she won the Women of the Future Award for Construction, Real Estate and Infrastructure.

For her inaugural lecture, Dr Bolpagni discussed how Digital Engineering as a career prospect can support engineering and construction disciplines to both improve Equality, Diversity and Inclusion outcomes and address decarbonisation challenges.

Careers in construction will continue to be at the forefront of her work throughout her time at the University as she plans to deliver several lectures on the topic for staff and students.

Commenting on her appointment Dr Bolpagni said: "I'm excited to work in collaboration with the Department of Mechanical and Construction Engineering to enhance the student experience and explore how Digital Engineering can support a sustainable, diverse and inclusive society. I'm looking forward to working with students as they prepare to step into their careers in construction and will be mentoring them along the way."

Professor John Woodward, Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor for Engineering and Environment added: "We are delighted to welcome Dr Marzia Bolpagni as a Visiting Professor in the faculty. I have no doubt that Professor Bolpagni's

expertise and mentoring will have a positive impact on our students as they plan their future careers in the industry. We look forward to working together to offer this critical support to our students.'

Northumbria University is the lead partner in the [International Centre for Connected Construction \(IC3\)](#). This global centre brings together leaders in industry, public sector and academia to drive positive transformation in construction, underpinned by digital technology. Construction is still a sector with low productivity, safety issues and a lack of investment in R&D. Northumbria is working with other IC3 partners to demonstrate new and innovative ways of working using live construction projects. Spanning the entire life cycle of built assets, projects range from leveraging AI to [optimise management of site equipment](#) like bulldozers and trucks to reduce environmental impact and financial losses, to [tackling fuel poverty](#) using data from sensors and IoT. These projects provide an evidence-base for how 'smart construction' can be used in practice, supporting a major cultural shift across the industry. They are also creating the body of knowledge required to reshape education and skills in this sector enabling us to successfully build and manage buildings and infrastructure that are sustainable, safer, healthier and more effective.

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