

# Business Secretary pays tribute to late Lord Bhattacharyya with new engineering inspired initiatives

The outstanding achievements of Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya (CBE FREng FRS) are to be recognised with two dedicated tributes to continue his legacy, the Government announced today (Tuesday 16 July).

Lord Bhattacharyya, who passed away 1 March 2019, was formerly Regius Professor of Manufacturing at Warwick University and Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering. As the founder of Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG) he was widely recognised globally for his position as a leading light in the fields of manufacturing, engineering and technology.

The reputation of WMG and Lord Bhattacharyya's status as one of the UK's foremost experts in manufacturing saw successive administrations call on his expert advice for a range of initiatives, including most recently the Government's investment in battery technology through the Faraday Challenge.

Business Secretary Greg Clark announced in the House of Commons today two tributes designed to reflect Lord Bhattacharyya's life and achievements by championing excellence in engineering education, and industry-academia collaboration. They are:

- a Bhattacharyya Award for sustained collaboration between universities and industry. This Award, administered by the Royal Academy of Engineering, will recognise the types of partnership being championed by the Government's Industrial Strategy, that bring together academia and industry to tackle challenges across sectors; and
- a Bhattacharyya Engineering Inclusion Programme in the South West Midlands area. This Programme will be an engineering Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) education support programme for schools and FE colleges in the region, providing a range of extra-curricular activities, resources and bursaries to engage and inspire young people to pursue further study and careers in engineering.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Today I am pleased to announce a tribute to celebrate the contribution Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya has made to the UK, since he came here from India in 1961.

He founded and led Warwick Manufacturing Group for nearly 40 years. Through his leadership, WMG has developed a global reputation in automotive research, the built environment, digital technology and healthcare systems, built on strong collaborations between academia and industry.

Successive UK governments have drawn on his advice on manufacturing and technology and built strong lasting collaborative relationships with India and China. Kumar Bhattacharyya also championed high quality technical education so the tribute I am announcing today reflects both these important aspects of his work.

Dr Hayaatun Sillem, CEO of the Royal Academy of Engineering, said:

We are delighted to be working with BEIS on a new suite of programmes and awards to celebrate the life of the exceptional engineer Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya. Lord Bhattacharyya was a pivotal figure in UK manufacturing industry while having a long and distinguished career in higher education.

The new award to promote longstanding industry-university collaboration is a fitting tribute. In addition, the Academy is delighted to be supporting a new engineering inclusion programme for schools and colleges in the West Midlands to encourage children from diverse backgrounds into careers in engineering.

Lord Bhattacharyya was a passionate advocate of diversity and inclusion and we look forward to working with the Warwick Manufacturing Group, local employers, schools and colleges to create future generations of engineers and technicians for our industries.

Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street, said:

Lord Bhattacharyya's contribution to the West Midlands economy was immense, not least in helping to place our region at the cutting edge of next-generation automotive technology.

We are also benefitting from the strong and lasting links he forged between industry and education, relationships that will help stand us in good stead over the coming years.

But Kumar was also a friend, colleague and trusted advisor and I can think of no better way of growing his wonderful legacy than with these two new initiatives.

The Award and the Programme will be opened officially from later this year.