

Glancing back at the ITEA PO Days 2022 and Family reunion in Helsinki

Three days of familiar onsite inspiration and innovation

ITEA Call 2022 for project proposals was launched on 13 September 2022 in conjunction with the ITEA Project Outline Preparation Days (ITEA PO Days) in Helsinki on 13 and 14 September. After two years of meeting online, many were happy to finally reunite in real life. The Scandic Marina Congress Center in Helsinki provided a perfect backdrop to celebrate this occasion during the PO Days and the following ITEA Family reunion on 14 and 15 September.



Driving innovation face-to-face again

This year around 310 participants from 21 different countries registered for the online sessions of the ITEA PO Days and about 230 of them joined the event in person in Helsinki. After years of online conferences, many were happy to finally be back again and meet their possible collaboration partners face-to-face. It became clear that the companies and researchers attending not only represent the leading edge of software innovation, but they also form our thriving ITEA Community.

ITEA Chairwoman, Zeynep Sarilar, comments: "During the pandemic, we learnt many things such as the value of technology to keep seeing each other and the importance of physical meetings, especially with our families. Therefore, it was great to have the onsite ITEA PO Days and Family reunion in Helsinki this year to be able to meet and to collaborate in a physical environment."



Combining best of both worlds

For the first time, the ITEA PO Days were also partly online to combine the best of the online and physical PO Days. An online preparation session, 11 online country information sessions and an online project idea pitch session (with 34 pitches) were organised prior to the physical event in Helsinki. This optimised the time for networking and consortium building during the PO Days and opened up participation to a broader group of people that otherwise would not have been able to attend due to busy schedules or difficulties with travelling across the globe.

This combination of online and onsite sessions was highly appreciated by

most of the participants; 81% of the survey respondents indicated that it was a big success and another 18% felt that ITEA partly achieved in combining the best of both worlds, providing at the same time good suggestions to further improve for future events.

Mehrdad Saadatmand at RISE Research Institutes of Sweden expressed his view: "The ITEA PO Days, in general, serve as a great forum for representatives from various industries and market sectors as well as academic and research partners to come together, exchange ideas, and identify industrial research challenges and project topics that are of high impact. The ITEA PO Days 2022 event was of special importance since it was the first physical and in-person PO Days event after two years of having

with numerous very concrete projects in the pipeline.

Ramon Schiffelers, Public Private Partnerships Manager at ASML draws a positive conclusion from his premiere participation at the ITEA PO Days: "ITEA brought the best of the online and offline worlds together by providing an online event a few days before the PO Days in which most project ideas were pitched. Due to this there was more time available on the PO Days itself to brainstorm and to form consortia face-to-face. Together with one of our suppliers, we went to the PO Days equipped with (just) some ideas. At the end of the PO Days, there was a Project Outline, a consortium spanning six different countries, and lots of energy to turn it into a project proposal!"



Public Authorities showing strong commitment

This year, a record number of ten representatives of the Public Authorities attended the event, showing their strong commitment to the ITEA PO Days. They combined their online country information session with a poster in a dedicated poster area at the event, informing participants about national priorities, eligibility criteria and funding outlook. Of course, participants were also able to discuss their first ideas for their project proposal one-on-one with the Public Authority representatives at the Scandic Marina, creating an early dialogue, which is very important to improve the chances for funding.

it only online due to the pandemic. Thanks to the excellent organisation of the event by the ITEA Office, the PO Days 2022 enabled us to not only meet our old ITEA friends once again, but also establish new international collaborations and contacts."

Innovative powered Community presenting solutions for the future

In addition to the plenary sessions in Helsinki, there was plenty of time for interaction during the poster session – in which 32 project ideas were presented – and the many lively brainstorm and workgroup sessions to exchange, discuss and develop new ideas together. The group discussions resulted in 17 plenary project idea presentations



Mika Niskanen, Business Finland (Finland NCP for ITEA), shares his thoughts: "The ITEA PO Days 2022 were my first experience of the PO Days. My expectations were to understand the character of the event, meet customers, meet my ITEA colleagues and hear about ITEA projects under preparation and finished projects. My own task related to ITEA projects is to work with evaluation and funding of national applications

will work better together in the future. It was a pleasure to participate in the ITEA PO Days 2022."

Apart from initiating new innovative ideas, the PO Days 2022 also provided the opportunity to have a look at the great achievements of ITEA projects that were recently completed. On Thursday 15 September, during the ITEA Awards of Excellence ceremony, ITEA's four most outstanding software

(OT) exposes manufacturing systems to a growing number and diversity of threats. The ITEA project CyberFactory#1 has designed, developed, integrated and demonstrated a set of key enabling capabilities to foster the optimisation and resilience of the Factory of the Future (FoF). For these achievements, the CyberFactory#1 consortium was awarded the ITEA Award of Excellence 2022 for Business Impact!



and thus the PO Days event was an excellent opportunity to discuss the coming projects and to understand the results of finished projects. Definitely the most important dimension of the ITEA PO Days was to meet live with my ITEA colleagues who during the last two years have only been images on the screen. I enjoyed this possibility to learn more about my colleagues as persons and also to get to know the whole ITEA Community. We have worked well together before online and I think we

innovation projects – that finished between mid-2021 and mid-2022 – were celebrated for their impressive results. This year's award winners are:

> **CyberFactory#1 - fostering the optimisation and resilience of the Factory of the Future**
To enable the Factory of the Future, optimisation must be reconciled with security. The growing integration of Information Technology (IT) into Operational Technology

> **IMPACT - making healthcare more efficient, accurate and cost-effective**
Healthcare faces many challenges, including improving patient outcome and working more cost-effectively, while the demand is growing, staff capacity is declining, and new clinical and technological developments succeed each other quickly. The international collaborative ITEA project IMPACT has addressed several challenges by leveraging the power of data and building on the preceding award-winning ITEA projects MEDIANE and BENEFIT to move towards intelligence-based healthcare. Thanks to this innovative approach, IMPACT has won the 2022 ITEA Award of Excellence in the category 'Innovation' and was one of the three finalists for the 2022 Eureka Award 'Best Product and Service Innovation'.

> **OPTIMUM - offering greater efficiency, safety and usability in future smart factories**
In today's factories, machines such as cranes are typically operated manually using heterogeneous



hardware. These are usually not interoperable and diverse control environments are in use; static machine configurations also make evolution hard to achieve. The ITEA project OPTIMUM enables machines of different kinds and from different manufacturers to communicate with each other and their operators, improving the worker's and equipment's safety. In recognition of this exceptional achievement, OPTIMUM received the Special ITEA Award of Excellence in all three nomination categories: Innovation, Standardisation and Business Impact.

› **PANORAMA - supporting the shift to open source**

In the automotive domain, many similar control units are used, but different organisations often use heterogeneous functional domains, hardware and teams. This complicates collaboration, while this is very important as many stakeholders are involved. The ITEA project PANORAMA has created an open-source meta-model and framework that promotes collaboration on software and hardware development using heterogeneous tools and practices and without losing control of one's own data. The PANORAMA project received the 2022 ITEA Award of Excellence in the category 'Standardisation' for this great achievement.

ITEA congratulates the ITEA Award of Excellence winners for their impressive results contributing to a better society!

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ITEA Family reunion

On the back of the ITEA PO Days, we celebrated the ITEA Community getting back together again during the ITEA Family reunion. The programme consisted of inspiring sessions with SME Stars and well-respected ITEA Family members, a keynote speech "Should innovation become maintenance?" by Sietske Rozie, Radiologist M.D. and the ITEA Awards of Excellence ceremony, combined with the opportunity to reunite for drinks, a dinner and a long-awaited chance to socialise.

Maria Rimini-Döring, of Robert Bosch and a member of the ITEA Steering Group attended the ITEA Family reunion: "The two-day Family reunion followed a proven "choreography" according to the motto "no future without a past". Wednesday was devoted to the history, the very special persons, traditions and values of ITEA which made and make up its strong spirit of collaboration and cohesion. This kind of "intensive care" we feel for each other, the projects and, I dare adding, the work as a whole creates the solid ground for the sparkling innovations

envisioned and awarded the next day. It was great to look from the stage into so many happy faces! I felt so proud and honoured to be part of this great ITEA family."

After two years online, we can definitely say the physical ITEA PO Days are back! It was inspiring to see the ITEA Community reunite, reinforcing the event as the must-attend event for a large international Community of large industry, SMEs, start-ups, academia and customer organisations to create innovative solutions and collaborate in funded projects focusing on software innovation. We look forward to meeting you all again next year!

The organisation of these PO Days was supported by Business Finland, the Finnish government organisation for innovation funding and trade, travel and investment promotion, for which we are very grateful.

More information and recordings & presentations

<https://itea4.org/podays2022/index.html>