Engineering and the Environment
Making history for over 120 years

1882: Frederick Lanchester studied at the Hartley Institute (now the University of Southampton), before designing and building one of the first petrol-driven four-wheeled cars.

1950: Elfyn Richards, Chief Aerodynamicist and a designer of the Vickers Viscount aircraft, introduced research on the environmental and industrial effects of noise and vibration.

1952: The University of Southampton was granted its Royal Charter.

1961: Aeronautical engineering students flew the world’s first human-powered aircraft.

1970s: The first moving ground was installed in our wind tunnel, revolutionising car design.

1981: The RJ Mitchell Wind Tunnel was presented to the University by the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) to support Formula One and IndyCar work.

1990: The ISVR Hearing and Balance Centre, now the University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service, fitted their first cochlear implant device.

1998: Academics working on bubble acoustics co-authored the current guidelines for every foetal scan in the world — that’s over 700 million births to date.

1964: Geoffrey Lilley, leader of the Concorde technical team and the Father of Aeroacoustics, joined the University.

1959: Our researchers developed modelling techniques to analyse and improve the design of the iconic Sydney Opera House.

1963: The Institute of Sound and Vibration Research (ISVR) was established.

1988: Flight trials of an active noise control system were carried out with British Aerospace; audible inflight entertainment was born.

1996: We began work on European Union funded projects to reduce railway noise, with the rail dampers we developed now implemented in 16 countries.

1979: The world’s first cryogenic wind tunnel was designed and demonstrated at the University, before the technique was adopted by NASA.

For over 120 years we’ve been using sound science and creative engineering to shape the world you know today.
2001: Tests conducted by our researchers were used to design the Kingfisher yacht, sailed by Ellen MacArthur during the Vendee Globe race.

2007: Our engineers completed the first fully-turbulent aerofoil flow simulations using high-performance computing.

1999: Our research led to the first commercial implementation of adaptive cruise control in Jaguar vehicles.

2005: The ISVR was awarded a Queen’s Anniversary Prize for improving the quality of life for the profoundly deaf and reducing noise pollution.

2010: StarStream® was invented, a device with the potential to clear leaves from railway tracks, fight against antimicrobial resistance, and clean medical equipment.

2008: Our students developed Amy Williams’s sled, helping her win Gold at the Winter Olympic Games.

2008: Our engineers worked with the British Cycling team, helping them win Gold at the Beijing Olympic Games.

Our researchers began work on the world’s first 100% fossil fuel free cargo ship.

2011: We designed and flew the world’s first 3D-printed unmanned aircraft.

2012: The University was awarded a Queen’s Anniversary Prize for innovation and world-leading expertise in performance sports engineering.

2015: The state-of-the-art Southampton Boldrewood Innovation Campus was opened by HRH The Princess Royal.

We designed a biodegradable stent to open blocked coronary arteries with Arterius Ltd.

Be a part of our evolving story as we continue to work at the forefront of innovation.