PROTEC and GE Vernova celebrate inaugural Next Engineers: Engineering Academy class

- 37 learners graduate from programme designed to inspire the next generation of engineers

Johannesburg, South Africa (September 27, 2024) - Next Engineers, a global college-and career-readiness programme working to increase the diversity of young people in engineering, celebrated the graduation of its first-ever Engineering Academy learners in Johannesburg, South Africa on Friday, September 27. The graduation ceremony marked the programme's contribution towards bridging the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills gap in the country through exposing learners to hands-on engineering experiences and career pathways.

The 37 learners from 15 high schools across Johannesburg who completed the programme, many of whom plan to study towards an engineering-related qualification at university or technical higher learning institutions, were joined by their families at University of Witwatersrand, Sturrock Park Sports Hall, to celebrate their achievements. Launched in 2022, PROTEC, University of Witwatersrand, and Kutitiva Foundation are the educational partners for the local Next Engineers programme, and local GE Vernova engineers and employees actively engage with Academy participants through hands-on, skill-based volunteering.

"We are proud to see our first cohort of learners graduating and wish them all a successful learning trajectory in the next stage of their education journey," said **Matsi Eseu, South Africa HR Director for GE Vernova**. "At GE Vernova, we believe education is a significant driver of economic inclusion and it's inspiring to see the positive impact the Next Engineers programme is having, not just in empowering tomorrow's engineers who will solve society's most pressing challenges but also in increasing the diversity of young people, particularly

females, in the engineering sector. We extend our gratitude to all those involved in the Engineering Academy."

Learners who complete the Engineering Academy program and enroll in a qualified engineering or engineering-related degree programme receive financial aid to support them as they continue on their paths to becoming engineers.

Balan Moodley, CEO of PROTEC, said, "I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every graduate in this programme. Their commitment and hard work inspire us all, and I have every confidence they will continue to make a positive impact in the field of engineering and beyond. I also want to express my sincere gratitude to GE Vernova in Johannesburg for their unwavering support and partnership throughout this journey. Together, we have laid the groundwork for a brighter future in engineering, and I am excited to see the continued success of Next Engineers in empowering young minds."

The Next Engineers: Engineering Academy is a transformative learning experience designed for learners aged 15 to 18. Through a rigorous curriculum, immersive design challenges, and career coaching, participants learn to think and act like engineers.

Key programme highlights:

- **Dedication:** The Engineering Academy spans three years, with learners dedicating 220 hours outside of regular school hours to participate.
- **Design challenges:** In small teams, learners tackle increasingly complex design challenges, mastering the engineering design process.
- **Foundational skills:** Beyond technical knowledge, learners develop essential skills such as communication, teamwork, persistence, time management, and presentation abilities.
- **Education and career exploration:** Workshops and activities prepare learners for their next steps, including university campus tours and interactions with company volunteers.

- **Scholarships:** Learners who complete the program and enroll in post-secondary engineering degree programs receive partial scholarships. Next Engineers anticipates granting at least $2 million in scholarships to the inaugural classes of Engineering Academy learners worldwide.

Johannesburg, South Africa, was among the first four locations to launch Next Engineers, with a $2.5 million (R44.6 million) investment from the GE Foundation in 2021. To date, Next Engineers, which also includes programming for learners in grades 8-12, has reached more than 3,500 learners across Johannesburg.

STEM training and education, such as Next Engineers, is helping to solve global challenges while also lifting up communities through economic opportunities. Next Engineers is not the only way GE Vernova in South Africa has committed to supporting the next generation of STEM talent. GE Vernova's South Africa External Bursary Programme has offered comprehensive bursaries to the tune of $5.4 million (R95.6 million) to support over 648 beneficiaries pursuing a Bachelor of Science, Commerce or Arts qualification from 2020 to date. The bursaries are aimed at alleviating the financial strain of tertiary students and covers the tuition, accommodation, textbook costs, and a monthly stipend over the period of study.

For more information about Next Engineers and the Engineering Academy, visit NextEngineers.org.

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About Next Engineers
Next Engineers, a program originally funded by the GE Foundation in 2021, now known as the GE Aerospace Foundation, is a college- and career-readiness program dedicated to inspiring and preparing the next generation of engineers. Through innovative programs, mentorship, and community partnerships, we empower young minds to shape a better future through engineering.

About GE Vernova
GE Vernova Inc. (NYSE: GEV) is a purpose-built global energy company that includes Power, Wind, and Electrification segments and is supported by its

accelerator businesses. Building on over 130 years of experience tackling the world's challenges, GE Vernova is uniquely positioned to help lead the energy transition by continuing to electrify the world while simultaneously working to decarbonize it. GE Vernova helps customers power economies and deliver electricity that is vital to health, safety, security, and improved quality of life. GE Vernova is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S., with approximately 75,000 employees across 100+ countries around the world. Supported by the Company's purpose, The Energy to Change the World, GE Vernova technology helps deliver a more affordable, reliable, sustainable, and secure energy future. Learn more: GE Vernova and LinkedIn.

About PROTEC

PROTEC was established in 1982 by a group of engineers from the South African Institute of Civil Engineers to respond to the challenges facing the education system and to address representation across all socio-economic and racial groups in STEM careers. To date, PROTEC has seen more than 40,000 learners complete the Learner Excellence Programme. Based in Randburg, PROTEC has 17 branches and projects in 6 out of the 9 provinces. Our aim is to extend the programme to all 9 provinces. The programme targets learners from Grade 4 to Grade 12 in specifically Science, Mathematics, and English. Teachers who teach these subjects as well as coding and robotics, benefit from development and support that uses a centre-based and classroom support model. Find us on www.protec.org.za, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.

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