Note from the guest editor

"You're going to make a difference. A lot of times it won't be huge, it won't be visible even. But it will matter just the same. Don't do it for praise or money, that's what I want to tell you. Do it because it needs to be done. Do it to make your world better."

James Gordon, in Ed Brubaker and Greg Rucka's Gotham Central Book One: In the line of duty

This annual Special Edition once again combines outstanding papers from two conferences:

- The 33rd annual conference of the Southern African Institute for Industrial Engineering (SAIIE33), held from 3 to 5 October 2022 in Zimbali, South Africa,

- and The 23rd annual Rapid Product Development Association of South Africa (RAPDASA) conference, joined by the 15th Robotics and Mechatronics (RobMech), the 33rd Pattern Recognition Association of South Africa (PRASA), and the 3rd South African Advanced Materials Initiative (CoSAAMI) conferences. This joint conference was held from 9 to 11 November 2022 in Somerset West, South Africa.

This Special Edition presents the best work presented at these conferences. Papers undergo the same double-blind peer review process, using the journal's criteria. They are selected on the basis of reviewer rankings and a final check of quality and suitability by the journal editors.

The theme of this year's SAIIE conference introduced us to The marvellous world of industrial engineering, comparing the work done by industrial engineering professionals with that of superheroes, while the RAPDASA conference showcased the wonders of Digital technology in production development. These themes highlighted the industrial engineering profession's versatile nature and far-reaching impact.

The papers in this Special Edition are, without a doubt, excellent, and they contribute both visibly and invisibly to making the world a better place. I encourage you to explore the papers, and I trust that you, too, will be able to see our industrial engineering professionals as the superheroes of the future.

Teresa Hattingh
Guest Editor