

About the Brunel Solar Team

The Brunel Solar Team is a self-managed group of engineering students from Delft University of Technology, united by a shared ambition to advance clean mobility. Each year, a new team is selected to take on one of the most demanding student engineering challenges in the world: designing, building, and racing a fully solar-powered car across 3,000 kilometers of the Australian Outback.

Since their debut in 2001, the team has competed in every edition of the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge. They have earned global recognition for their consistent podium finishes and for pushing the boundaries of what solar vehicles can achieve under real-world conditions.

The 2025 team brings together 18 students from a wide mix of technical disciplines, from mechanical and electrical to aerospace, software, and structural engineering. With full ownership over the vehicle's design and systems, these students take on real engineering responsibility from concept to completion, developing solutions that prioritize performance, efficiency, and reliability in one of the world's toughest test environments.

In *Building Nuna*, our behind-the-scenes story, we follow four team members to capture the mindset, problem-solving, and collaboration that shape every part of the build. Details for all team members can be found on the [Brunel Solar Team website](#).

Daan van den Dries

Chief Engineer, Brunel Solar Team

With a background in Mechanical Engineering from TU Delft, he paused his studies to focus fully on building the team's next-generation solar car. In his role, Daan brings together every technical discipline, ensuring the car is tested under pressure and is ready for the challenge. His connection to the project runs deep: having followed the team's achievements since childhood, he now plays a central role in carrying that legacy forward.

Quotes:

On building Nuna 13 under new race regulations:

"We have a smaller battery and a larger solar panel. That means we have less energy to drive. But we don't want to slow down... so we have to find a way to make the car even more efficient."

On responding to setbacks:

"When we saw Nuna flipped over, we feared the worst. Fortunately, it was fixable, and the experience brought our team much closer together. It was a real crisis, but also a turning point."

What companies can learn from the team:

"It's not necessarily about our technology, but the way we work together... We take a lot of ownership, and we collaborate in a way that I think is very special."

Jans van den Nobelen

Partnerships team, Brunel Solar Team

With a background in Industrial Design Engineering, Jans took on a dual role: managing team communications and race strategy as Mission Control Driver, and supporting outreach and logistics as part of the marketing team. She oversees real-time communication between the car and race crew, helping guide decisions that keep the team on track. From coordinating the shipment of Nuna 13 to Australia to visiting schools to share the team's story, Jans combines technical precision with a clear sense of purpose, helping drive the project forward while inspiring others along the way.

Quotes:

On real-time race decisions and communication:

"You have to make the right decision at the right time, and that can change every minute. So it's quite a challenge to keep all the information up to date and make sure we're choosing the best strategy."

On managing the team's logistics:

"One of the most difficult things was transporting everything to Australia... we had 17 boxes and a trailer with the car in it. Just arranging all of that – figuring out what paperwork we needed, making sure everything was legal, and dealing with the timelines – that was definitely a big task."

On personal motivation and legacy:

"I saw a video on the news when I was around 12, and I remember thinking, wow – that's such a cool project. It stuck with me. So when the application opened, I signed up immediately."

Merijn Kroon

Partnerships team, Brunel Solar Team

As part of the Partnerships team, Merijn is responsible for managing relationships with the team's sponsors and ensuring partners stay connected to the project throughout the year. With a recently completed bachelor's degree in Architecture, he brings a design-driven perspective and a practical, hands-on mindset to his role – building trust through regular communication, tailored events, and shared goals. Merijn also contributes to team logistics and external engagement, from onboarding partners to showcasing the solar car during public events. He aims to make every collaboration meaningful, creating long-term value for the team and its supporters.

Quotes:

On his role in partner management:

"My responsibility is managing external relationships. I'm part of the Partnerships department, which means I stay in contact with our partners and make sure they're involved in the project."

On creating value for sponsors and partners:

"We also want to give something back. So when we go to Australia, we include all the partner logos on the car and make sure to send back photos, videos... Everything they can use for their own communication."

On being involved beyond the sponsor role:

"For us, it's not only about getting money from a company. It's about creating a relationship."

Thijmen God

Technical Manager, Brunel Solar Team

As Technical Manager, Thijmen is responsible for overseeing all systems on the solar car and ensuring seamless integration between mechanical, electrical, and software components. With a background in Electrical Engineering, he plays a key role in translating high-level performance goals into practical design choices. Thijmen's focus is on making sure the car operates safely and reliably under real-world conditions – from sensor data and software reliability to driver safety and control systems. He leads with a systems-thinking approach, ensuring that each decision contributes to the car's efficiency and performance in the race.

Quotes:

On software and sensor reliability:

"We need to make sure everything is reliable and that it works the same in real life as it did in testing. Because once you're in the Outback, you don't get a second chance."

On performance and responsibility:

"It's quite a challenge, because we have to make the car as efficient as possible, but also as safe as possible."

On what makes the team unique:

"We're not just building a car. We're building a full system, with people, with trust, and with a common goal."