

IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors meeting minutes

Hawaii Convention Center, Honolulu, HI, 06.29.2014, 1:10-6:20 PM

Edmund Yeh

Present: Abbas El Gamal, Sergio Verdu, Vijay Kumar, Nick Laneman, Alex Vardy, Matthieu Bloch, Joerg Kliewer, Alon Orlitsky, Rudiger Urbanke, Aylin Yener, Emina Soljanin, Michelle Eros, Urbashi Mitra,

administrator who would serve a role similar to that of the current administrator for the EIC, and who could provide administrative continuity.

A discussion followed on the topic of administrative support. It was noted that the location of the administrator is not too important. The hiring process would consist of placing an ad in an appropriate venue, and then informing IEEE. It was noted that since the nature of the work associated with the position is bursty, perhaps the position can be combined with that of the assistant to the EIC. It was pointed out that the person hired should be able to read financial statements properly. One question raised is whether the hired person should be an IEEE person or an outside contractor.

Bolcskei, Merouane Debbah, Albert Guillen i Fabregas, Dongning Guo, Stephen Hanly, Amir K. Khandani, Urbashi Mitra, Ralf Muller, H. Vincent Poor, Aylin Yener, and Wei Yu. BoG members will vote over email to approve (all or a subset of the candidates), not approve the slate of candidates, or to abstain.

Muriel proceeded to First and Second Vice President and President nominations. Ubli Mitra and Rudiger Urbanke were nominated for Second VP. An email vote will be taken where BoG members approve one of the two candidates for 2nd VP or abstain. Alon Orlitsky was nominated for First VP. Michelle Eros was nominated for President. An email vote will be taken where BoG members approve or disapprove these candidates or abstain.

4. Michelle Eros presented the Awards Committee Report, which was previously emailed to BoG members.

The Awards Committee members for the IT Society Paper Award are: Giuseppe Caire, Michelle Eros (ex-officio, chair), Tracey Ho, Mike Honig, Navin Kashyap, Young-Han Kim, Vijay Kumar, Alon Orlitsky (ex-officio), Stephan ten Brink, Andreas Winter.

Eight papers were nominated for the 2014 IT Society Paper Award. After four rounds of review, two finalists were selected. The Committee recommends the following paper for the IT Society Paper Award:

Dalai, M., "Lower Bounds on the Probability of Error for Classical and Classical-Quantum Channels," *IEEE Transactions on Information Theory*, Volume 59, Issue 12, Dec. 2013. pp. 8027-8056.

Michelle also summarized recent activity for the 2014 ComSoc-ITSoc Joint Paper Award. The committee consisted of: Michelle Eros (chair), Giuseppe Caire, Costas Georgiadis, Vincent Lau, Aria Nosratinia, and Alon Orlitsky. The award was given to:

Gopalan, P., Huang, C., Simitci, H., Yekhanin, S., "On the Locality of Codeword Symbols," *IEEE Transactions on Information Theory*, Volume 58, No.11, pp. 6925 - 6934, November 2011.

5. Ram Zamir presented the Fellows Selection Committee report on behalf of Rob Calderbank. The committee members are Rob Calderbank (Chair), Helmut Boelcskei, Andrea Goldsmith, Tom Richardson, Emre Telatar, Raymond Yeung, Ram Zamir. The Committee provided IEEE with a rank ordering of the 8 candidates before the June 7 deadline. Rami described the procedures used by the Committee to arrive at the set of candidates. It was noted that only 4 of the 18 IT Society members elected to Fellow this year were nominated through the IT Society itself. A number of BoG members noted that perhaps the bar set for Fellow nomination in the IT Society is too high. Many accomplished researchers are not named Fellow until quite late in their careers. Members may feel that their chances are better with other societies. Rami noted that Rob is actively trying to improve the process.

6. Elza Erkip presented the Conference Committee Report. Elza presented a quick update on ISIT 2014. For ISIT 2015 in Hong Kong, Elza noted that the venue is expensive. We are expecting a 25% discount on the venue, which may lead to lower registration fees. The budget has three versions, the most likely of which leads to a 10% surplus.

In the discussion which ensued, it was pointed out that ISITs now have high registration fees. Given that IT Society has a mix of member backgrounds and support levels, the Society should try to keep conference fees in check. It was suggested that ITA provides a good model for conferences with low registration fees. It was also suggested that conferences should be held at universities if possible, with access to reasonably priced dorm accommodations. On the other hand, it was pointed out that conference fees are determined by the proposals which the Conference Committee receives, and recently the proposals have come from expensive locations.

Motion: To approve the budget for ISIT 2015 in Hong Kong. Motion was passed.

Elza moved on to ISIT 2016 to be held in Barcelona. The venue will be a university. The registration fee will be 600 euros. Around 900 people are expected. The budget surplus is expected to be greater than 10%.

Motion: To approve the budget for ISIT 2016 in Barcelona. Motion was passed.

Jossy Sayir presented a proposal to host ITW 2016 at Cambridge University, UK. Jossy pointed out that many UK universities have recently hired faculty in the information theory area, and it seems appropriate to bring ITW to the UK. The proposed venue for ITW 2016 is Robinson College, Cambridge University, which will also provide accommodations.

Motion: To approve Cambridge, UK, as the location for ITW 2016. Motion was passed.

Elza next moved to technical co-sponsorship for ITA 2015.

Motion: To approve technical co-sponsorship for ITA 2015. Motion was passed.

Elza discussed prospects for future ISITs (2018 and beyond). There is a potential proposal for ISIT 2018 from New York (Emina Soljanin, Alexei Ashikhmin). A third co-chair is needed. Other possible locations include Paris (Pablo Piantanida), Stockholm (Lars Rasmussen), and Melbourne (Emanuele Viterbo).

7. Alon Orlitsky presented the Membership Committee report. Alon first summarized the Student Sub-

Alon moved on to the Distinguished Lecturers (DL) program. There were two requests for Distinguished Lectures this year, similar to the past. We need more requests. Suggestions include making the DL program more noticeable on the IT Society website, request and advertise yearly travel schedule, and mail to chapter chairs.

Alon next discussed the Padovani Lecture. This year, the lectureship was awarded to Professor En-Hui Yang, a distinguished member of the IT Society who straddles academia and industry. Prof. Yang is FRSC, FCAE, Tier 1 Canada Chair. Based in Toronto, he has successfully started and sold two companies.

Alon next noted that the Chapter of the Year award has been given to the Israel Chapter. Discussion ensued on how the Society can create new IT chapters. We should try to enhance the role of chapters in the life of members. It was noted that in the past, certain chapters hosted talks every month where local industry was involved. It is suggested that the Society create incentives for the creation of new chapters. Currently, new chapters receive \$1000 from the Society to jump start activities. The Chapter of the Year further receives \$1000. It is suggested that chapter activities be funded at higher levels. It is also suggested that the DL program be coordinated with chapter activities.

Alon next mentioned that the IT Society has been nominated for the IEEE Professional Development Award. Although the Society is not the largest in IEEE, it has pioneered many innovative professional development activities such as IT Schools, the mentoring program, the Student Committee and WITHITS.

Alon moved on to discussing IT membership numbers, which have been declining recently. The wide availability of Xplore has decreased Society benefits and excitement level in the area is also down. Incentives such as differential registration charges and the mentoring program may help reverse membership decline. Other societies are trying new approaches such as webinars and courses. Alon gave figures for IT Society members who participated in the North American School and at ISIT. One suggested way to increase

+, etc. One can now upload videos into the website or embed videos hosted elsewhere. Looking ahead, the Online Committee will work on linking and advertising all the media resources using the new media features.

Matthieu continued on the topic of domain names and archiving of future ISITs. Presently, creating a website and managing the domain name (isitxxx.org) is the responsibility of conference organizers. While this does provide them with flexibility in terms of website design, interfacing with submission sites, etc., it makes it difficult to ensure archival over the years. The Online Committee recommends the following: moving from isitxxxx.org to isitxxxx.itsoc.org as the standard address for ISIT, and encouraging conference organizers to create a subwebsite within Plone for their conference.

Finally, Matthieu mentioned that Pareja is about to be discontinued. A complete backup has been performed and will be archived on DVDs.

9. Joerg Kliewer presented the Outreach Subcommittee report. The committee is chaired by Joerg, and has Elza Erkip, Bobak Nazer, and Daniela Tuninetti as members. At ITA 2014, the Outreach Subcommittee organized a panel discussion "Landing Your Dream Job" with the Student Committee. The panel featured Bert Hochwald, Muriel Medard, Giuseppe Caire, and Joseph Soriaga. 75 students and postdocs attended. The Outreach Subcommittee will organize a panel discussion at ISIT 2014 on Tuesday evening titled "How to Survive Tenure-Track." The panelists are Salman Avestimehr, Robert Calderbank, Natasha Devroye, and Pulkit Grover. This will be followed by the traditional ISIT mentoring get-together reception.

Joerg pointed out that the mentoring program is stable and doing well. Contacts are being established between the ITSoc mentoring program and the IEEE mentoring program (MentorCentre). Joerg presented recent experiences of mentors and mentees in the program.

10. Aylin Yener presented the School Subcommittee Report. The members of the School Subcommittee are Alex Dimakis, Stark Draper, Michael Gastpar, Gerhard Kramer, Young-Han Kim, and Aylin Yener (Chair). Aylin first previewed reports on past 2014 schools.

Patrick Mitran reviewed the North American School which took place June 18-21, 2014, in Toronto, Canada. Speakers included Robert Calderbank, Brendan Frey, Andrea Goldsmith, Alon Orlitsky, Henry Pfister, and

Budget for the 2015 Indian School.

Gerhard Kramer presented the report on the 2015 European School of Information Theory, to be held in April 2015 in the Netherlands. The organizing committee consists of Jasper Goseling, Tanya Ignatenko, Jos Weber, and Frans Willems. The school location will be near the Amsterdam airport. The estimated budget is 45,000 euros for 60 student participants. The School seeks IT Society support of \$20k.

Motion: To approve funding at \$20k for the 2015 European School of Information Theory. Motion was passed.

Alon Orlitsky presented the report on the 2015 North American School of Information Theory, to be held at Warren College on the UCSD campus in late summer 2015. The organizing committee consists of Massimo

as all implementation details.

Frank noted that IEEE does currently support posting of supplementary material. The present interface appears aimed at supporting the posting of supplementary multimedia files. The supplementary material associated with a paper is available from the same IEEE Xplore page from which the paper can be down-

suggested that long proofs and source code may be good reasons. It was pointed out that proofs should be treated differently from tables and figures. The nature of information theory research gives proofs a different status, and proofs should be included with the main text.

Motion: To accept the recommendations of the Committee on Implementation of Transactions Supple-