

IEEE R8 Professional Activities Subcommittee Report April 2013

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The IEEE R8 Professional Activities Sub-Committee (PASC) team: Jan Verveckken, Chair (Benelux Section), Marc-Joe Chedid (Lebanon Section), Urmet Janes (Estonia Section)

1. Highlights from the past

- Sections contacted to organize events to increase the level of activities within the region. Several workshops successfully realized in autumn-winter 2012 with organization of local PA volunteers.
- In July Professional Activities Summit held within the program of SBC 2012 in Madrid, Spain. Three parallel workshops attracted volunteers at the half-day event (report published in R8 News).
- Sections contacted to propose new PA trainers/speakers to increase the available volunteers and PA topics in Region 8.
- Established active contacts with other committees and IEEE bodies, e.g. IEEE Professional Communication Society.
- Maintenance of a web page with details on PA activities and contacts.
- PASC Presentation was delivered by Emilio Corchado at SBC 2012 to student and GOLD members of Region 8.
- PASC Presentation at Sections Congress 2011 was recorded as a webinar this summer and will be available for online viewing. Best practices in the area of professional activities in Region 8 were presented by Matej Zajc, PASC chair.SBC 2012 PA track
- Appointment of new PA subcommittee

2. Future activities

- Contacting Sections for requests of activities
 - The PA subcommittee kindly invites all sections and their PA officers to organize activities within professional activities. The PA subcommittee facilitates such activities by funding transportation for appropriate high quality speakers for such events. As each year the budget is limited, the sections will be served on a first come, first serve basis, within speaker availability.
- Contacting Sections about appointing/updating PA officers
 - Approach of PA activities adapts to the differences between sections. The needs of the members differ. A section PA officer is the best point of information concerning the different approaches necessary to organize good PA activities locally. The PA subcommittee will continue its efforts in promoting local volunteers in each section.
- Organize annual PA Summit
 - An PA summit offers seminars to help engineers develop awareness and command of non-technical professional skills that include, but not limited to, soft skills, psychological and sociological issues in the business world, job searching, communications, project management, design management, engineering management, and economics-related topics. In the years that R8SAC is not organizing an SBC, this summit is organized by PA volunteers. The PA subcommittee kindly invites section PA officers to propose organizing this event in their section.
- Update PA Handbook
 - The PA handbook is filled with information of previous PA events. It focuses on best methods to organize an event, depending on the section. With every activity, this handbook grows into a larger source of information for sectional PA officers.
- Update PA trainers/presenters database
 - There are several international trainers that the PA Subcommittee has worked with over the last years, and developed good relationships with. Also, at several events, the attendees are not only taught to improve their non-technical skills, but also trained to pass this knowledge on to their local section members. These trainers are also part of the PA network within R8.

3. Best practices

- Early contact with PA team for any activities
 - The speakers with which PA works, provide their cooperation to these events as volunteers. They free up time in their professional schedules for these events. The earlier PA can contact them concerning availability for future events, the higher the likelihood they can accommodate these requests.

- Reporting on PA activities from a sectional perspective
 - The PA handbook grows with every finished activity; the experience aids future organizers to better serve our members.
- SAC/GOLD Cooperation
 - Student and GOLD members can ask for cooperation on their events. Whenever the event is within the topic of PA, PA will gladly help organizing and finding speakers.
- Appointing sectional PA volunteers
 - Sections with a local PA officer have proven to be more active within PA for their members, and have a better feeling on how to make these events successful for their members.

4. Points of concern / Topics for future discussion

- Expanding service of Professional Activities beyond workshops/trainings; Establishing a program of PA in R8.
 - PA subcommittee has been growing steadily in activities and responsibilities. To better serve the members, from student to seasoned professional, from job-hunter to independent engineer, PA subcommittee aims at extending the service it currently provides. The ambition is improve experience and training for IEEE members in their career and profession, handling all non-technical issues concerning their professional development, training, career.
 - This expansion of the PA subcommittee's service to the members will need careful discussion with all stakeholders.
 - Funding these new services to the members should be self-sufficient within R8.
- Many sections do not have PA officer listed (29 out of 56)
 - The importance of such officer can not be ignored. They are the most valuable asset to ensure activities for the section are organized effectively.
- Increase cooperation with other institutions (e.g. JCI)
- Collect and promote best tools and practices for online collaboration (webinars, presentation and documents sharing and publishing etc)

Jan Verweken, IEEE R8 Professional Activities Sub-Committee Chair