

IEEE PA Subcommittee Report October 2013**Jan Verveckken**

The IEEE R8 Professional Activities Sub-Committee (PASC) team: Jan Verveckken, Chair (Benelux Section), Marc-Joe Chedid (Lebanon Section), Urmet Janes (Estonia Section) and the corresponding members are Han Van Loon (Switzerland), Matej Zajc, Past Chair (Slovenia), Hafidh Al-Samarrai (Saudi Arabia West).

Highlights from the past

- GOLD/PA special session at IEEE Eurocon 2013, Zagreb, Croatia
 - This event was a good example of cooperation between GOLD/PA, where the local GOLD team indicated the interests of the local attendees concerning the PA topics to be addressed, discussed speaker selection, as well as coordinated the local organization and attendee invitations
 - What GOLD means to IEEE
Tomislav Pokrajčić, Binariad.o.o., Zagreb, Croatia
 - Croatia - Analysis of competitiveness with emphasis on Information and Communication Technology
Marko Lacković, National Competitiveness Council, Zagreb, Croatia
 - How to build startups based on new technology
Damir Sabol, Zagreb Entrepreneurship Incubator, Croatia
 - IEEE professional activities focus on Croatia within Europe
Jan Pieter Verveckken, IEEE PA Subcommittee chair
 - Towards active social responsibility in the ICT domain
Željka Car, University of Zagreb, Croatia
 - Body language in business - workshop
Kurt Richter, Technical University Graz, Austria

Future activities

1. Support to Professional Activities Workshop on 15th Nov 2013 on the 2nd day of NIGERCON 2013 Conference
2. Support to Workshop "Introduction on Writing Technical Publications", Sarajevo 1-2 October
3. Targeted PA efforts
 - a. As the budget for PA is limited, and the needs of the members are substantial, we continue the efforts to improve efficiency and effectiveness of PA funding of activities.
 - b. Analysis and categorization of all sections along dimensions "engineering demography vs. need for engineers" and "engineer mobility & entrepreneurship", being the dimensions of influence to the engineer working conditions with the largest differences among sections
 - c. Establishing best practices within these categories in cooperation with section PA/GOLD/SAC officers to further focus efforts tailored to the needs of the sections
4. Increase GOLD&SAC cooperation, adapting to reality
 - a. In many sections the function of PA is embodied by GOLD/SAC officers
 - b. The prime target group for PA is the target group of GOLD/SAC
 - c. Largest PA event (PA summit) is typically held at Student Branch & GOLD Congress
 - d. Only in a limited number of sections is the PA function fundamentally different from GOLD/SAC (eg. South Africa)
 - e. Recreating SB&GOLD Congress formula, to increase the cooperation between SAC&GOLD, and increase the focus of activities on PA topics
 - f. Active invitation of GOLD/SAC officers in sections where PA officers is not available to all PA discussion concerning the section
5. Evolve cooperation with Educational Activities committee
 - a. As the goals of PA and EA are similar in nature (providing further/continued education of our members) and the target groups are largely the same, cooperation is logical. However, this cooperation has not been actively pursued in the past.
 - b. In the first phase focus on webinars and joint invitation for events for this cooperation
6. "Success stories" of members on the dimensions of needs for engineers
 - a. Largest need identified by EU commission and several other institutions is "Mobility of engineers". Overall, the mobility in the EU is less than 10%, with several countries not reaching 2% mobility of their engineers.
 - b. Though in principle, the possible mobility of engineers is complete, there persists a perception of large hurdles to overcome.

- c. We have several members that have successfully migrated to other sections and built their education and/or careers there. Their success stories can be an extra, more convincing argument for other members to think about mobility as a serious option
- 7. Update PA trainers/presenters database
 - a. 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.

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.
- 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.

Points of concern/Topics for future discussion

- 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.
 - PASC will cooperate with sections to find a PA officer or contact SAC/GOLD officers, depending on sections possibilities and needs
- 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)