

Professional Activities Subcommittee (PASC)

Ana Katalini Mucale

The Past

- Professional Activities include a variety of non-technical actions which can contribute to and enhance careers. Activities coordinated by Region 8 Professional Activities are held on both local and regional level. Currently, 28 out of 56 (or 50 textpercent) Sections in Region 8 have appointed PA Chair.
- The available regional PA program for the local chairs is the Speaker Program, easy way to organize workshops or seminars conducted by experienced lecturers. Currently, there are six speakers in the program.
- STARS Workshop on leadership organized in South Africa Section by Han Van Loon in September 2014
- Webinar dedicated to organizational issues, October 2014
- Workshop: How should engineers express their ideas, including two seminars: Oral Presentation Skills and How to Write Technical Paper, in Belgrade, by Kurt Richter, November 2014. The workshop was situated at the 22nd Telecommunications Forum - TELFOR, organized by Serbia and Monte Negro Section.
- Leadership skills workshops in Oman and Dubai, by Kurt Richter in February 2015. The workshop in Oman was organized at the 8th IEEE GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) Congress with participants from the following Sections: Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

Outlook

- The main goals and priorities can be summarized into following:
 - Increasing PA visibility on both local and regional level
 - Cooperation with other IEEE entities, mainly YP and IR
 - Enlarging the PA community in Region 8
 - Further strengthening and promotion of Speaker Program
 - Reaching the industry
- The focus of activities towards local communities will be put on further strengthening and promotion of the Speakers Program. In addition to having more speakers in the program, it is planned to increase total number of PA events. In 2014 there were ten workshops; in 2015 PASC will try to reach 15.
- The visibility of PA activities will be addressed mainly via regular updates of PASC website and PASC social media pages. However, it is necessary to motivate local PA officers to report about their local events. In order to support PA officers, PASC will prepare guidelines for running a PA event. We will build a network of PA officers through personal contact wherever possible. Additionally, in order to promote PA activities, mainly the Speaker Program, PASC will keep publishing newsletter with main activities.
- In line with the priorities of R8, special efforts will be put on getting closer to the industry and contributing the Section Vitality in general. This objective will be addressed in a close cooperation with YP and IR.
- Special focus will be put on enlarging the PA community, motivating Sections within Region 8 to appoint PA chairs. This will be achieved via personal approach to Section chairs.
- Expected outcome and indicators:
 - Regular updates of website and social media, with reports on local PA events
 - Guidelines for PA chairs and newsletter published
 - Active collaboration with R8 YP and IR
 - New R8 PA chairs appointed
 - New speakers in Speakers Program
 - Increased number of events within Speakers Program in 2015. Currently planned: April: workshops in Vienna, Austria Section and Oulu, Finland Section; both events by Kurt Richter; May: workshop within CESYP 2015 in Zagreb (TBD)

Best practices

- With regard to industry relations - Egypt Section experience
- With regard to visibility and building community - YP AG Toronto Section, IEEE Elevate Croatia
- With regard to concept - IEEE Metro Events, non-technical programs should be added

Points of concern / Topics for future discussion

- Members are keen to have online courses, which is why local events are often poorly attended. Additionally, there is a great variety in member needs by location, age etc. which should be taken into account when planning an event. This can be resolved in a close cooperation with the local organizer, where PASC can offer its full support.
- The attendance of organized webinars, as well as PA tracks within IEEE conferences, was discouraging. The reason was either poor promotion or not attractive topic, and both can be easily solved.
- Explaining benefits of IEEE membership to the members in the industry is a challenging task. One of the possibilities could be offering exclusive content, like certified soft-skill workshops for members only, as an added value for the membership.

Miscellaneous

The following projects / programs can set a good example and improve both visibility and relations with industry:

- IEEE PACE
- IEEE Metro - industry relations
- IEEE Collabratec - building the community on international level