

## Voluntary Contribution Fund Coordinator

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### Goals

Voluntary Contribution Fund (VCF) provides support for professional activities of members with low income (below \$10,000 per year). Primarily, it supports travel and subsistence costs of students and young professionals to present their papers at conferences in Region 8, which they would not be able to do otherwise due to the lack of finance. The fund comes from the additional voluntary contributions declared by IEEE members during the annual renewal of their membership. Our goal is to maintain sufficient level of the VCF budget to support all the worthy applicants.

### Status and Past Contributions

- In 2013
  - 26 VCF requests
  - 16 travel grants approved for the total of \$12,715
  - The budget was only \$10,000
  - To avoid overspending: \$1,000 limitation per event for one section
- In 2014
  - 14 VCF requests
  - 7 travel grants approved for the total of \$6,602
  - 6 did not get section chair's approval
  - 1 not approved due to the conference outside R8
  - The budget of \$10,000 was not fully utilized
- Partial report for 2015
  - 16 VCF requests up to 20 October 2015
  - 12 travel grants approved for the total of \$8,924
  - The budget of \$10,000 is almost exhausted.

### Outlook

The VCF's \$10,000 annual budget is almost exhausted this year. Fortunately, we have been assured by the R8 Treasurer (confirmed by the R8 Director) that within reason, we should be able to award further worthy applications for VCF grants this year, even if we go slightly above the budget.

### Points of Concern

The challenge is in maintaining voluntary contributions at sufficient level. In the past, the typical annual income to VCF was about \$12,000 to \$15,000. Unfortunately, this year, we have received just less than \$3,000. Part of the problem was the internet membership renewal form change, with the voluntary donation page only accessible by pressing "Donate to IEEE" button. This has not changed this year, but the Donate page contains now a default amount of \$25.00. One of the concerns is limited number of countries from which the applications are received. This year, out of 16 applications, 9 were from Tunisia, 3 from Ukraine, and 1 each from Algeria, Russia, Serbia, and UK/Bangladesh. Perhaps awareness of the existence of VCF is not sufficiently well spread across the Region.