

Voluntary Contribution Fund Coordinator

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Goals

The Voluntary Contribution Fund (VCF) provides support for technical activities of members with low income (below \$10,000 per year). The main focus of the fund is to support travel and subsistence costs of researchers presenting their research at conferences in Region 8, which they would not be able to do otherwise due to the lack of finance. In addition, the fund supports technical activities of student branches and young professionals in low income areas of Region 8. The main sources of the fund are additional voluntary contributions declared by IEEE members during the annual renewal of their membership.

In order to fulfil the mission of the fund, the key goals for 2017 are:

- Maintain a stable income for the fund of at least \$10,000 per year by raising awareness for the fund amongst the membership.
- Increase awareness of the fund amongst potential applicants in order to issue at least 15 grants per year making full use of the target budget of \$10,000.
- Increase VCF publicity and promotion compared to previous years.

Status

During the previous year, the VCF has seen a stable incoming donation stream of approximately \$11,500 per year. However, the grant situation has been more varied:

Year	Planned Budget	Donations	Applications	Issued
2014	\$10,000	\$11,576		\$6,602
2015	\$10,000	\$11,374	\$14,017	\$10,507
2016	\$10,000	\$12,480	\$10,507	\$8,365
2017	\$10,000	\$11,500 (expected)	\$3,500 (March)	\$2,500 (March / planned)

At the time of this writing, pending activities stemming from 2016 have been completed. In total, 13 grants have been issued for the previous year. Out of these, 11 grants were issued to grant holders residing in African sections and 2 grants to grant holders residing in Eastern European sections.

For the current year, 3 conference travel grants have been approved so far. 2 further grants have been rejected due to non-eligibility of the applicants.

Outlook

On the income side, the stable donation situation is expected to continue based on the trend from previous years. Based on already approved grants and pending enquiries, the year started well with respect to the target volume of grants issued. However, it is still too early to predict the total application volume for 2017.

The main activity in the current year, besides the ongoing management of the fund, is the development of a systematic publicity and promotion concept for the VCF and the start of its implementation.

Points of Concern

Although the donation situation is stable at the moment, care must be taken to maintain the income stream to the fund (or ideally even increase it) as this is the fundamental operating base for the VCF program.

In previous years, the grants from the VCF have been statistically skewed towards the Maghreb area despite other areas in Region 8 being similarly challenged regarding the local financial situation. Hopefully, a more systematic publicity approach might create a more balanced awareness of the VCF across the countries in Region 8.