South Africa Section   Albert Lysko

What activities/programs/initiatives work well in your Section to foster Industry Relations? What changes would be required by IEEE/the Region/your Section to improve Industry Relations? What were major successes since the last meeting in terms of Industry Relations? How are you going to continue to foster Industry Relations?

- We have signed MoU with a local society, the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers, which is strongly linked with local industry (especially the power industry), and promote IEEE programs with them and perform activities together.
- We plan to run Senior Membership development workshops in May 2018 and nominate industry leaders to SMIEEE, as a way of attracting their attention to IEEE, and promoting support to payment of IEEE membership fees and IEEE activities at all levels.
- Conferences and IEEE lectures by DVP might foster Industry relations, this is the place for exchange of ideas and industry contact between academia and staff. Future IEEE conferences will assist further.
- The activities that work well to foster industry relations have been the talks that we have organised between people of industry and students. This creates a better engagement especially for the students as a lot of the questions they may have get answered. The students also get to interact with people from industry and get to learn from this experiences. A suggestion to help improve industry relation would be to offer attachments positions to IEEE students members. I understand finding such positions may be difficult, but I would recommend a limited number of vac work positions are awarded based on some kind of competition or merit process. Also if the vac work positions is a problem the IEEE can create a job shadow week where students can shadow people in industry.
- The changes recommended to the IEEE is to improve industry relations: if a more active relationship could be established between Industry and the IEEE student members. This can be done by organising more talks and lectures so that students can activeley and constantly interact with industry people. I believe trips to different industries could also spark interest among student members and Improve industry relations. Also the Job shadow week would be very helpful.
- The student branches were able to organise Lunch and Learn sessions with some people from industry. Lunch and Learn sessions are essentially lectures that we have over lunch that are more interactive.
- We hope to organise a trip to one of the top industries so as to get the student members excited about whats being done in industry. We also plan on have some Lunch and Learn sessions with people from industry .

What activities/programs/initiatives work well in your Section to Attract and Support Future Members, e.g., Students and Young Professionals? What changes would be required by IEEE/the Region/your Section to better Attract and Support Future Members? What were major successes since the last meeting in terms of Attracting and Supporting Future Members? How are you going to continue to support Students and Young Professionals?

- Regular communications and visibility provided by the IEEE events are helpful.
- Ensuring that the local conferences have a sufficient discount for IEEE members and requesting the conferences to show text like ""Join IEEE at ieee.org/join at USD27 for students and USD90.50 for professionals"" proved to be useful to helping new members consider joining IEEE.
- The membership fees is a bit steep for academia, students, even for staff the expectation from many in South Africa for full membership is ZAR500 (USD40) for academia, currently it is almost double, there are institutions that are willing to support payment of membership fees.
- We were able to attract many members, may be a member fees discount for the institution as such based of large number of members they have/ able to attract or discount to that specific individuals who serve for the Computer society can assist
- We have improved the web site by adding more content, addressing common queries;
- With a student chapter the main aim is to get excitement around the prospect of being a student member. We plan to organise a welcome Braai which will also act as a recruitment drive. We are also planning on organising Lunch and Learn sessions to help keep the club relevant. We also hope to have atleast one trip to one of the major players in the industry. We also planning on having a Hackathon completion amongst our members .
- When it comes to the changes required by the IEEE, the heads of the Student chapter require more support in terms of getting contacts and people from industry to the universities. We also require a more active presence from the IEEE.
- Last year we were able to revive the Student chapter at Wits university as it had been inactive for a long time. Now that the club is alive we trying to push for recruitment to get the numbers up. However to do this the students need to see any kind of benefit of joining the club. That why the earlier suggestion was provided: if students members could get attached to various industries during the vac work or participating in a Job shadow week. Also, having friendly completions based on engineering projects could be helpful. This would definitely create more excitement amongst the student members and the club as a whole.
- Spreading information about the opportunities offered by IEEE (including funding programs and travel grants such as IEEE Region 8 Voluntary Contribution Fund) is important. For the conference IEEE R8 Africon 2017 in Cape Town, five people successfully received VCF grants.

What activities/programs/initiatives work well to drive the vitality and sustainability in your Section? What changes would be required by IEEE/the Region/your Section to improve Section vitality and sustainability? What were major successes since the last meeting in terms of Section Vitality? How are you going to continue to foster Section Vitality?

- We have supported 12 conferences held in South Africa in 2017 and have strengthen support to the conferences and see the consistent increase in membership (10% increase, as compared to the same period from 2016).

- The young professionals feel a sense of belonging to an IEEE Society if their little achievements are celebrated and acknowledged, Society's sustainability is based on its members. We are encouraging the above.
- We have signed MoU with a local society, the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers, and promote IEEE programs with them and perform activities together.
- We have run the regional conference IEEE R8 Africon 2017 in Cape Town, which received good attendance (over 200 presenters)
- In the Africon 2017, we have run a special full day session called ""IEEE Session"", which included presenters from R8 and above and told about many opportunities IEEE offers.
- We have invested in developing the Section's ExCom by providing a travel grant for one of our officers to attend the R8 meeting in Stockholm.
- We have awarded the most active volunteer in Section with a grant to attend the IEEE Sections Congress.
- We have invested in one of our active conference organizers by sending him to IEEE POCO in Australia.
- We have invested in another of our active conference organizers from Durban by providing her with a travel grant to attend the IEEE-SA event in Johannesburg.
- We have successfully nominated several members for elevation to Senior membership in IEEE and now plan to run Senior Membership development workshops in May 2018 to help to increase the loyalty and sustainability
- We have nominated a number of active volunteers to various MGA positions.
- For SBs the Lunch and Learn sessions are important, the possibility of getting attachments to various industries for vac work or having a job shadow week with people industry, The friendly completions based on engineering projects would also keep people interested in the Student branch
- More active IEEE presence helps the students see the importance of being members CHALLENGES:
  ○ We have identified a challenge experienced by many members in paying their membership dues. The student members do not have credit cards and have to rely on student branches collecting money. The staff at universities often experiences problems with being able to pay their membership fees from their research funds due to bureaucratic processes, which sometimes lead to the members not being able to fully recover the money paid for the membership. This was brought to the attention of IEEE but no response was received as yet.
  ○ Another challenge is financial and related to the general improvements in the country (thanks to the fall of the President Zuma), which has led to the steady drop in the exchange rate between USD and ZAR. Over the last 3-4 months, the exchange rate dropped from 14.5 down to 11.5, i.e. by over 20%. This has effectively reduced the amount of money Section has by 20%!
- It would be great to be able to receive the lists of new successful Senior membership applications, as a way to promote them in the local community.
- We found that the IEEE R8 VCF may need to request additional information (such as professor's letter telling what has and what has not been covered by the university for the student's trip) in order to counteract misuse of the fund.

What are your recommendations to IEEE Region 8 and the Africa Area Chair Gloria Chuckwudebe to foster IEEE in Africa? How does your Section support IEEE Activities in Africa?

- We are supporting establishing IEEE Africa Council and actively participated in drafting the bylaws.
- We are bringing the IEEE R8 Membership Development workshop (MDW) to South Africa as a part of supporting one of IEEE's priorities, i.e. developing IEEE in Africa. The MD workshop will be held at the Hotel Verde in Cape Town in March 2018.
- In supporting continuous development of IEEE in Africa, we are also considering applying to host IEEE Sections Congress and IEEE Convene and have approached R8 and relevant parties. These events will help to highlight the IEEE activities to local volunteers and to train local African members/volunteers. We will continue attempt to bring some of IEEE R8 meetings to Africa, as this will help to show IEEE and R8 what the problems in Africa really look like and will also assist with promoting IEEE and training local volunteers.
- We have promoted cooperation between South African and Botswana Sections in the inaugural event for IEEE Botswana Section in Gaborone, Botswana.
- We have invited volunteers from other Sections to the IEEE Session we organized in the conference IEEE Africon 2017 in order to improve the visibility of IEEE and to help training our officers.
- We hope to extend the ""IEEE - SAIEE South African Distinguished Lecturer"" initiative to allow exchange with Africa. CHALLENGES:
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  ○ A more active IEEE presence is needed. If the hand of the IEEE can be seen in the student's projects, this would generate more interest

What services and which kind of support would you expect for Region 8 and/or your section out of the new IEEE office in Vienna, Austria? How has the existence of this office influenced your section since its inauguration last year?

- We would like a strong consideration to bringing IEEE R8 meeting to Africa, at least once every N years.
- Sending of professionals to give lectures on various topics.

Outstanding new initiatives, Special Achievements, Anniversaries.

- Our IEEE South Africa Section Joint AP/MTT/EMC Chapter received ""Best Chapter Award"".
- IEEE South Africa Section has celebrated 40 years of its existence.
- We are in process of setting up a new initiative ""IEEE - SAIEE South African Distinguished Lecturer"" to allow good local lecturers to share their knowledge with colleagues and students away from their normal employment, within South Africa.
- Small challenge: as the Section card is used very infrequently, it is difficult to keep track of the PIN code.

Fig. 1.   Event at MUT - 20171201

Fig. 2.   Event at DUT 20171128

Fig. 3.   Event at WITS University

Fig. 4.   IEEE Session on 20170918

Fig. 5.   UKZN Event