

Voluntary Contribution Fund Coordinator

Andreas Koltes

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. 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 2019 are:

- Maintain the stabilized income stream of the fund of at least \$10,000 per year by raising awareness for the fund amongst the membership.
- Continue to 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.
- Stabilize VCF publicity and promotion increased in previous years.

Historical Trends

Over the course of 2018, the income situation of the VCF has been stabilized with the income from donations in that year totaling \$13,937. This is an increase of roughly 20% over the situation before 2017. This means, that the fund is in the fortunate situation to be able to continue operating at the target budget level of \$10,000 while maintaining and even strengthening its reserves. This in turn will permit compensating future fluctuations of the income stream.

During 2018, a total of 11 payments have been made to grant holders totaling \$6,109. A delayed reimbursement has been completed in January 2019 amounting to \$500. Unfortunately, 3 grants approved totaling \$2,300 were not claimed by their holders as the holders decided to cancel their respective planned conference activities. Therefore, the fund used only 2/3 of its target budget in 2018 with the remaining funds going to its reserves.

Grant statistics: number of grants awarded, stats by country, age, gender. Comparison with historical data

At the time of writing, 7 grants have been approved in 2019, totaling an amount of \$5,300. In addition, 2 further grants are currently under evaluation, potentially amounting to \$1,800.

The grants already approved were granted to members of the sections of Egypt (1), Iran (1), Kenya (2), and Tunisia (3) with 5 of the grant holders being male and 2 female.

In total, 8 grant applications were rejected during the current year due to not meeting the application criteria.

Compared to previous years, the VCF continues to see diverse applications from a range of different countries, particularly from the African continent. So far, application numbers are slightly lower in 2019 than in past years, though.

Financial status

The fund is financially in a healthy state of operation with the target budget for 2019 being set at \$10,000.

The donation situation is expected to continue to be reasonably stable and the income of the fund in 2019 is expected to be above \$10,000 again. A meaningful income figure for the current year is not available yet, as the majority of income will be generated during the upcoming membership renewal season.

The reserves of the fund at the beginning of 2019 amounted to \$50,124. These are expected to grow moderately until the end of the year.

Future plans

As the number of grant applications dropped slightly in the current year when compared to the past, the current focus is on raising awareness of the fund with potential applicants. At the time of this writing, preparations for a social media outreach are underway to promote the fund.

Other Issues to report