

Conference Coordination Committee (CoCC)

Tiziana Tambosso

2024 Team:



Tiziana Tambosso
(Italy)
Chair



Habib M. Kammoun
(Tunisia)
Past Chair



Abdellah Kouzou
(Algeria)
Member



Shaun Kaplan
(Germany)
Member



Nadezda Kunicina
(Latvia)
Member



Robert Bierwolf
(Benelux)
Member



Sergio Rapuano
(Italy)
Member



Katerina Papanikolaou
(Greece)
Member



Aleksandar Mastilovic
(Serbia)
Member



Pascal Lorentz
(France)
Finance Committee Liaison



Paul M. Cunningham
(Ireland)
Climate Change Committee liaison

2024 Members – ex officio (Members of the IEEE Conferences Committee (ICC)):

- Peter Nagy (Hungary)
- Antonio Luque (Spain)
- Maciej Ogorzalek (Poland)

Goals

In 2024 the following Goals and KPI were defined.

Goals	KPIs
Efficient management of the CoCC [internal goal]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CoCC meeting minutes 2. Reports for the R8 OpCom 3. Reports for the R8 meetings 4. CoCC webpages updated

Timely review of the financial and technical co-sponsorship (TCS/FCS) requests	Number of evaluated TCS/FCS requests in 2024
Ensure success of the R8 flagship conferences: call for bids, support, oversight	Define the Steering Committee for each R8 flagship and portfolio conferences Oversight the process from call for bids to conference closing Participation of at least one R8 CoCC representative to the conference
Ensure success of IEEE conferences TCS/FCS by R8	Oversight the process from Application form to final report and budget control Percentage of successful conferences (timely reporting, financial surplus, papers published in IEEE Xplore)
Increase IEEE R8 visibility through conferences	Number of activities for Region 8 in conferences 1. No. of conferences programs including R8 speech / presentation in opening or closing conferences 2. No. of special events in cooperation with R8 committees
New initiatives	Multi-region conference agreements No of conference upgrades (from TPC to FCS) from FCS to R8 portfolio
Support the sections' conference coordinators, section chairs and IEEE R8 TCS/FCS Conference organizers	1. Number of appointed section / subsection conference coordinator (59 sections + 10 subsections) 2. Number of webinars and training events
Ensure good relationship with MGA, MCE, and other regional conference coordinators	Number of meetings and workshops Participation to Convene 2024
Industry focused events and conferences	Incorporate industry panels/events in conference and organize conferences with strong industry involvement Number of industry panels/events and industry conferences.

Progress against goals since the last (August 11, 2023) R8 Committee Meeting report

1. Efficient management of the CoCC

5 CoCC meetings were held (September 27, October 31, December 14, January 22) with detailed minutes containing task distribution and reports on activities.

Two Reports for the R8 OpCom of 25 Nov. 23 and 5 Feb. 24 (proposal of R8 TCS conferences to be upgraded to R8 FCS with criteria of selection. Proposal for steering committees of 2024 and 2025 flagship/portfolio conferences. Revised R8 CoCC Operations Manual. Recommendations of sites for MELECON 2026, ENERGYCON 2026, RTSI 2026. Proposals of new activities for 2024 and preliminary budget 2024).

Reports for VP_TA with summary of activities

The committee webpages are periodically updated (see <https://ieeer8.org/conference-coordination/>).

All CoCC documents are available to all members and VC-TA in a dedicated google drive folder.

2. Timely review of the financial and technical co-sponsorship (TCS/FCS) requests and conc unit approval

From August 2023:

5 R8 Financial Co-Sponsorship requests have been approved

9 R8 Technical Co-Sponsorship have been approved, 1 declined

8 requests of Conc. Unit. evaluation have been approved

3. Ensure success of the R8 flagship conferences: call for bids, support, oversight

A new strategy was applied with the main objective of having more qualified bidders.

The selection will take into the most active Sections where the flagship conferences have not yet been held or were held many years ago. They will be encouraged to apply with email and/or personal contacts.

A Virtual Meeting with MELECON 2026, ENERGYCON 2026 and RTSI 2026 conferences candidates, to answer their questions on the final bid preparation, was held on December 12th, with the participation of 7 bidders and Section chairs or their representatives. The meeting was appreciated and productive. The CoCC received very good bid documents from all candidates. We encourage not selected bidders to submit their application to the next calls.

We plan to hold this type of virtual meetings with the bidders/Section chairs in the future as well to ensure a good understanding of the R8 rules and a set of good bids to choose among them the best candidates for organizing future R8 flagship and portfolio conferences.

On January 22nd the CoCC meeting was held to evaluate the candidates for the MELECON 2026, ENERGYCON 2026 and RTSI 2026. The R8 CoCC recommendations were submitted for approval to the R8 OpCom meeting of February 5th and the motions have been prepared to be approved by the R8 Committee of March 2-3, 2024.

The organization process of each flagship/portfolio conference is supervised from the application form check list to the final report submission and budget control.

In September 2023 two R8 flagship/portfolio conferences were held.

- HISTELCON 2023 - R8 Final report and IEEE financial report have been submitted within the end of 2023. The participation was very good for this kind of conference with 97 attendees (about 20% online) and 46 papers published on IEEEExplore.
- AFRICON 2023 - Participation in the conference was excellent: about 340 attendees and 182 papers published on IEEEExplore. 6 Parallel Technical Tracks, 10 Keynotes, 4 Industry Panels, 4 Workshops, 2 Industry Tutorials, 3 Social Events, 1 Post-Graduate Forum, 1 Women in Engineering and Technology Forum, 1 Pre-Conference Career Fair, 6 Pre-Conference Virtual-Webinars.

In November 1-3, 2023 IHTC 2023, FCS by R8, was held in Columbia. Magdalena was there as representative of R8. We are waiting for the final report with data about participation and financial details.

Meetings of the R8 steering committees of the R8 portfolio/flagship conferences of 2024 have been held:

1 SC meeting for ENERGYCON (<https://ieee-energycon2024.com/> March 4-7, 2024, Doha (Qatar)).

2 SC meetings for MELECON (<https://2024.ieee-meleon.org/> June 25-27, 2024, Porto (Portugal)).

Documents on best practices and lessons learned have been prepared for EUROCON 2023, AFRICON 2023, HISTELCON 2023 and are available for the future organizers. Presentations on best practices and lessons learned were held by the conference general chairs during the workshop of December 5, 2023.

Marie Hunter Director IEEE MCE participates in the workshop with a presentation on Convene 2023 and her feedback on the workshop was extremely positive. She was impressed by the flagship conferences programs with so many special events. In the last IEEE MCE newsletter, an article dedicated to this workshop has been published (see below).

Region 8 Conference Leadership Workshop Supports Learning and Collaboration



On 5 December 2023, a virtual workshop brought together over 100 IEEE Region 8 conference leaders, including Section Chairs, Chapter Chairs, Section Conference Coordinators, and organizers of Technical and Financial Conferences in the Region. Organized with the support of [IEEE Meetings, Conferences & Events \(MCE\)](#), the event provided

information and guidance for organizers on developing successful IEEE conferences. Region 8 leaders and organizers also shared information on creating more value for participants through Region 8 sponsorship.

General Chairs of Region 8 Flagship conferences, [HISTELCON 2023](#), [EUROCON 2023](#), and [AFRICON 2023](#), reviewed highlights and best practices, including collaboration with local IEEE Chapters, Societies, and past organizers. Some initiatives promoted industry-academia interactions, women in engineering events, and the engagement of students and young professionals. Other highlights included a workshop on entrepreneurship, a student career fair as a pre-conference event, and strategy meetings with IEEE leadership to discuss areas of collaboration between institutions. IEEE AFRICON's opening featured keynotes by President Saifur Rahman, President-Elect Tom Coughlin, Region 8 Director Vincenzo Piuri, Kenya Section Chair Esther Muchiri, and General Chair Humphrey Muhindi.

Marie Hunter, Senior Director and Head of IEEE Global Meetings, Conferences & Events (IEEE MCE), reviewed highlights from IEEE Convene 2023, the annual event produced by IEEE MCE. Convene is critical to Regional Conference Coordinators' and VP of Conferences' roles and offers conference organizers the unique opportunity to engage with one another, the IEEE MCE team, and industry experts. The event reflects how, together, we can actively support our conference organizers and guide the necessary activities for future generations of organizers.

Key Takeaways

- Increase your involvement in the IEEE Society conferences organized in your country.
- Enhance the value your members receive from conferences.
- Consider including a variety of programmatic elements at your conference to grow your audience and maximize participant engagement, such as:
 - IEEE booth
 - Student paper contest
 - Industry oriented workshop
 - Standards workshop
 - Entrepreneurship workshop
 - Humanitarian workshop
 - Professional and educational activities
 - WIE, Students, and Young Professionals

The well-received workshop was a unique opportunity for Region 8 Conference Leadership to share success stories and learn best practices for supporting conference excellence.

4. Ensure success of IEEE conferences TCS/FCS by R8

CoCC liaison members have been assigned for each R8 conference (FCS/TCS/conc. unit).

The task of the liaison member is the supervision of the entire process from the application form to the final report submission and budget control for R8 FCS conferences only.

In 2023 18 R8 TCS conferences were held with success except for COMCAS 2023 which has been moved to 2024 (due to unpredictable external circumstances). The complete list of the 2023 R8 conferences is available on the R8 website, at this [link](#).

The two 2023 R8 FCS conferences (EDUCON 2023 and Wireless for Space and Extreme Environments - WiSEE 2023) were successfully held with an excellent financial result.

EDUCON 2023 had 198 attendees and 164 papers published on IEEEExplore.

WiSSE had 96 attendees and 31 papers published on IEEEExplore.

Final reports from 20 conferences (held in 2023) have been received, other 16 reports are in progress or have been requested.

5. Increase IEEE R8 visibility through conferences

Special events involving R8 Committees (Entrepreneurship, Industry, WIE, YP, Students, Standard, Membership, ...) were organized.

During AFRICON 2023 (<https://2023.ieee-afriicon.org/>)

- R8 director gave a welcome speech in the Opening Session

the following special workshop and events involving R8 committees have been held:

Industry panel (organized by the R8 Afi Committee with participation of R8 Afi chair, R8 VC-TA, IEEE IEC (Industry Engagement Committee) chair and IEEE President).

- IEEE Standards workshop (part 1 and part 2)
- IEEE Volunteering Workshop (Antonio Luque – R8 Past-Director)
- Keynote address on “Conference Organization” (Shaun Kaplan – R8 CoCC)

During HISTELCON 2023 (<https://2023.ieee-histelcon.org/>)

- R8 director gave a welcome speech in the Opening Session
- CoCC chair presented a CoCC activity overview at the opening session.
- a special workshop on “Women in the history of technology” (organized by the Italy Section WIE AG) with participation of R8 CoCC Chair as a speaker.
- Special meeting of IEEE History Committee with participation of R8 History Activity chair and IEEE History Center Fruitful discussion with IEEE History Center representative on HISTELCON multi-region project.

6. New Initiatives/activities

- The R8 CoCC Operations Manual has been updated and a motion will be presented for approval at the R8 Committee Meeting of March 2-3.
- Two conferences have been upgraded to R8 FCS: 2024 IEEE Symposium on Computers and Communications (ISCC) (R8 20%) and 2024 32nd Telecommunications Forum (TELFOR) (R8 5%).
- The Operation Agreement for transformation of HISTELCON in a multi-regional conference rotating among R7, R8, R9 and R10 has been prepared and approved by the R8 Committee of August 11, 2023. R10 also approved the agreement and is starting the organization of HISTELCON 2026 assigning the general chair, who will be part of the HISTELCON 2025 steering committee. R7 and R9 directors asked for more time to discuss this agreement with their ExCom and Board.
- A special workshop on “climate change” will be organized during IHTC 2024 (Bari, 25-27 November 2024) in cooperation with the R8 ad hoc committee on climate change and involvement of industries, associations, and international institutions. A meeting with UNGSC (<https://www.ungsc.org/brindisi>. The base is celebrating its 30th anniversary on November 23, 2024) has been held to discuss possible cooperation and participation in the conference of a high representative of the UN. IHTC with its focus on UN SDGs is the perfect conference to host this kind of special invited speakers.

7. Support the sections' conference coordinators, section chairs and IEEE R8 TCS/FCS Conference organizers

The updated list of the Section Conference Coordinators is available on the R8 CoCC website <[link](#)>.

The third education workshop of 2023 was an online event and it was organized on December 5, 2023 with participation of IEEE MCE. The title was “IEEE conference organization and sponsorship” (118 interested people, 90 participants).

The first training workshop of 2024 has been organized on March , 2024 in hybrid format.

8. Ensure good relationship with MGA, MCE, and other regional conference coordinators

Weekly correspondence with IEEE MCE is maintained. Virtual meeting was held on January to discuss 2024 programs and important topics, including education workshops of 2024.

Participation in IEEE ICC online meetings. Ex-officio members of CoCC are reporting news form ICC face to face meetings during CoCC meetings and with a special presentation during the Workshop of Dec. 5, 2023.

Participation in Convene 2023 of three CoCC members.

Two Education workshops are organized with participation of IEEE MCE and IEEE ICC speakers.

9. Industry focused events and conferences

Organization of RTSI 2024 is ongoing. The website is online (<https://2024.ieee-rtsi.org/>) and CfP has been circulated. RTSI (Research and Technology for Society and Industry) is the only R8 conference with an industry focus, with many workshops, panel and special events dedicated to industry and with industry contribution. For this edition a workshop on entrepreneurship and a competition for young startups will be organized in cooperation with the R8 Entrepreneurship committee. A round table with industries in cooperation with R8 AfI will be organized. Special tutorials for industry people on topics suggested by the companies supporting the conference on the RTSI 2024 main topics will be held.

During AFRICON 2023 a workshop dedicated to industry has been organized by the R8 Action for Industry Committee.

During ENERGYCON 2024 and MELECON 2024, panels with industry participation will be organized.