115th IEEE Region 8 Committee Meeting , November 2020

Report of R8 LMAGs activities

Coordinator: Victor Fouad Hanna

I- Administration status :

i- R8 has 14 LMAGs (the second) after the R10 (15 LMAGs) and before the R5 (13 LMAGs),

ii- Result of sending letters, on July 2020 to chairs of the R8 sections having more than 30 LMs asking them to create a LMAG in their sections : a petition is started in the Portugal Section while Austria, Swede and Denmark Sections showed their interest in this subject.

iii- No R8 LMAG was dissolved.

II- Activities in 2020

i) <u>France LMAG :</u>

    1- organized a very successful Virtual conference on 09 June 2020 about Artificial Intelligence: Scientific basic elements and ethics questions, presented by Professor *Raja Chatila* (there were 75 registrations for the event from all France cities, all Europe and even from Middle East),

    2- organized its Second Virtual Meeting on 20 October 2020 from 05h00 pm to 17h00pm . Title *"The great André-Marie Ampère and the 200 years of electromagnetism",* By : *Philippe Ponchon,* Administrator of SAAMA, « Société des Amis d'André-Marie Ampère ». Number of of participants 36 from all France cities and all Europe.

ii) <u>Switzerland LMAG and Italy LMAG :</u>

    1- **Participate in the IEEE Day Online Virtual Celebration with their YP Operating units and the <u>Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne</u>, on 6 October 2020 from** 06:00 PM to 08:30 PM.

    2- Representatives of the Life Members and History activities of Switzerland and Italy brought up a session around the theme of The microchip revolution. For more details see : **https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/239910**

iii) <u>UK & Ireland LMAG :</u>

    1- **October 14th:** Review meeting on the progress of 4 Milestone proposals. One has been approved, one is being assessed, one is being submitted, and one is in a preliminary state of preparation. The unveiling ceremony for the first Milestone had to be postponed until 2021.

    2- **November 25th**: Webinar on Robotics by Professor Kaspar Althoefer, Queen Mary, University of London.

iv) <u>**Lebanon LMAG :**</u>

1- In 2019, a US$32,079 grant was awarded by the IEEE Foundation for to the IEEE Lebanon Section's Life Member Affinity Group in IEEE Region 8 for its project " SET-Souq ETaqa (Energy Info Market)" to support an awareness campaign to education the general public on sustainable green energy solutions to solve the perpetual power deficit in Lebanon. (See : https://www.ieeefoundation.org/pages/for-ieee-units/grants-awarded-in-2019)

2- Lebanon LMAG had couple of ZOOM meetings for the LMAG Committee. However, these activities never stopped as far as the Souk e-Taqa IEEE Foundation Grant was concerned. Our preparatory work was almost on daily basis through e-mails, telephone calls and WhatsApp messages. We interviewed six individuals (face to face and ZOOM) for possible hiring. We visited companies personally or contacted them by e-mail. We received 8 offers for Branding/Website design/ Social presence and campaign. Currently we are at a stage of choosing one of the offers. Therefore the rest of this year will be dedicated to the implementation of the Grant.

3- As far as technical or professional activities not related to the Grant, it is possible to arrange for a WEBINAR. Lectures are not possible due to the following reasons:
a) High schools are closed (online education with unproven success)
b) Universities have restrictions and the education process was online.
c) Electrical outages last month was severe
d) COVID19 pandemic and closures effected the possibility of local presentations.

v) **Israel LMAG :**

Two meetings:

1- **12 August 2020 :** Title : Light rail systems, by Efi Kalifa of NTA Ltd
2- **7 September 2020 :** Robotic Process Automation, by Dudi Karmi of EY Company

vi) <u>**Remarks :**</u>

I- **Due to the present difficult situation resulting from COVID-19:**
i) it was not easy for LMAGs to make significant use of the larger allocations for Life member activities of up to a maximum of $2,000 each year,
ii) For France LMAG: three F2F meetings planned on 10-03-2020, 08-05-2020 and 23-06-2020 were cancelled ,

iii)   Joint F2F meeting organized by the Switzerland LMAG and the Italy LMAG planned to be held on March 31, 2020 in Lugano at the Switzerland Scientific Computing Center was cancelled,

iv)   The Benelux LMAG intends to organize virtual meetings. A few of their members attended the 2 meetings organized by the French section in June and October and reported about it. They are looking for suitable topics and speakers.

III-   Strategy for 2020

i)   Elevation of the Ad-hoc Life Members Subcommittee to Life Members Affinity Groups (LMAGs) Sub Committee ». as it is difficult for only one active member (responsible of AD-hoc committee) to coordinate the possible promising activities of our 14 LMAGs. Also I underline that the task of the LM coordinator includes organizing our own Regional events, not relying exclusively on what it is done by the Sections. I already sent a proposal to R8 OpCom concerning this issue

ii)   A top priority is to facilitate the use of Webex for Life member meetings (due to CODIV-19) and also to reduce the running costs and make it easier to connect members living away from the main urban centers,

iii)   LMAGs should encourage members to apply for the special projects grants available from the Life Member Fund and the IEEE Foundation,

iv)   The inclusion of older members approaching LM status, together with retired members, would transform the viability of the smaller LMAGs.