

## **IEEE Information Theory Society (ITSoc) Board of Governors (BoG) Meeting**

**Location:** Remote Meeting

**Dates:** March 4-5, 2022

**Time:** The meeting convened at 9:00 am Eastern Standard Time (EST), March 4; the meeting recessed between 11:30 am EST, March 4 and 9:00 am EST, March 5; it adjourned at 10:52 am EST, March 5.

**Meeting Chair:** Christina Fragouli; Minutes were taken by Parastoo Sadeghi.

**Meeting Attendees:** Erik Agrell, Matthieu Bloch, Srikrishna Bhashyam (#), Joseph Boutros (#), Po-Ning Chen (#), Robert Calderbank (#), Themistoklis Charalambous (#), Li Chen, Daniel Costello (#), Marco Dalai, Natasha Devroye, Alex Dimakis, Lara Dolecek, Stark Draper, Meir Feder, Christina Fragouli, Massimo Franceschetti, Shao-Lun Huang (#), Navin Kashyap (#), Sid Jaggi, Tara Javidi, Brian Kurkoski, Matt LaFleur (#), Michael Langberg, Muriel Medard, Henry Pfister, Georg Pichler (#), Joachim Rosenthal, Parastoo Sadeghi, Anand Sarwate, Vincent Y. F. Tan, Satyajit Thakor (#), Daniela Tuninetti, Sennur Ulukus, Aaron Wagner, Shun Watanabe, Edmund Yeh, Aylin Yener, Wei Yu.

Non-voting attendees are denoted by (#).

### **Business conducted between meetings:**

1. In December 2021, the Board voted to approve meeting minutes from the Nov 2021 meeting.
2. In December 2021, the Board voted to appoint Sennur Ulukus as the IEEE Journal on Selected Areas in Information Theory Steering Committee member for 2022-25.
3. In December 2021, the Board voted to appoint Daniel Costello as the Chair of the IEEE BITS the Information Theory Magazine Steering Committee for 2022.
4. In December 2021, the Board voted to appoint Li Chen as the Chair of the Information Theory Society Conference Committee for 2022-24.
5. In December 2021, the Board voted to appoint Brian Kurkoski as the Chair of the Information Theory Society Digital Presence Committee for 2022-23.
6. In December 2021, the Board voted to elect Giuseppe Caire as a member of the Information Theory Society Nominations and Appointments Committee for 2022-24.

In December 2021, the membership committee, chaired by the second VP Matthieu Bloch, concluded the selection of the Distinguished Lecturers and Goldsmith Lecturer. The following lecturers were selected:

2022 Goldsmith Lecturer: Shirin Saeedi Bidokhti

2022-23 Distinguished Lecturers:

- Pulkit Grover
- Hamed Hassani
- Michèle Wigger
- Parastoo Sadeghi

In February 2022, the membership committee of 2021, chaired by Matthieu Bloch, concluded the selection of the Padovani Lecturer.

Elza Erkip was selected as the 2022 Padovani Lecturer.

## **Meeting Proceedings:**

At 9:00 am EST, March 4, ITSoc President, Christina Fragouli, called the meeting to order. Attendees introduced themselves and the roll call was taken. The following motion was issued.

**Motion:** To approve the agenda.

Motion passed.

### **President's Report – Christina Fragouli**

First, the President explained the rationale for the experimental format of the meeting (pre-recorded reports), which is to allow more time for discussions and questions. Christina, informed the members that Matt LaFleur, ITSoc administrative assistant, has accepted a full time position with another Society. She thanked Matt for excellent work for the Information Theory Society over the past seven years and presented a digital thank-you card to him. Christina also expressed her appreciation of Efimenko Alexey, a graphic designer who contributed on a number of projects such as the BITS Magazine design and the Newsletter design, and who is from Ukraine, for his excellent work even during these difficult times.

Christina welcomed the following new members to the BoG: Marco Dalai, Lara Dolecek, Michael Langberg, Henry D. Pfister, Sennur Ulukus, and Shun Watanabe. She reminded the members of ITSoc officers' shift register model and introduced ITSoc Treasurer (Edmund Yeh) and Secretary (Parastoo Sadeghi) for 2022. Next, Christina acknowledged the following committee chairs: Li Chen (Conference Committee), Brian Kurkoski (Digital Presence Committee) and Daniel Costello (BITS Steering Committee). New appointed members of various committees were also introduced. Christina thanked all new chairs and members for accepting to serve.

Christina congratulated the following people for receiving awards or recognitions: Elza Erkip (2022 Padovani Lecturer), Shirin Saeedi Bidokhti (2022 Goldsmith Lecturer), Pulkit Grover, Hamed Hassani, Parastoo Sadeghi and Michèle Wigger (2022 Distinguished Lecturers), P. R. Kumar (recipient of the IEEE Alexander Graham Bell Medal) and Madhu Sudan (recipient of the IEEE Richard Hamming Medal). Next, Christina congratulated the following 13 members of ITSoc who are among the 2022 Class of IEEE Fellows (the first five were elevated through ITSoc): Alexandros Dimakis, Albert Guillen i Fabregas, Michael Langberg, Yingbin Liang, Devavrat Shah; Petros Boufounos, Minghua Chen, Andrea Conti, Deniz Gunduz, Steve Hranilovic, Amir Leshem, Rebecca Willett, Sriram Vishwanath.

Then the President described a birds-eye view of the IEEE organization chart. Next, she provided a high-level summary of the most recent Technical Activities Board (TAB) meeting, held February 18-19, 2022. Financially, IEEE is doing well with its net assets in an upward trajectory. However, one observation is that membership numbers have remained mostly flat in the past decade. IEEE is highly encouraging all societies to invest in strategic growth and to enhance their membership services. Christina stated that this already part of ongoing efforts of ITSoc but that we actively want to sustain and expand such efforts. She welcomed suggestions and ideas towards a sustainable expansion of the Society. She then provided examples of IEEE-level initiatives, in which ITSoc is participating. This includes offering multi-society membership discounts (starting in 2023) and membership in the Climate Change Committee.

The President concluded her presentation by acknowledging the amazing history of the ITSoc and the strides it has made in serving its membership over the years. She projected a positive outlook for better serving the IT community and addressing large-scale societal challenges in the coming years.

### **Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) and Membership– Stark Draper**

In a pre-recorded video, Stark Draper, the Second VP of ITSoc and the Chair of the D&I Committee, first introduced the D&I Committee members. He stated that the tenure of all D&I Committee members will finish at the end of 2022 and to stagger the composition of this committee, new members will need to be added in 2022.

Stark recalled some updates that were not fully presented in the Nov 2021 BoG meeting, due to lack of time. This included six ITSoc scholarships for undergraduates from groups currently underrepresented in ITSoc to attend ISIT 2021, as well as D&I and Student and Outreach activities held at ISIT 2021. Stark highlighted efforts to broaden nominations from a more diverse group to serve on committees or as editors for ITSoc publications. Stark recalled the mandate from the BoG on evaluating best practices documents of different committees through the D&I lens. To this end, he encouraged various committees to keep working on their best practices documents and contact the D&I Committee to collaborate.

Stark reported on his participation in IEEE-level TAB D&I workshops and panels, as well as submission of D&I statistics to the IEEE. He presented a sample of what is typically reported, which included statistics about the composition of different ITSoc technical committees, editorial boards, as well as D&I activities and efforts undertaken by ITSoc.

Stark briefed the BoG about the ITSoc Climate Survey, which was conducted last year. There were 354 respondents, but not all questions were answered by all participants. Stark highlighted that only about 41% of respondent considered most or all of their research to fall within IT. The majority of respondents (bit over 70%) were faculty, in industry, or in government. Just over 20% were students. In addition to presenting a breakdown of the demographics, Stark provided a high-level summary of the long-form answers. They displayed a diversity of experiences, preferred paper review models (double-blind versus single-blind) and conference attendance modalities (fully in-person, hybrid, or online). A detailed summary of the survey was uploaded to the BoG meeting website for members to review. Stark stated that an article about the survey is expected to be submitted to an upcoming issue of the ITSoc Newsletter or to the BITS magazine.

During the live meeting, Stark presented a proposal to run a 60-90 min D&I event at ISIT 2022. Since ISIT 2022 will be held in Finland, there is an opportunity to learn about Scandinavian perspectives on D&I. The request from the BoG was to fund travel costs, accommodation costs, and professional fees for two speakers, as well as catering and overhead costs. Stark further clarified that this is an event organized by the D&I Committee and that he expected other activities would be organized once new chairs of WITHITS and Student and Outreach Committee are confirmed. One member strongly supported this initiative and emphasized the importance of leveraging on a range of global perspectives on D&I.

**Motion:** To support a session on D&I at ISIT 2022.

Motion passed.

**Motion:** To appoint Prof. Vadlamani as a member of the ITSoc Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Motion passed.

**Motion:** To appoint Prof. Shirani Chaharsooghi as Chair of the ITSoc Student and Outreach Committee.

Motion passed.

## **IEEE BITS Magazine – Robert Calderbank**

In a pre-recorded video, Robert Calderbank, the Editor-in-Chief of the IEEE BITS Magazine, reported that Wojciech Szpankowski and Christina Fragouli have rotated off from the Magazine Steering Committee. He thanked Christina for her continued support. Robert recalled that Dan Costello is now chairing the Committee. Next, Robert introduced the current editorial board and thanked Martina Cardone for taking on the web editor role. The first BITS issue has been published, which was negotiated to be Open Access on IEEEExplore. Robert invited feedback on the first issue to improve the upcoming issues. Robert stated that the submissions to the Magazine have been somewhat slow. One possible reason could be that colleagues are not used to publishing magazine articles. He asked BoG members to support efforts to increase timely submissions.

Robert highlighted that the first Special Issue of IEEE BITS will be on Art and Information Theory, which is a collaboration between IT and Museum Communities. The second Special Issue will be on emergence of quantum computing, which will be a mixture of hardware (physics) and software (information processing). A regular issue is also scheduled for June 2022. Finally, Robert put forward a motion to add a new member to the IEEE BITS Steering Committee.

During the live meeting, Robert reiterated the need to receive more magazine article submissions and invited colleagues to submit an article to BITS.

**Motion:** To appoint Prof. Sid Jaggi as a member of the BITS Steering Committee.

Motion passed.

## **IEEE Transactions on Information Theory (Trans IT) – Muriel Medard**

In her pre-recorded video report, the Editor-in-Chief of the IEEE Trans IT, Muriel Medard, first provided an update about the PRAC review of the Transactions, which is a major five-yearly review of operations, performance and strategies of the Journal. Muriel thanked the incoming and outgoing executive assistants of the Transactions and also Christina Fragouli for their support. Muriel expected to share the full report at the next BoG meeting. Overall, the review went well and PRAC was pleased with the new Area Editor structure and addition of new Associate Editors to Board (as opposed to extending the tenure of existing ones). She emphasized that the PRAC is pleased to see we are taking real measures to address the long sub-to-pub times. She also noted that the finance position of the Transactions is healthy.

Muriel reported on progress in shortening the turn-around times for the Transactions. In 2020, the average turn-around time was about 200 days. In 2021, the average turn-around time has been reduced to around 95 days. Muriel mentioned that she is actively engaging with AEs with long turn-around times and is pleased to see substantial improvements. Muriel was pleased to see the editorial team is becoming bigger, stronger and more diverse. She thanked the Editorial Board, the BoG, and the community for their continued support.

Muriel presented a suggestion for input: in cases where the AE is able to make a decision based on two reviews only (instead of three), then the AE would thank the third reviewer and inform them that their review is no longer necessary. This will help reduce the straggler issue in the review process. If the third reviewer is close to completing their review, the AE could wait a reasonable amount of time to receive their review. She mentioned that she had

presented this idea to the Editorial Board and PRAC. The reaction had been quite positive, recognizing that a similar practice is in place in some cognate societies.

During the live meeting, members thanked Muriel for the great reduction of turn-around times and supported the idea of making editorial decisions based on two reviews if possible. Muriel stated these are not policy changes, but rather cultural changes to address long turn-around times. She recognized the importance of clear communication to reviewers about this new practice, to maintain good working relationships between the Trans IT and reviewers.

### **Conference Committee – Li Chen**

In a pre-recorded video, Li Chen, the chair of the Conference Committee, provided an update on the status of upcoming ISITs and ITWs. There were also written and/or video updates from General Chairs of ISIT and ITW 2022-2023. Generally, the organization of these events is going well. Li mentioned that ISIT 2024 is currently a problem, since the NY team withdrew their proposal. Currently, two independent teams are investigating feasibility of running ISIT 2024 in Athens, Greece or Santa Barbara, California, USA; more information to be provided later. Li also reported that in the past several months, the conference committee has approved or is in the process of approving technical sponsorship for a number of cognate conferences or schools.

During the live meeting, Li reiterated some of the points made in the recording and outlined difficulties in conducting financial transactions in India for ITW 2022. He described some measures taken by ITSoc to facilitate these transactions. It was also clarified that the main difficulty for running ISIT 2024 in NY was very high hotel and A/V costs.

### **ISIT 2022 Updates:**

One board member asked about support for remote presentation at ISIT 2022 for authors who cannot attend, possibly due to outbound travel restrictions by their institution. Themistoklis Charalambous, one of the General Co-chairs of ISIT 2022, confirmed that while the organizing committee is preparing for the worst-case scenario (i.e., a fully virtual conference), the most likely format will be in-person with a hybrid component for those who cannot attend. He clarified that an online platform, which is similar to the one used for ITW 2021, will enable remote presentation. He expected a final decision on the modality of ISIT 2022 will be made some time in the middle to end of May. They will take into account the state of the pandemic, geopolitical situation in Europe, and the expected number of in-person attendees. He clarified that their plan is to ask the authors of accepted papers whether they can attend in person, which can be in May. Themistoklis clarified that no such question was asked from authors at the time of submission.

In terms of obtaining a visa to enter Finland, Themistoklis responded while he does not know the exact waiting times, there are currently no extraordinary delays for visa processing. He confirmed that the organizers can produce a visa letter for authors via EDAS.

One member asked about differences in registration fees for remote versus on-site attendees. Themistoklis clarified that the main difference will be the catering costs (which is roughly Euros250). He also anticipated that the fee gap between online and in-person registration would be kept at a minimum to encourage in-person participation.

One of the TPC co-chairs of ISIT 2022 stated that they have surpassed the number of submissions compared to ISIT 2020 and 2021. She asked colleagues to do their reviews on time. The General Co-chair also stated that the tutorial proposal deadline has been extended and invited proposal submissions by colleagues.

### **ITW 2022 Updates:**

Navin Kashyap, one of the General Co-chairs of ITW 2022 provided an update on handling financial transactions of ITW in India and the difficulties they had encountered regarding

management of sponsorship proceedings. One member suggested to the organizers to persist with negotiating with all parties involved. Based on past experience, oftentimes, it is possible to reach a feasible solution. Another board member suggested that the ITW 2022 organizers can get in touch with the ITSoc Treasurer to help resolve financial issues, which could have stemmed from different terminologies used by different parties.

### **ITW 2023 Updates:**

One of the General Co-chairs of ITW 2023 anticipated that sponsorship proceedings for ITW 2023 would be used to reduce the registration costs.

### **Discussions about ISIT 2024 and Planning for Future Events:**

The board then discussed general organization matters of future ITSoc events. One member stated that given the substantial task of conference organization and volunteers' heavy workloads, more structured support from the Society (e.g., help with venue negotiations, bookings, and vetting contracts) would be beneficial. One member stated that other cognate societies have a unified website across multiple editions of the same conference and do not need to build publicity structures from scratch. Two members stated that as part of the Future of the Information Theory Society (FITS) initiative, the ITSoc events platform has recently been upgraded to include new conference tools and features. However, there is some reluctance on the part of organizers in taking this up, perhaps due to concerns about limited flexibility. One member outlined challenges in negotiating with multiple venues and getting the best competitive rates, especially in big and expensive cities. It was flagged that MCE provides venue and contract vetting services for a fee and it is important to utilize such services when and where it is most needed, for example to assist General Co-chairs early on with their mandate of getting the best deals for the Society and for the attendees.

The president concluded the discussion and reiterated that one or two proposals for ISIT 2024 may be coming in the next weeks.

### **Digital Presence Committee – Brian Kurkoski**

Brian Kurkoski, the chair of the Digital Presence Committee, had produced a video recording of his report. Brian first acknowledged members of the Digital Presence Committee. He then highlighted that it has been one year since the new ITSoc website was launched. He presented a list of ITSoc events and publications that have been hosted on the ITSoc platform or been promoted via ITSoc social media and news feed. Work continues to enhance the conference platform based on experiences of ITW 2021. Cameras and microphones have been received for handling hybrid events in the future. The Committee also continues to work on a single landing page for the outreach activities of the Society. The design is completed and the site is moving to development soon. The other big project of 2021 has been transitioning to the online newsletter site (the last print issue of the ITSoc Newsletter was the December 2021 issue). The site is expected to go live on March 11, 2022.

The first project for 2022 is the creation of a microsite for Shannon. The purpose is to gather some existing material on Shannon in a single easy-to-navigate site. One question raised by Brian was how to get access to more images of Shannon that can freely be used. The second project of 2022 is to provide Society members with a collection of information theory themed clipart. This could also allow members to share source files of their own developed clipart.

The third project is a site for sharing resources for teaching Information Theory courses. Some members already share their teaching material with each other in an ad-hoc and limited manner. The aim is to make this more structured and widely available to ITSoc members, while ensuring credit is given to authors. A small pilot project will be started and its parameters will be adjusted based on how it is received. At the end of his report, Brian presented the main features the new ITSoc Newsletter website.

During the live meeting, Brian asked members to keep an eye out for the all-digital newsletter. Christina thanked Brian for his dedicated work on ITSoc website and chairing the Digital Presence Committee. Regarding obtaining images of Shannon, one member suggested to get in touch with the director of the Bit Player movie to find out more.

### **Break for offline discussions on strategic directions**

At about 10:30 EST, the President asked members to participate in one of the three informal breakout sessions on the following topics: open access journals, alumni network, or multi-disciplinary events, which were respectively led by Wei Yu, Anand Sarwate, and Matthieu Bloch. The President explained that a pre-allocation of members to rooms was made to ensure there is sufficient participation in each room. However, members are free to roam between rooms if they so wish. The purpose of these discussions is to identify opportunities and challenges and if possible, propose actionable items to address them. These discussions were not formally part of the BoG meetings and thus were not recorded. However, a summary of each thread would be presented after recess and captured in the minutes.

**Motion:** To recess after the breakout discussions are over.

Motion was approved.

### **Treasurer's Report – Edmund Yeh**

In his video report, the Treasurer, Edmund Yeh, stated the Society is in a very good financial position. It enjoys a significant operational surplus, as well as built-up reserve (roughly \$7.2M). A fraction of each surplus can be used for funding new initiatives. Of the reserve, 3% can be used for funding special projects. Of the operational surplus, 50% can also be used for special projects. He explained that generally speaking, money coming from the operational surplus has a shorter life span than that coming from the reserve.

In terms of 2021 general funds, Edmund reported that the 2021 budget was submitted with an expected \$5.4K surplus. However, the current (non-final) actual surplus is \$547.2K. He flagged another surplus bump may come, which is due to returns on IEEE assets. Some of the reasons for the current large surplus is that ISIT 2021 returned a surplus due to retained sponsorship from a government sponsor. There is also a higher net returns from the Trans IT publications. In addition, various committees spent less than what they had requested for 2021, where the cause of underspending was mostly covid-related.

For special projects in 2021, ITSoc had a total of \$605K to spend. From the 3% spending rule (available \$218K), the BoG had approved a total of \$85K, which has been subsequently approved by IEEE. From the 50% spending rule (available \$387K), BoG had initially allocated \$65K and further approved an additional \$120K in the June 2021 BoG meeting. However, this is still well below what we could have used.

For the 2022 special projects, the BoG had pre-allocated \$169K from the 3% spending rule at the June 2021 BoG meeting, which included a placeholder (non-approved) item for marketing for a possible ITSoc Open-Access journal. However, the 3% spending rule is subject to another cap imposed by IEEE (1% of all its total reserves). This second limit kicked in for 2022 special projects, meaning that only \$103.6K could be spent under the 3% rule. He clarified that the balance of \$65.4K can still be spent under the 50% spending rule.

Edmund then presented the budget submitted to IEEE for 2022 general funds with an estimated surplus of \$64K. Edmund asked committees to consider sending their itemized expenditure so that they can be included in the budget.

One member asked about the \$79K projected loss for ISIT 2022. Edmund clarified this estimate was made back in June or July 2021 and essentially reflects the worst-case scenario and uncertainties associated with attendance numbers and venue cancellation costs. One member reminded the Treasurer about finalizing venue cancellation recovery for ISIT 2020 via insurer.

### **Schools Subcommittee – Parastoo Sadeghi**

In her pre-recorded video, the chair of the Schools Subcommittee, Parastoo Sadeghi, first acknowledged the membership of the Subcommittee. She then presented a snapshot of four upcoming IT schools in 2022, all of which are currently planned as fully in-person events. Parastoo reported that she is in regular contact with the organizers and that planning is going well. Separate written reports from three schools were also provided by their respective chairs. Parastoo then flagged possibilities for switching to virtual or hybrid formats (in case of worsening pandemic or border restrictions). She outlined proposed times and revised budgets. In the event that a school format needs to change, a revised budget will be reviewed by the Schools Subcommittee and submitted to the Board for vote via email in April/May. Finally, Parastoo presented a brief report on the upcoming proposals for IT Schools in 2023.

It was suggested that all school lectures be recorded (even in the case of in-person schools), so that they can be posted on the ITSoc website for offline viewing by ITSoc members. Parastoo made a note to ask the organizers to record lectures whenever possible.

### **Fellows Committee – Sennur Ulukus**

In her presentation, Sennur Ulukus, the Chair of Fellows Committee, acknowledged members of the Committee. She reported that twelve nominations for elevation to IEEE Fellow were received for 2022, of which five were successful. She also reported that eight other ITSoc members were elevated to IEEE Fellow through nominations from other societies.

### **Executive Session**

No minutes are available.

### **Summary of Breakout Discussion on Future Directions**

#### **Discussion on Open Access Journals – Wei Yu**

First, Wei Yu reminded board members that after a presentation to the BoG on Open-Access (OA) journals in March 2021, an ad-hoc committee was formed to investigate relevant issues for ITSoc. He acknowledged that his presentation is informed by discussions at the breakout session with a subset of BoG members on March 4, 2022, and follow-up comments. He presented some background information on traditional academic publication models, where authors transfer copyright to the publisher and the publisher, in turn, sells subscription-based access to readers (mostly libraries). However, this means that public university need to pay to read the outcome of publicly funded research.



He stated that this traditional model is being seriously challenged by a growing push for an Open Access publication model, in which the authors pay to publish and readers get access for free. Readers who do not publish a lot stand to gain and both for-profit and non-profit publishers stand to lose a lot of money. Wei reminded members that IEEE is a non-profit organization and is a relatively niche player in the academic publication landscape. In addition, authors and institutions who publish a lot, would need to find budget to pay for publication charges. Based on current trends, Wei expected that OA will be the dominant model for academic publication in the long-term future.

He then presented some information on a movement called Plan-S, which is mostly comprised of public research funding agencies in Europe. This movement is pushing for publicly funded research to appear in Gold OA journals, or in hybrid journals which have a Transformative Agreement (TA) in place between the publisher and the relevant institution or national consortia (with which the authors are affiliated). He then presented two recent examples of such TAs made between IEEE and Finland and Switzerland research consortia. He flagged that the Plan-S membership is a dynamic one and members (both big and small funders) have joined or left in the past several years. He highlighted that IEEE Communications and Signal Processing Societies have already started Gold OA journals and typically have a rapid turn-around time for publication. IEEE is currently incentivizing starting OA journals by all societies.

Wei then posed the following questions: given the above, should ITSoc start an OA journal? And if so, in what form and when?

Before concluding, Wei presented a number of risks and opportunities. One of the main challenges is finding qualified volunteers to serve as EiC, editorial board members, and reviewers. Other risks include mandatory article processing charges (APC), competing non-IEEE OA journals, establishing reputation and impact factor, as well as self-archiving practices by majority of ITSoc authors. However, Wei highlighted that arXiv or institutional repositories do not appear to satisfy the Plan-S requirement (since they are not under the CC BY license and cannot be the final formatted version by the publisher), unless the authors find other means to pay an APC so that IEEE would grant a CC BY license.

Next, the President opened the floor for comments and questions.

One member said that there are major funding agencies in Europe that are not part of Plan-S, but still require OA publication for research they fund. These funders seem to give the authors more flexibility in where they can publish and allow a version of Green OA: self-publishing or archiving on arXiv or university websites without having to pay APC. While such Green OA is not compatible with the presented definition of Gold OA, it has been around for much longer and is an acceptable form of OA to many funders.

Another member brought up another non-trivial movement in publishing Diamond Open Access Journals, in fields such as mathematics, where neither the authors nor the readers pay and the process is mainly run by community volunteers with minimal operational costs.

One member stated that as an IEEE Society, it is not possible to start a Diamond Open Access journal through IEEE mechanisms. Therefore, volunteer time is going to be more of an issue for starting a Diamond OA Journal as a grass-root community-based operation. This member also emphasized on the importance of maintaining high quality in the editorial and review processes.

Another member raised concerns about top-down approaches from politicians or funding agencies to mandate where authors can publish. This member also emphasized the

importance of balancing rapid turn-around times, typically associated with Gold OA journals, with maintaining high quality.

One member stated that by 2024 everything will need to be in open access mode in Switzerland.

Wei concluded by stating that a survey will be conducted to capture of the sentiment of the Board members on the issue of OA.

### **Discussion on Alumni Network – Anand Sarwate**

Stark Draper presented a summary of discussions on behalf of Anand Sarwate. The main issues are that many PhD students in IT do not continue with IT after graduation and do not renew their ITSoc memberships. Some do not see IT as a good career choice. Stark flagged the main question is does ITSoc want to do anything about this? And if so, what and how?

Stark stated that understanding how graduates use their IT knowledge in their future careers is going to be useful in shaping the alumni network. This can help to link current graduates with past graduates, to navigate their careers, and to move to cognate areas where their IT knowledge is deemed valuable.

Stark stated that the group discussion had identified tapping into existing networks such as LinkedIn to create a list of ITSoc alumni. Another option was to use the BITS magazine to connect with recent and not-so-recent IT graduates. This could entail publishing articles in the Magazine, featuring alumni experiences and success stories. Another idea is to create “IT at work” columns to highlight how information theory knowledge is being used in industry.

A different possibility is hosting meet-up events at ISITs or ITWs for recent graduates to get together and share knowledge. Given time and travel constraints by alumni working in industry, another possibility is to run virtual alumni meetings throughout the year.

One member suggested that IT Schools participants could be tapped into to further build the network. It was flagged that obtaining consent for contacting participants upon conclusion of ITSoc events would be required to remain compliant with privacy laws.

### **Discussion on Interdisciplinary Events – Matthieu Bloch**

Matthieu started by posing the main question: should and how could ITSoc support interdisciplinary events? How can we promote such events? He acknowledged many organic grassroots efforts by the community already exist. He also encouraged members to check out an initiative called Neuromatch, which has leveraged on online tools to build a global network and transforming Neuroscience into an accessible trans-disciplinary community.

He emphasized the importance of putting the Society surplus into good use by growing the reach of information theory beyond traditional boundaries and inform members of availability of resources at ITSoc to help organize such events. For example, in biology, circuits, systems and controls, quantum, and machine learning. Matthieu emphasized that while there are many formats for these events, they are not mutually exclusive. Instead, ITSoc could leverage on them to build even stronger connections and create opportunities for having global events with local flavors.

Matthieu flagged that one key take-away message from discussions was that just bringing experts together is not enough. Rather, there is a need to design the events such that they enable developing personal connections.

One member supported this initiative and gave an example of being approached by the VP of Circuits and Systems Society to organize joint workshops or special sessions at ISIT 2023 on the topic of coding and circuit theories. This thread is currently being pursued. It is also important to create technical program committees from multiple societies. Another member echoed their support for these types of initiatives and bringing together colleagues from different communities who can speak the same language.

### **New Business**

One member asked how ITSoc can better document a suite of ongoing and concluded new initiatives. It was agreed that it is a good idea to maintain a more coordinated and systematic record of new initiatives and their outcomes. One member stated that upgrading ITSoc website was a major new initiative and an article about the project and outcomes recently appeared in ITSoc newsletter. The member encouraged colleagues to write articles in the newsletter or BITS magazine to promote their projects, call for participation, or report on the outcomes.

Another suggestion was about promoting JSAITs more widely and educating colleagues from other communities about what JSAIT is about. This can help with recruiting Senior Editors or Guest Editors from other cognate communities. There was general consensus that needs to be done.

One member stated that more coordinated advertising efforts can help with celebrating success of ITSoc members, for example when they receive prestigious awards or medals.

Another member highlighted the importance of nominate deserving colleagues for awards such as IEEE-level teaching awards.

**The meeting adjourned at 10:52 am EST, March 5, 2022.**