

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

**Location:** Remote Meeting

**Dates:** October 28, 2022

**Time:** The meeting convened at 9:00 am Eastern Standard Time (EST), October 28. The meeting adjourned at 12:43 pm EST, October 28.

**Meeting Chair:** Christina Fragouli

**Minutes taken by:** Parastoo Sadeghi

**Meeting Attendees:** Erik Agrell, Matthieu Bloch, Martina Cardone#, Li Chen, Marco Dalai, Alex Dimakis, Lara Dolecek, Stark Draper, Christina Fragouli, Tara Javidi, Brian Kurkoski, Michael Langberg, Muriel Medard, Henry Pfister, Sandeep Pradhan#, Joachim Rosenthal, Parastoo Sadeghi, Anand Sarwate, Farhad Shirani#, Vincent Tan, Ashley Tufuga#, Daniela Tuninetti, Shun Watanabe, Edmund Yeh, Aylin Yener, Wei Yu (Non-voting denoted by #.)

**Business conducted between meetings:** Between BoG meetings of June 2022 and October 2022, the following business items were conducted and voted upon via email.

- 1) In August 2022, the Board elected Matthieu Bloch as the 2023 President of the IEEE Information Theory Society.
- 2) In August 2022, the Board elected Stark Draper as the 2023 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the IEEE Information Theory Society.
- 3) In August 2022, the Board elected Aaron Wagner as the 2023 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of the IEEE Information Theory Society.
- 4) In September 2022, the Board approved the minutes of June 2022 BoG meeting.
- 5) In September 2022, the Board voted to extend the Paper Award decision deadline by 4 weeks (till October 1, 2022).

At 9:00 am EST, meeting Chair, Christina Fragouli, called the meeting to order and roll call was taken. The following two motions were issued.

**motion:** To approve the meeting agenda. The motion passed.

**motion:** To add Natasha Devroye to the meeting attendees in the minutes of BoG meeting of June 26, 2022. The motion passed.

**1) President's Report:** Christina Fragouli, the President of the ITSoc, presented her report. She started by recalling the Officers shift register, welcoming Aaron Wagner as the 2<sup>nd</sup> VP-elect of the Society and thanking the outgoing Senior Past President, Aylin Yener, for her outstanding and generous contributions to the Society over the past decade in several roles. She congratulated her on becoming the Director-elect of IEEE Division-IX, to which ITSoc belongs. Next, Christina thanked various committee chairs and BoG members, whose term ends in December 2022. She then introduced new elected members to the Board who will join in January 2023. Next, Christina thanked the current Secretary and Treasurer, who have accepted to continue in their roles for 2023. She asked BoG members to vote on the motions for these two appointments. Next, Christina congratulated the following ITSoc members: Erdal Arıkan: 2023 Padovani Lecturer; Rashmi Vinayak: 2023 Goldsmith Lecturer; Ashish Khisti, Oliver Kosut, Arya Mazumdar, Chao Tian, and Shun Watanabe: 2023-2024 Distinguished Lecturers. She concluded her report by highlighting upcoming meetings and activities, which includes IEEE Technical Activities Board (TAB) meeting, November 17-20, 2022; 5-year conference portfolio review, December 1, 2022; 5-year ITSoc review, February 16, 2023.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Parastoo Sadeghi as the Secretary for 2023. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Edmund Yeh as Treasurer for 2023. The motion passed.

- 2) **Treasurer's report:** The Treasurer, Edmund Yeh, started his report by stating that the financial situation of the Society remains in a very good shape. At the end of 2021 Financial Year, there were \$8.776M in the reserves and \$790.2K surplus in the general operational funds, which have mainly been due to stronger than expected performance and lower costs. In 2021, only about half of the \$270.16K allocated for special projects were spent. Edmund identified this as an ongoing issue. In addition, he reported a large IEEE reserve allocation in 2021 due to strong market performance. Overall, this resulted in the Society's net surplus for 2021 to be \$1.521M, which went to the reserves. However, the Treasurer expected that IEEE reserve allocation in 2022 may be significantly lower due to poor market performance. Next, Edmund gave an overview of the 2022 budget, which as of September 2022 shows \$334K surplus and is substantially higher than the initial forecast. The Treasurer recalled at the June 2022 BoG meeting, \$169K was approved for special projects. However, as of September 2022, only \$13K has been spent, which is clearly not on pace with the forecast. The Treasurer encouraged champions of special projects to increase the rate of spending in the remainder of 2022. Next, the Treasurer gave an overview of the upcoming requests for special projects in 2023, amounting to \$195K, of which \$156.7K was approved by the IEEE to come from the reserves and the rest can come from operational surplus of 2022. The Treasurer concluded his report by encouraging Society members to propose new initiatives, while ensuring the approved amount is spent on pace.

During discussion time, the Treasurer clarified that the effective deadline for invoicing in each financial year is before the Thanksgiving Holiday. He also clarified that ISIT 2022 went from \$79K forecast deficit (due to an uncertain Covid-related outlook) to \$44K surplus, which contributed to a large surplus in 2022. A member emphasized such a large surplus has become a real problem and encouraged members to champion more new initiatives. In response to a comment on the market volatility and lower expected returns (or even losses) in 2022, the Treasurer clarified that the Society can still tap into 50% of the operational surplus for special projects. It was clarified by some members that in the past IEEE covered market losses through taking money out of Society reserves. Therefore, it is important to use the reserves to support new initiatives when they are available. One member suggested that the healthy financial state of the Society should be clearly communicated to future ISIT and ITW organizers so that they focus on ensuring an excellent event experience rather than on returning a large surplus. One member suggested providing grants to conference organizers and communicating that breaking even is sufficient.

- 3) **BITS Information Theory Magazine Steering Committee report:** Christina Fragouli presented a brief report on behalf of Dan Costello, the Chair of Steering Committee, and Rob Calderbank, the Editor-in-Chief of the Magazine. She reported that the Steering Committee has elected Emina Soljanin as the Chair of the Committee in 2023 and the Special Issue on Information Processing in the Arts and Humanities was about to be published in October 2022. Christina presented a request from the Committee to the BoG to continue supporting the promotion of BITS through an allocation of \$15K. This fund will be used to support promotion methods that enhance the content of BITS with the goal to attract more readers and contributors. She reported that the 2022 funds were used for expenses such as the column logo designs and promotional merchandise distributed at ISIT 2022.

**motion:** To support the promotion of BITS, the Information Theory Magazine, with new initiative \$15K funding for 2023. The motion passed.

- 4) **Alumni in Industry Ad-hoc Committee report:** The Chair of the Ad-hoc Committee, Christina Fragouli, provided a short update on the progress of the Committee and upcoming plans. She reported that since the BoG meeting in June 2022, progress has been made as follows. The following mission statement was created: *"Our goal is to form strong connections between ITSoc and industry, provide career development mentoring*

to our current graduate students and inspire exploration of new research areas to ITSoc researchers.” In addition, a logo was designed and ideas about creating an alumni website are explored. An interview with Rajiv Laroia will appear in the second BITS issue and two more interviews with Meir Feder and Xingzhou Wu have been scheduled. An alumni event at ITA is being planned, targeting faculty and addressing questions such as how best to approach new industry partners. An additional event at ISIT 2023 is being considered, targeting students who want to explore careers in industry. Finally, creation of a directory of former graduate students in industry is progressing. Christina presented a request from the Committee to the BoG to fund \$20K per year for the next three years to support events at ITAs and ISITs, logos/designs, creation and maintenance of alumni directory and its promotion.

**motion:** To support a three-year new initiative on Alumni in Industry on the amount of \$20K per year. The motion passed.

- 5) **Sharing Teaching Resources Ad-hoc Committee report:** The Chair of the Committee, Martina Cardone, provided an update on the progress of the Committee since June 2022. She recalled the membership of the Committee and the goal of the committee, which is *to support the collection and controlled distribution of teaching material through an independent website*. Martina reported that the name of the website will be THOMAS, in honor of Thomas Cover and Joy Thomas who were pioneers of teaching information theory. A logo featuring THOMAS with an information theory flavor has been designed. Next, Martina presented the designed website and stated that a fully functioning website is expected to come online in mid-December 2022. Current work includes identifying inaugural courses to be made available on the website, organization of events at ITA 2023 (and possibly at ISIT 2023), and advertisement of the website at IEEE educational magazines and websites. Martina ended her presentation by encouraging BoG members to contact her with any feedback or suggestions about this initiative. The following motion was presented to the BoG from the Committee to support this work.

**motion:** To support a three-year new initiative on Sharing Teaching Resources on the amount of \$20K per year. The motion passed.

- 6) **Travel Scholarship Initiative:** Lalitha Vadlamani, a member of the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee, presented a proposal on behalf of the Committee to fund D&I travel scholarships as a new initiative for the next three years. She stated the purpose of the scholarship is to support travel to the Society events, which can include ISIT, ITW or IT schools. She motivated the need for establishing such scholarship as follows: funding opportunities to travel to Society events is limited, competitive and generally non-uniform across different sections of the Society. The target of the new initiative is underrepresented groups, which are self-identifiable by race, gender, geographical regions, seniority and so on. She outlined the procedure for allocating funds to events as follows: event organizers will apply to the D&I Committee (template to be provided by the Committee). Upon review and approval, funds will be allocated as a block grant and managed by the event organizers according to a best-practices documents that the D&I committee will also provide. Lalitha expected that reimbursement of registration fees and accommodation costs will be the two main mechanisms to spend the fund.

During discussion time, one member asked whether a decision has been made on the proportion of funds reserved for ISIT versus ITW. It was clarified that in 2022, \$30K was allocated to ISIT and \$20K to ITW. However, the number of attendees to each event can also serve as a rough guide, while other factors such as location could be taken into account. One member observed that it is somewhat difficult to discern from the proposal how the money will be spent. In response, it was clarified by other members there is precedence for in-principle approval of new-initiative funds, followed by more details on how the money is to be spent. A best-practices document can further specify more details on usage and application process. It was generally agreed it is best to keep new-initiative funding at a high management level and allow sufficient discretion for the committees and

organizers to work together towards the best use of the funds. One member commented that for IT schools, it may be better to increase the base block grant from operational funds and ensure free registration and heavily subsidized accommodation for all ITSoc student members regardless of diversity considerations.

**motion:** To support a three-year new initiative in the amount of \$50K per year to be used for travel grants to attend ITSoc events, prioritizing attendees from currently underrepresented groups. The motion passed.

- 7) **Global Workshop Initiative:** Matthieu Bloch presented a proposal on behalf of Aylin Yener and himself for a new initiative called Global Workshop Initiative. Matthieu motivated the initiative by referring to the term “Glocalization” which underpins the importance of “*continental and global levels coming together with the increasing salience of local and regional levels*”. It is recognized that while online events increase reach, in-person events enable personal connections. The rationale behind this new initiative is that post Covid, travel is still complicated, and in the meantime, knowledge and experience has been acquired on leveraging various tools for online interactions.

The goal of this new initiative is to capitalize on the tools that have already been developed by the Digital Presence Committee to encourage thematic workshops with a global reach, promoting information theory and its intersection with other fields. The main principles of organizing a Global Workshop were outlined as follows: identification of a theme that is relevant to information theory, organizing a global (online) anchor event, such as keynote lectures or panels, organizing parallel local (in-person or hybrid) events, and tapping into ITSoc resources such as website infrastructure and BITS Magazine. Benefits will include lower costs of organizing Global Workshops, lower carbon footprint, and simpler organization. It will also foster networking between local communities, ITSoc and cognate communities. The new-initiative funds will be used to provide awards to workshops (total of \$40K per year, up to \$8K per event) and to support digital tools (\$10K per year) as needed. Matthieu expected a call for proposals to be issued in late 2022 or early 2023. An ad-hoc committee will be formed to vet the proposals and select winners according to selection criteria, which will include relevance of the topic and program to ITSoc objectives, as well as inclusivity and global reach of the event.

**motion:** To support a three-year new initiative in the amount of \$50K per year to be used for Global Workshops. The motion passed.

- 8) **Digital Presence Committee report:** Brian Kurkoski, the Chair of the Committee, presented a report on the progress of the Committee since the last BoG meeting in June 2022. Brian reported that the outreach website is now live, the video website is growing with new videos being added from past ITSoc events, the events platform continues to be used, and the Committee budget is mostly spent according to plan. Brian encouraged event organizers to post their events under the Society calendar and use the ITSoc Mailchimp for advertising their events, which features a larger database than the ITSoc mailing list. The outreach website is a single webpage which contains various links to the Bit Player movie, children’s book and cartoons, Art of the Problem videos, and the ITSoc Student videos, which are organized by the Student and Outreach Subcommittee.

Brian clarified that roughly 30% of videos on the website are accessible by ITSoc members only, while others are available for the public. In addition, videos of almost all Shannon Lectures going back to 2007 are now available on the website. Brian encouraged event organizers in 2023 to record tutorials and plenaries and work with the Committee to post them on this website. Next, Brian reported that ITW 2022 will be using the ITSoc events platform. Next, Brian gave a detailed account of how the budget has been used, where most of the money has gone towards the teaching resources initiative and the outreach website.

In terms of ongoing work, Brian stated a plan to invite all Society members to join the ITSoc mailing list. Next, a volunteers’ page is being created, appealing to members to

register their interest in various roles. Improvements to the videos page is being considered and applied. The teaching resources website is also progressing well.

During discussion time, Christina thanked the Digital Presence Committee for their amazing work during the past year. She encouraged more input from the BoG on ongoing projects and asked for fresh ideas on new projects.

The following motion was presented to the BoG for supporting ongoing projects, as well as developing new projects.

**motion:** To further our digital presence with \$40K for 2023. The motion passed.

**9) Paper Award Committee report (executive session):**

**motion:** That the ITSoc Board of Governors accepts the amended 2022 Paper Awards Committee Report. The motion passed.

**motion:** That the 2022 IEEE Information Theory Society Paper Award shall be awarded to the paper by A. B. Wagner, N. V. Shende, and Y. Altug, titled “A new method for employing feedback to improve coding performance,” IEEE Trans. on Info. Theory, vol. 66, no. 11, pp. 6660–6681, 2020. The motion passed.

**10) Strategic Goals:** Christina Fragouli presented the following three strategic goals to be adopted by the BoG for 2023: *(1) Strengthen Diversity and Inclusivity (2) Increase Visibility of our Society to other Societies and the General Public (3) Expand Member Services and Benefits*. The rationale for these goals is to identify priority areas and to encourage additional volunteer effort and new initiatives towards achieving these goals. She clarified that none of these directions is new, but the goal is to make them more formal and visible. This will also help with the ITSoc response to the previous 5-yearly review of the Society.

During discussion time, Christina clarified that the strategic goals are meant to be broad and are neither divisive nor exclusive of other new initiatives or goals. Another member supported the role of BoG becoming more strategic and less operational. One member asked whether technical excellence (such as publications) should be included in the these goals. However, another member clarified the distinction between our mission (which is sustained technical excellence) from strategic goals (which can change from year to year). One other member iterated the importance of keeping strategic goals brief and at a high level, free from metrics or prescriptions.

**motion:** To adopt for 2023 the following strategic goals: (1) Strengthen Diversity and Inclusivity (2) Increase Visibility of our Society to Other Societies and the General Public (3) Expand Member Services and Benefits. The motion passed.

**11) Establishing ISIT Steering Committee:** Christina Fragouli started the discussion by recalling that the Conference Committee is responsible for working with ISIT General Chairs on the proposal, venue, setting the budget, and managing contracts. However, in recent years, several changes to the ISIT program have been tried by the organizers and it is important to learn from the outcomes of different experiments and ensure memory is retained. One of the first tasks of this steering committee will be putting together a best-practices document to provide guidance to future organizers by collecting data, maintaining memory, and setting strategic goals.

During discussion time, several members asked whether it is better to focus on ITW and then extend the best practices to ISIT. The response was ISIT is the Society’s most important conference and it is reasonable to focus on ISIT first and then extend the work to ITW. One member pointed to an old version of ISIT organization guide, which was compiled in 2014 and the need to update and expand such documents. A member raised a point that this matter is the responsibility of the Conference Committee and questioned the need for establishing a separate ad-hoc committee. It was suggested instead to start this as an ad-hoc subcommittee or an extra component of the Conference Committee. In

response, it was clarified this is an intermediate step and the ad-hoc committee may be dissolved in a year. In the long-term, this may indeed become an ongoing component of the Conference Committee. However, currently the goal is to populate the ad-hoc committee with recent past general and TPC chairs of ISITs, while avoiding conflicts of interest. One member stated that the experience of ISIT 2022 will be very important as it was the first conference post covid that ran in person. One member pointed out that currently the Conference Committee is overloaded with many tasks associated with overseeing all ITSoc events and interfacing with the IEEE.

**motion:** To support having an ISIT steering committee, and create a precursor ad-hoc committee as a transition. The motion passed.

- 12) Reimbursement funding:** Christina stated there may be some funding available for BoG members to travel to BoG meetings if they do not have other sources of funding or if there is no conference adjacent to a BoG meeting. There is also a need to support travel costs for the Secretary and Treasurer to attend BoG meetings.

**motion:** To support in part travel of Secretary and Treasurer to BoG meetings subject to president's approval. The motion passed.

**13) Committee appointments and publications (executive session):**

The following appointments were proposed by the Membership Committee Chair.

**motion:** To appoint Dr I-Hsiang Wang to the ITSoc Membership Committee and as ITSoc Chapters Liaison for the period 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2024. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Martina Cardone to the ITSoc Membership Committee and as WITHITS Liaison for the period 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2024. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr. Akademischer Oberrat Christian Senger to the ITSoc Membership Committee and as Chair of the ITSoc Schools Subcommittee for the period 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2024. The motion passed.

The following appointment was proposed by the Nominations and Appointments Committee Chair.

**motion:** To approve Lalitha Sankar as the chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee starting January 1, 2023. The motion passed.

The IT Transactions Editor-in-Chief (EiC), Muriel Medard, presented significant reduction of sub-to-pub and submission-to-first-decision times for the Transactions. She then proposed appointment of 10 new editors for the Transactions as follows.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Yingbin Liang as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Ahmad Beirami as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Yue M. Lu as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Francesco Orabona as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Ido Tal as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Mingyue Ji as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Mahdi Soltanolkotabi as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Waheed U. Bajwa as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Selin Aviyente as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

**motion:** To appoint Dr Aditya Ramamoorthy as AE to the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. The motion passed.

#### **14) Journal on Selected Areas in Information Theory (JSAIT) Editor-in-Chief (EiC)**

**report:** Tara Javidi, the EiC of JSAIT, presented a report on the state of JSAIT and a number of discussion items. She expressed her gratitude to Senior Editors and reported that two new Senior Editors, F. Bach from INRIA France and M. Wainwright from Berkeley/MIT have joined the JSAIT leadership team. Next, Tara invited input on the following items.

The issue of resubmission: Tara reported that resubmission of papers that have already appeared at top conferences (such as NeurIPS and ICML) has led to discussions within the leadership team and Guest Editors of JSAIT. These papers are typically much longer than ISIT papers. Tara stated that as a first step, IEEE CrossCheck is used to measure overlap and if labelled as “significant”, the paper is desk rejected. If the paper, however, has a large supplementary (unreviewed) material, this will often lower the similarity score to below the threshold. The viewpoint of the JSAIT leadership and Guest Editors is that allowing resubmission of such papers creates a substantial burden on the reviewers, which is compounded by the fast turn-around time of JSAIT. The JSAIT Steering Committee currently gives full discretion to the Lead Guest Editor on whether to accept or reject resubmissions. During discussion time, it was stated that the Lead Guest Editors are effectively the EiC for their special issue and it is reasonable for them to have discretion on whether to commit to time-consuming review of previously published papers. For comparison, the policy of IEEE Transactions on Information Theory is that submission of a paper already accepted at a conference does not constitute as duplicate. Many on the Steering committee as well as EiC see this more liberal policy of the IT Transaction as relieving the pressure on JSAIT to change its current policy. The one point that became clear, however, is that the submission policy language should be updated. The hope is that this will guide the authors to detail contributions of their paper compared to already published work and clarify that the Lead Guest Editors have full discretion to assess the merits of papers submitted to their issue.

Next, Tara presented the motivation for improving and clarifying the language of policy for submitting contributed (unsolicited) special issue proposals. She stated that the aim is to help those who would like to propose an issue to have a clearer sense as what makes a successful proposal (almost all but one issue so far have been invited but to ensure success we should really plan for more contributed issues). Two changes are proposed: one is to include in the proposal a plan for obtaining quality reviews and the other is identifying a Senior Editor at the time of submission who may act as the Overseeing Senior Editor.

Finally, Tara presented the motivation and rationale for moving to a single-volume model for JSAIT in the future, which is to do with deadline extensions and bottlenecks in receiving final manuscripts from a small set of papers. A single-volume model will address this issue and will allow timely publication of papers. Tara stated that a formal proposal will be presented to the BoG in their first meeting of 2023.

#### **15) Conference Committee report:** Li Chen, Chair of the Conference Committee, presented a report on the state of past and upcoming ITSoc events. Li pointed out that a video report from ISIT 2022 organizers has been provided summarizing their experience running a conference post covid. The organizers also identified provision of free lunch at future ISITs to create more network opportunities for participants. They called for creation of a practice or policy for running future ISITs (Note a guideline booklet for organizing ITSoc conferences already exists). They also suggested better estimating the food and

beverage consumption and budget. Next, Li stated that ITW 2022 will take place in Mumbai, India in November 2022 in hybrid format, starting with the online component and followed by the in-person event. As of early October, the conference had received 84 in-person registrations and 98 online registrations. Travel grants have been processed and other aspects of the event are progressing according to plan. Next, Li reported timely progress for ISIT 2023 in Taipei, Taiwan. Li then reported on the progress of ISIT 2024 in Athens, Greece, which mainly involves negotiating contracts between IEEE and various service providers, as well as adding more members to the organizing committee. Next, Li presented a summary of a new proposal for holding ISIT 2025 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The venue will be at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, which was attended by Claude Shannon in 1930s. The budget involves roughly \$300K expenses and \$430K income, mainly coming from registration fees which are set at around \$600 for early ITSoc member registration. Li stated that should ISIT 2025 in Ann Arbor be approved by the BoG, then ISIT in Guangzhou, China will be postponed to 2026. A more detailed video was provided by the organizers, boasting a rich history of information theory at the University, an experienced and knowledgeable team of professional conference organizers, and well-equipped and historical meeting rooms. Finally, Li listed three events for which technical co-sponsorship has been or is being approved by the Conference Committee.

During discussion time, Christina thanked General Co-chairs of ISIT in Guangzhou for graciously agreeing to postpone their event to 2026. Sandeep Pradhan, the General Co-chair of ISIT 2025 clarified that hotel booking is disjoint and independent of all conference expenses and hotel deals can be made later. One member noticed the proposed budget shows around 30% surplus and given the strong financial position of the Society, such large margin will not be necessary. Instead, registration costs can be further reduced.

**motion:** To postpone the ISIT in Guangzhou, China to 2026; To approve for 2025 to hold ISIT in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The motion passed.

**16) James L. Massey Research and Teaching Award for Young Scholars Selection**

**Committee report:** In a pre-recorded video, Tara Javidi, the Chair of the Committee, presented her end-of-term report. She reminded the members that in 2019 the BoG changed the selection criteria from age to those with no more than 10 years post graduation with their highest degree with the hope to allow a larger and more diverse pool of nominees. She said that back in 2019 and 2020, there was a lack of diversity (gender or otherwise) among nominees. She then stated that in 2020, Yuri Polyanskiy was selected from 12 nominees. In 2021, Changho Suh was selected from 6 nominees. In 2022, Mary Wootters was selected from 4 nominees. In 2021, there was representation from female and regions 8 and 10 nominees. In 2022, there were two female nominees. While diversity seems to have been increasing, concerns remain about a shrinking pool of nominees.

Next, Tara presented several strategic thoughts moving forward. She stated that having only one “Young Investigator” award capturing both teaching and research contributions simultaneously might be discouraging some nominators. In fact, the nominators letters are non-uniform across these two selection criteria, which makes it also very hard to judge the nominees track record. As a way forward, she suggested creating two separate awards, one for teaching and one for research. Another suggestion is to provide guidance to the nominators about elements can measure teaching or mentoring excellence.

**17) Diversity & Inclusion Committee report:** Stark Draper, the Chair of the D&I Committee, presented an end-of-term report of the state and achievements of the Committee. He first recalled the membership of the Committee and then highlighted the mandate of the Committee as codified in the Society Bylaws. He then presented a year-by-year progress of the Committee between 2020 and 2022. In 2020, a best practices document was drafted by the chair of Paper Award Committee, feedback was sought from, and discussions were held with the D&I Committee. Stark encouraged all committees to create a best-practices document and consult the D&I Committee on D&I aspects.



Another ongoing effort is to ensure nominations for various awards have a diverse representation across different parts of ITSoc. Another achievement of the Committee has been information collection. Most notably, a D&I Survey was conducted in 2021 and results have been published in the March 2022 ITSoc Newsletter. The survey report contains many good ideas and useful perspectives which Stark encouraged BoG and Committee members to consider and draw upon. Stark also reported on his interactions as Committee Chair with the TAB Committee on Diversity and Inclusion and various points of information exchange between the committees.

Stark concluded his report with a detailed list of suggestions. One item was better internal data collection mechanisms. Such mechanisms would, in turn, make it easier to respond to information requests from IEEE TAB. Another matter was creating more opportunities for sharing learnings at ITSoc events. Stark noted that a large portion of 2021 Survey responders were in favor of blind reviews. He commented that the D&I Committee had discussed single vs double-blind reviews extensively in its meetings. The Committee does not have a recommendation, but Stark suggested that Society members could benefit from a comprehensive presentation and discussion of the various considerations (pros and cons) of single- and double-blind review in the specific context of ITSoc. Stark then recalled data from the Survey regarding perceived insularity and limited accessibility of the Society and called on the Board to develop mechanisms to make the Society and its events more inclusive. He then touched upon the issue of transparency of processes, and that creating best-practices documents is a good way to building transparency. Another suggestion was to create an Ombudsperson role at ITSoc events to have an immediate touch-point for reporting any grievances and harassments that may occur. Stark also touched upon volunteering and suggested the society design processes and mechanisms for ITSoc members to volunteer for various roles. Stark made some suggestions on how to streamline and formalize the operations and role of the D&I Committee. Stark concluded his report by suggesting that a D&I Committee line-item be added to the budget to make it easier for the Committee to plan and organize D&I events.

**18)** During discussion time, Christina thanked Stark and the Committee for their great work and thanked Stark for his interactions and information sharing with the IEEE TAB.

**19) Open Access Ad-hoc Committee report:** Wei Yu, Chair of the Open Access Ad-hoc Committee, provided two updates on the issue of open access since the BoG meeting of March 2022, where the issue was discussed at length. He started his report by recalling details on the operation of Plan-S funders, which require research funded from their grants to be published in open access journals under a CC BY license.

The first update is a policy update by the US Office of Science and Technology Policy, which mandates that by the end of 2025, all publications and associated data funded by federal agencies must be publicly available. Further, the Office mandates all federal agencies to develop a plan in the next 6-12 months on how this will be achieved and monitored. Wei noted that some details are still unclear. For example, the policy requires that the developed plans by the agencies to describe “any re-use rights and which restriction, including attribution, should apply”. Wei identified several questions that arise, for example whether the US will soon require a CC BY license to be obtained for all NSF funded publications that are archived in the NSF repository; whether NSF will pay for article processing charge (APC); and whether IEEE will require APC to grant the CC BY license. Wei noted that based on this development, Open Access is here to stay, but it will remain to be seen how disruptive this will be to the IEEE publication model and to the IT Transactions.

The second update is about the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) which is a UK-based funding agency and a member of Plan-S. Wei noted their open-access policy was incompatible with the IEEE publication policy, namely that the APC must be paid for the CC BY license to be issued. However, in May 2022, IEEE decided to allow authors funded by UKRI to publish their papers in IEEE journals under CC BY license *without* paying the

APC. Wei stated that if this was to be extended to all US-funded publications, it will fundamentally change the IEEE business model. Wei concluded his presentation by remarking that a creation of a new journal for the ITSoc may be seen as an opportunity to grow the Society, to reinstate letter- or correspondence-type publications, to advertise a path to rapid publication, and to attract or retain authors.

During discussion time, Wei iterated while a downward trend in revenue from the IEEE traditional publication model has been on the cards, the actual extent and rate of decline is still unclear. One member suggested surveying ITSoc members on how they see the Open Access landscape and that it may be wise to proceed with caution until the landscape becomes clearer. Several members emphasized significant resources required to set up a new journal and that it takes about two years to complete the process. Several members remarked that the University of Illinois is one of few universities in the US that has a transformative agreement with the IEEE to allow APCs to be paid in bulk, and it is possible that other US universities are also considering signing transformative agreements with the IEEE.

## **20) Membership Committee reports:**

- 1) Schools Subcommittee:** Parastoo Sadeghi, the Chair of the Subcommittee, presented a brief update the state of IT Schools in 2022 through to 2024. In 2022, IT School in Mandi, India (virtual), European School of IT (ESIT) in Vienna, Austria (in-person), East Asian School of IT (EASIT) in Shenzhen, China (hybrid), and North American School of IT (NASIT) in LA, USA (in-person) were held. All schools went well, detailed statistical reports have been received, and ITSoc Newsletter items have been published. She reported that planning is going well for 2023 schools, namely the IT School in Bangalore, India, ESIT in Bristol, UK, and NASIT in Philadelphia, USA. Parastoo concluded her report by listing the school proposals to be received for 2024 and 2025.
- 2) WITHIS Officers:** In a pre-recorded video, four new WITHIS Officers, Hye Won Chung from KAIST, Sanghamitra Dutta from University of Maryland, Lalitha Valdamani from IIT Hyderabad, and Rashmi Vinayak from Carnegie Mellon University introduced themselves and stated their research interests, as well as their passion for organizing WITHIS events at ISIT and creating an inclusive environment for under-represented groups of the ITSoc, especially for women.
- 3) Student and Outreach subcommittee:** Farhad Shirani, the Chair of the Subcommittee, provided a report on activities organized by the Subcommittee at ISIT 2022. The first event was the Information Duets Competition whose objective was to foster collaboration among student especially from different institutions. Students chose from JKW award winning papers from past three ISITs and prepared a video about the contributions of the paper under mentorship of one of the authors. Four winners from a diverse range of institutions were announced among 15 teams, who received a cash prize and were p on the ISIT website. The second activity was six mentoring events for students and postdocs, which was attended by about 60 people. A recurring request was to organize more industry-oriented events, which will be addressed at ISIT 2023. Finally, “Meet the Shannon Lecturer” was organized, which involved a pre-recorded interview with the 2022 Shannon Lecturer, Raymond Yeung, and a live Q&A conducted over Zoom.

**21) Thomas M. Cover Dissertation Award Committee report:** In a pre-recorded video, Roy Yates, the Chair of the Committee, provided a brief update on the Committee work in 2022. He stated that 11 nominations were considered in 2022, including 4 theses from 2020 and 7 theses in 2021. The Committee evaluated these 11 theses in a two-round process, eliminating 3 theses in round one. In round two, three theses out of 8 received enthusiastic support from the Committee members and after closed voting, the thesis by Qian Yu was selected as the winner. Roy stated that the theses were difficult to evaluate,

encompassing a wide range of topics. This points to a need to expanding the Committee and ensuring expertise in newer areas are included in its membership.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:43 pm EST, October 28.