

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

Location: Hybrid Meeting, where the in-person meeting was held in San Diego, USA.

Date: February 12, 2023

Time: The meeting convened at 1:08 pm Pacific Time (PT), February 12. The meeting adjourned at 6.30 PT, February 12.

Meeting Chair: Matthieu Bloch

Minutes taken by: Parastoo Sadeghi

Meeting Attendees: Matthieu Bloch, Martina Cardone#, Marco Dalai*, Natasha Devroye*, Lara Dolecek, Stark Draper, Meir Feder, Christina Fragouli, Massimo Franceschetti*, Michael Gastpar*, Tara Javidi, Brian Kurkoski, Michael Langberg, Muriel Medard*, Henry Pfister, Parastoo Sadeghi*, Lalitha Sankar#*, Anand Sarwate*, Farhad Shirani#*, Mikael Skoglund*, Vincent Tan, Ashley Tufuga#, Daniela Tuninetti, Venugopal Veeravalli*, Aaron Wagner, Shun Watanabe*, Edmund Yeh*, Wei Yu (Non-voting are denoted by #. Remote attendees are denoted by *)

Business conducted between meetings: Between BoG meetings of October 2022 and February 2023, the following business items were conducted and voted upon via email.

Motion: To elect one of the following as a member of the Information Theory Society Nominations and Appointments Committee for 2023-25

- a. Alexander Barg
- b. Raymond Yeung

Raymond Yeung was elected.

Motion: To approve the October 2022 BoG meeting minutes. The motion passed.

Motion: To appoint Suhas Diggavi as the EiC for IEEE BITS, the Information Theory Magazine, for June 2023 to June 2026. The motion passed.

Motion: To appoint Daniela Tuninetti as the Chair of the Fellows Evaluation Committee for 2023-25. The motion passed.

At 1:08 am PT, the meeting Chair, Matthieu Bloch, called the meeting to order and roll call was taken. The following motion was issued.

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

1) President's Report: The President, Matthieu Bloch, first acknowledged retiring members of the BoG: Erik Agrell, Alex Dimakis, Sid Jaggi, Tara Javidi, and Joachim Rosenthal. He noted that Tara will stay on the BoG in her role as the Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of JSAIT. He congratulated re-elected members: Meir Feder and Camilla Hollanti and newly elected members: Michael Gastpar, Osvaldo Simeone, Mikael Skoglund, and Venugopal Veeravalli. He then thanked Aylin Yener for her outstanding service to the Society over the past 16 years. Matthieu recognized that Aylin has served the Society in many ways, including the 2022 President and Officer of ITSoc for five years. Matthieu cited another notable contribution by Aylin as the establishment of IT Schools, which has been going strongly since 2008 and is recognized at the highest IEEE levels. He then recognized Officers of the BoG and thanked Christina Fragouli for her leadership as the 2022 President. He then stated that Stark Draper will be taking on many responsibilities as the 1st VP, including chairing the Paper Awards Committee. He welcomed Aaron Wagner into his role as the 2nd VP. Aaron will be responsible for membership, among others matter. He also thanked Parastoo Sadeghi and Edmund Yeh for continuing in their role as the

Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. He asked members to join him in celebrating some of the highest achievements by ITSoc members. He congratulated Frank Kschischang for receiving the 2023 IEEE Hamming Medal and Jose Moura for receiving the 2023 Jack Kilby Signal Processing Medal. He then congratulated Rudiger Urbanke, the 2023 Shannon Award recipient; Erdal Arikan, the 2023 Padovani Lecturer; Rashmi Vinayak, the 2023 Goldsmith Lecturer; as well as Ashish Khisti, Oliver Kosut, Arya Mazumdar, Chao Tian and Shun Watanabe on being the newly selected Distinguished Lecturers of the Society.

Matthieu then highlighted the upcoming review of the Society, which is conducted every five years. This was preceded by the review of ITSoc conference portfolio in December 2022. The feedback of that review has been generally positive. The panel suggested organizing mentoring events for elevation to the grade of IEEE Senior Member and IEEE Fellow. Two other issues were raised about delays in the publication of proceedings and net-to-expense ratios. He then stated that the main review will be conducted on February 16 and the outcomes of that review will be shared at the next BoG meeting. He expected to receive some comments around sub-to-pub times and deadlines. However, thanks to the great work by the EiCs of T-IT and JSAIT, Muriel and Tara, these issues have already been largely addressed.

He then presented his visions for the future of the ITSoc, which is primarily serving its membership and steering the society such that it remains relevant, not only to its members, but also to wider society, industry, and funding agencies. He acknowledged many exciting new initiatives that are being developed and thanked their champions. He encouraged BoG members to create and lead even more strategic initiatives.

Matthieu then highlighted three ITSoc events at ITA 2023. The first event is called "Three Cheers to IT", which is organized by Matthieu. This includes three technical talks, followed by panel discussions. On Monday afternoon, there will be an Alumni and Industry panel discussion, organized by Christina. Lastly on Tuesday, Matthieu will present the State of the Society, which will be immediately followed by a live demo of Thomas website for sharing teaching resources by Martina Cardone.

Matthieu then recognized that ITA has helped ITSoc over the years through hosting ITSoc events and generously providing food and rooms. In recognition of this, there will be a motion to provide partial support to ITA 2023 for hosting the aforementioned three ITSoc events. It was clarified that the budget will come from the Shannon Centennial Initiative, Alumni Initiative, and Sharing Teaching Resources Initiative, which have already been approved.

BoG members thanked Matthieu for his leadership and for handling the ITSoc review.

- 2) **Diversity & Inclusion Committee report:** Lalitha Sankar, the new Chair of the D&I Committee, presented her report on the state of work and plans for the next few years. She thanked outgoing and current members of the Committee for their hard work. She then introduced three new members to be added to the Committee via vote and asked that Nihar Shah be re-appointed for another three-year term.

Lalitha then presented the goals for the Committee for 2023 and 2024. She first reported that the D&I Survey was presented at the IEEE TAB CDI in November 2022, where insights and feedback were shared with the TAB members and other IEEE societies. One key feedback from the Survey was that processes and opportunities for the Society members to participate in various roles was not clear. Therefore, there is a need to find mechanisms for members to engage more widely with the Society. To this end, Lalitha presented a draft of the Volunteers webpage, which is currently being developed. The webpage lists the various committees that offer volunteering opportunities and allows members to choose up to three roles that they wish to be engaged with.

Lalitha highlighted that a challenge is to create more transparency in how to become involved in ITSoc conference technical committees and journal editorial boards. She

suggested that in collaboration with the ISIT organizers and ISIT ad-hoc Committee, TPC membership of ISIT 2024 can be created, which includes junior faculty and targets various diversity aspects.

Lalitha then presented the second line of work on double-blind review processes. She recalled that the majority of Survey respondents were in favor of double-blind review for conferences. She commended ISIT 2023 organizers for implementing the first double-blind paper review for the Society and highlighted the importance of ensuring consistency in policies across years and conferences. The D&I Committee expressed readiness to help with a survey to better understand the outcomes of ISIT 2023 double-blind review.

The third goal is to do with travel scholarships, which is a new initiative of the ITSoc to increase access to conferences from students and underrepresented groups. She thanked ITW 2022 organizers for implementing travel scholarships very effectively. The Committee plans to solicit proposals from conference chairs every year to help identify best ways travel scholarships can be distributed.

The fourth and last goal is to improve transparency of ITSoc awards processes. Taking example from the ISIT Student Paper Award, Lalitha highlighted that students are not privy to the selection process and often do not understand how presentation is judged. She suggested that BoG can set up more transparent protocols, for example through creating rubrics for judging presentations. Lalitha concluded her presentation thanking ITSoc Officers for their valuable input and continued support.

During live discussions, one member assured members that ISIT TPC chairs take emerging topics and diversity matters into account when selecting TPC members and appreciate feedback. However, an open selection process can be detrimental to the confidentiality and robustness of TPC member selection. This member also emphasized that Volunteer webpage is designed such that it does not create false expectations about taking up roles.

Another member informed the BoG that the D&I Committee has been working with the Paper Awards Committee in the past three years on documenting decision processes. This member confirmed that all these matters are discussed at length within the Awards Committee to arrive at common ground for deliberations.

Another member highlighted the importance of addressing Society members' general perception about closedness of processes and urged the Society to create a more welcoming environment for people to self-nominate themselves for various awards or volunteer roles.

A final comment was made about ensuring more senior members will become part of the D&I Committee in the future, since they can provide valuable input to the Committee and awards processes based on their hands-on knowledge of nuances involved.

More discussion on this topic was deferred to the end of the meeting.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Onur Günlü (Linköping, Sweden), Flavio Calmon (Harvard, USA), Nan Liu (Southeastern U. China) as members of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee (3-year term from 2023-2025). The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Nihar Shah (CMU, USA) as a member of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee (second 3-year term from 2023-2025). The motion passed.

- 3) **Treasurer's report:** The Treasurer, Edmund Yeh, started his report by stating that the financial situation of the Society continues to be generally strong. Edmund stated that ITSoc reserves has been building up, amounting to \$8.776M at the end of 2021. However, due to IEEE investment losses some amount may be taken from the reserves, but the exact amount is not known yet. Edmund stated that as of December 2022, the 2022 budget was at \$507K surplus, which is mainly due to more publications and conference

revenues and lower expenditures and costs. However, the final figure will not be known until late February 2023. Next, Edmund presented the state of 2022 special projects, which have been approved for up to \$169K. However, as of December 2022 only \$27.6K had been spent. This has been an ongoing issue and the Treasurer encouraged champions of ongoing special projects to increase the rate of spending.

Next, Edmund presented the state of budget for 2023. The surplus is currently projected to be \$122K. For 2023 special projects, \$195K was approved which were later capped at \$156.7K by the IEEE. He encouraged members to propose more ideas since the Society is in a good financial position to ramp up special projects.

Next, Edmund presented a timeline of the IEEE/Society main budget decision points and encouraged BoG members to take note of the timeline so that special projects are approved as early in the year as possible. Next, Edmund presented a list of expenses that can be reimbursed. Partial reimbursement may be possible for attending BoG meetings which are not co-located with a conference or where a member does not have a paper to present. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to the approval by the President and Treasurer. He reminded members that the deadline for submission of invoices is before the Thanksgiving Holidays in each year.

During the live meeting and in response to a question, Edmund clarified that IEEE losses will not impact the ITSoc operational surplus. In fact, given Society's large operational surplus, he hopes that the reserves will not be impacted by much even after IEEE takes off money to cover losses. Therefore, there should be enough left to pay for special projects. He highlighted that many budget parameters are decided beforehand by the IEEE and that any change to the budget outside of these parameters requires negotiation.

A member asked whether it makes sense to notify current and future ISIT organizers to aim for a net-zero budget. However, another member clarified that there are IEEE guidelines which specify planned surplus for conferences. Therefore, it may not be possible to plan for net-zero conferences from the start. This member further clarified that in the past, IEEE has taken substantial money from reserves to cover losses. In addition, surplus from the Transactions is formula-based and is generally not controlled by ITSoc.

Motion: "To approve up to \$20K in support of membership and outreach events at ITA 2023 as part of the Shannon Centennial initiative, Alumni in Industry initiative, and Sharing Teaching Resources initiative". The motion passed.

- 4) **Conference Committee report:** Li Chen, Chair of the Conference Committee, provided a pre-recorded report on the state of past and upcoming ITSoc conferences. Li reported that ISIT 2023 in Taipei is progressing well and has received 100 submissions in the virtual track and 624 submissions for the on-site or in-person track. Li noted a decline in the total number of submissions compared to past in-person and virtual ISITs and highlighted the importance of attracting young scholars to ITSoc conferences and invited suggestions on how to achieve this. Li also presented some statistics about distribution of submitted papers across topics and countries. Li highlighted two inter-society special sessions at ISCAS 2023 (organized by the IEEE Circuits and Systems Society) and ISIT 2023. In May 2023, ISCAS will showcase five papers in a special session with an information theory flavor. Likewise, selected papers from ISIT with circuits and systems flavor will be presented at a special session at ISIT in June 2023. Both sessions are open to ISCAS and ISIT attendees.

Next, Li presented an update about ISIT 2024. He stated that the MOU is being followed up with IEEE and a conference organization company has been engaged. The organizers have selected a different hotel due to lower costs and better facilities. ISIT 2025 organizers have signed a contract with a conference organization company.

Next, Li gave an overview of the outcomes of ITW 2022, which was held in Mumbai, India. The conference had a healthy financial surplus and was able to attract sponsorship and

use most of the ITSoc Travel Scholarship for students. It was generally a successful conference and attendees were satisfied with the organization. However, one problem was visas: none of the authors from China were issued visa to travel to India.

Next, Li stated that the Committee has not received concrete proposals for ITW 2024 and beyond. However, there is interest to host ITW 2024 in Sydney, Australia. Li asked members to take note of this and suggest ways to attract proposals to host ITWs for the coming years. Finally, Li gave an overview of current conference technical co-sponsorships and IT school approvals.

During the live meeting, Parastoo provided updates, on behalf of Li, about the state of ISIT 2025 and ITW 2023. There were 135 papers submitted to ITW 2023. The organizers are expecting somewhat lower number of attendees than initially planned.

One member expressed concern about low submission numbers to both ISIT 2023 and ITW 2023 and asked the Conference Committee to investigate possible reasons and suggest promotion strategies for the future.

One attendee stated an interest to host ITW 2025 or 2026 in winter in Phoenix, Arizona.

- 5) **IEEE IT-Trans:** The EiC of the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory, Muriel Medard, reported significant reduction in the sub-to-pub and submission-to-first-decision times for the Transactions. The average weeks from submission to first decision stands at 23.6 (compared to 29.6 from Q2 2021). The average weeks from submission to online posting stands at 48.7 (compared to 60.8 from Q2 2021). She acknowledged that while there is still room for improvement, the figures are comparable to other Transactions from cognate societies.

During live discussions, Muriel stated that more editors are being proposed in busy areas or niche areas that require specific expertise. Muriel reminded the Board that her term as EiC is finishing at the end of June 2023 and that she is not seeking re-election. The President thanked Muriel for her leadership and for achieving a significantly reduced sub-to-pub time. He invited nominations for a new EiC for the Transactions.

One member asked about the trend in the number of submissions to the Transactions. In response, Muriel clarified that the number of submissions has been somewhat stable, but there is a slight softening trend. However, submission to some areas such as ML and statistics, which had witnessed a downtrend in the past few years, have started to pick up again. Muriel attributed this to strategically recruiting new AEs in ML and statistics from outside of the Society, thereby sending a receptive signal to scholars from other societies to consider submitting their work to the Transactions.

6) **IEEE IT-Trans (executive):**

The following motions were made to approve Associate Editors for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Yeow Meng Chee as an Associate Editor of coding/decoding for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory for a 3-year term. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Nikhil Karamchandani as an Associate Editor of networking/computation for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory for a 3-year term. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Mladen Kovačević as an Associate Editor of coding/decoding/Shannon theory for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory for a 3-year term. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Victoria Kostina as an Associate Editor of Shannon theory for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory for a 3-year term. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Felice Manganiello as an Associate Editor of coding/decoding/security for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory for a 3-year term. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Ayfer Ozgür as an Associate Editor of Shannon theory/ML for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory for a 3-year term. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Haim Permuter as an Associate Editor of Shannon theory/ML for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory for a 3-year term. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Xiaohu Tang as an Associate Editor of coding/decoding for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory for a 3-year term. The motion passed.

The following amended motion was proposed.

Amended motion: "To table all votes of AE nominations that have a perceived Col with the EiC until the BoG has clearly defined guidelines and procedures to handle such perceived Cols." The amended motion passed.

Motion: To appoint Alex Dimakis as a member of the JSAIT Steering Committee for 2023-2026. The motion passed.

End of executive session.

- 7) **Journal on Selected Areas in Information Theory (JSAIT) EiC report:** Tara Javidi, the EiC of JSAIT, presented a report on the state of the Journal. She stated that four issues were published in 2022, four issues are scheduled for 2023 where all, but one has passed its submission deadline, and that three issues are under discussion for 2024. Tara invited members to propose special issues and thanked all Overseeing Senior Editors for their work. Tara then reported that the PRAC review panel of JSAIT commended demographic diversity of its editorial board, a good sub-to-pub timeline, and healthy finances of the Journal. They recommended improvements in terms of industry representation on the editorial board and increasing the online presence for JSAIT. Also, it was noted that the acceptance rate of JSAIT seems rather high.

Another identified issue was the discrepancy of issue cover date versus actual date sent to publishing. Tara explained that this is often caused by extremely tight deadlines and a few delayed papers that cause publication of the whole issue to be delayed. Tara then proposed that through moving to a single-volume journal, this problem would be addressed, where papers that are ready for publication will be available on IEEEXplore and considered published, without waiting for delayed papers. Tara clarified that each special issue will be separately marked, will have its own cover page, and will be searchable via IEEEXplore. Therefore, moving to a single-volume issue does not affect the identity of individual special issues in the print. It only avoids an issue being flagged as delayed.

- 8) **BITS Information Theory Magazine Steering Committee report:** In a pre-recorded video, Rob Calderbank, the EiC of BITS first welcomed Suhas Dighavi as the incoming EiC for three years, starting from June 2023. He then reported that the Special Issue on

Information Processing in the Arts and Humanities was published in January 2023, featuring 128 pages of content including 8 feature articles and 4 museum reports. However, unfortunately, some printed issues had about 15 pages inverted. The source of this problem is under investigation by the IEEE Publications. A regular issue from 2022 is currently in production. Its front cover features Katalin Marton, associate with a lead article by Abbas El Gamal and Bob Gray on her legacy. Next in the line of production will be a special issue called Quantum Computation and Information. This will be followed by another regular issue and then two special issues on data storage and 6G. Rob highlighted that the pipeline of submission is not robust yet. This has been somewhat remedied by pivoting to special issues, which is expected to lead to four issues in 2023 as required by the IEEE.

9) Newsletter report: In a pre-recorded video, Changho Suh, Editor of the Information Theory Society Newsletter, presented his report. First, he gave an update on the status of Newsletter after transitioning to the online format. He presented the structure of the Online Newsletter and stated that the format is almost the same as the printed edition. As before, there are four issues each year, which are published in March, June, September, and December. However, one distinction is that surveys and vision columns are now moved to the BITS Magazine. Another distinction is that the President's Column may sometimes appear in BITS Magazine. Therefore, there may be only two or three President's Columns in the Newsletter each year. Changho then presented a more detailed structure of the Newsletter, comprising an Opening Section, a Main Section (awards news, conference/workshop/school reports, and the BoG meeting minutes), a possible Obituary Section and finally a Conference Calendar and Call to Action Section. He encouraged contributions to the content of the Newsletter, especially for the June Issue, which lacks sufficient regular content. He concluded his report by presenting the deadline for submitting content for each quarterly newsletter.

10) Digital Presence Committee Report: Brian Kurkoski, Chair of the Digital Presence Committee, provided his report on the Committee activities, including online publicity and promotion of the Society. He thanked all members of the Committee for their work and specially recognized Elsa Dupraz, Samir Perlaza and Christian Senger for taking on much work behind the scenes. Brian recalled that currently, the main activities of the Committee include development of Thomas website for sharing teaching resources, Alumni Outreach microsite, Call for Volunteers online form, videos webpage (e.g., plenaries and tutorials), as well as making further adjustments to many existing websites. Brian recalled that \$40K has already been approved by the BoG to be spent on the above projects in 2023; in addition, \$14K is required for server maintenance. He clarified that a Shannon microsite may be developed utilizing left-over funds from the Shannon Centennial Initiative.

In conclusion, Brian invited members and event organizers to put more content on the ITSoc website and to use the conferences mailing list to promote their events.

11) Membership Committee report: Aaron Wagner, Chair of the Membership Committee, presented a brief report. He first recalled the members of the Committee and their terms. He then stated that the role of the Committee is to coordinate efforts among different groups and the bulk of the work is done at the subcommittee level. He referred BoG members to the following individual reports from Schools and Student and Outreach Subcommittees.

12) Schools Subcommittee report: In a pre-recorded video, Christian Senger, the new Chair of the Subcommittee, provided an update on the state of IT Schools from 2022 to 2024 and beyond. Christian reported that 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. Christian summarized key feature of these schools. He stated

that all schools went well, detailed statistical reports received, and Newsletter reports published. Christian reported that planning is going well for the 2023 schools, which all have been approved. They are the IT School in Bangalore, India (approved for \$10K), ESIT in Bristol, UK (approved for \$15K), and NASIT in Philadelphia, USA (approved for \$15K). Christian presented some of the features of these schools. He continued his report by listing school proposals to be received for 2024, namely the IT School in Hyderabad, India; ESIT in Eindhoven, Netherlands, and EASIT in Tokyo, Japan. A proposal for NASIT 2024 is currently being sought. Christian concluded his report by listing groups who are being considered to run schools in 2025 (Italy for ESIT and New Jersey, USA for NASIT) and 2026 (Germany and Norway for ESIT).

During the live meeting, Aaron Wagner, the 2nd VP and ex-officio member of the Subcommittee, presented a summary on Christian's behalf and asked BoG members to suggest possible candidates for NASIT 2024.

- 13) Student and Outreach Subcommittee report:** Farhad Shirani, the Chair of the Subcommittee, first introduced new members of the Subcommittee and then provided a report on the upcoming activities which are being organized by the Subcommittee in 2023. The first event will be a mentoring event at ISIT 2023 in Taipei. In response to feedback from similar events last year, the Subcommittee is aiming to enhance representation from industry on the panels. He invited suggestions about format and topics of mentoring events, which can include navigating the industry job market, industry career planning, and navigating the academic job market. Farhad flagged that the Subcommittee is additionally looking into organizing a session for faculty to explain and promote elevation processes to IEEE Senior Member and IEEE Fellow.

Farhad then presented updates on the ISIT Student Competition, which has run in the past four years. Farhad welcomed being approached by several ITSoc members and volunteers on how to expand or formalize this competition. Given the success and continuity of this Award, it was discussed that the society may consider whether the award is worthy of inclusion in the IEEE Awards Manual. The last main activity of the Committee in 2023 will be organizing "Meet the Shannon Lecturer", featuring an interview with the 2023 Shannon Awardee, Rudiger Urbanke, followed by live Q&A.

During the live meeting, it was recognized that some level of coordination may be needed between Student Outreach events and Alumni and WHITHS events, which all aim to better connect students with industry job market. It was clarified that the inclusion of the Student Competition Award in the IEEE Awards Manual requires it to be precisely defined. In response to a suggestion to have a Student Column in the Newsletter, Farhad clarified that a Student Perspective Column is published in BITS Magazine.

- 14) Fellows Committee report:** Daniela Tuninetti, the new Chair of Fellows Committee presented her report on the activities of the Committee and outcomes in 2022 under the Chairpersonship of Sennur Ulukus. She first recalled the membership of the Committee in 2022. Thirteen Fellow nominations were received in 2022, of which five were elevated to the grade of IEEE Fellow following a rigorous process by the Committee and IEEE. Daniela highlighted that of about 3000 ITSoc members, only 3 are expected to be elevated to Fellow each year (since less than 0.1% of IEEE members can be elevated to the grade of IEEE Fellow). The long-term average for the Society is 2.6 per year. However, in the past three years, five members were elevated from the Society in each year, which is a great result and Daniela thanked Sennur for her leadership. She introduced and congratulated the five new Fellows that went through our society (other ITSoc members were elevated to Fellow, but through other societies): Mohammad Maddah-Ali, Mark Wilde, Natasha Devroye, Constantine Caramanis, and Changho Suh.

Next, Daniela introduced the composition of the Fellows Committee for 2023, which includes three new members. The nominations are due on March 1. She presented some

links which contain resources on Fellow nominations. She finally stated her plan to create an information page specifically for ITSoc Fellow nominations.

During the live meeting, Daniela flagged possible changes to the IEEE Fellow evaluation process. Daniela is to attend an orientation meeting and will report back to the BoG any significant changes to the procedures or guidelines.

15) 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 recalled the goal of the Committee, which 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. She recalled the membership of the committee, which includes three members from industry. She introduced the inaugural event at ITA on Monday February 13. This event targets faculty and addresses questions such as how best to approach new industry partners for initiating collaborations and ask for funding. The panel consists of two members in industry and two academics with a track record of working with industry, at different stages of their career, with the goal of providing a diversity of inputs. She invited BoG members to attend this panel discussion. An additional event at ISIT 2023 is being organized, targeting students on how to explore careers in industry. An interview with Rajiv Laroia has already appeared in BITS Magazine and two more interviews with Meir Feder and Xingzhou Wu are completed and will be published soon.

16) Sharing Teaching Resources Ad-hoc Committee report: The Chair of the Committee, Martina Cardone, first recalled the membership of the Committee and then provided an update on the progress of work. She stated that the Committee's goal is to create a place for widely sharing teaching material. Martina gave a demo of this website and its various functionalities. Development of the website is complete, but several implementation issues are being fixed. She stated that there will be an event at ITA on Tuesday Feb 14 to showcase and promote the website.

During the live meeting, one member asked about copyright issues: for example, how to deal with a teaching document that may contain a copyrighted image. One proposed solution was adopting a reasonable copyright policy and ask teaching content suppliers to check a box for compliance, thereby transferring responsibility to content suppliers. One member stated that IEEE has some forms and templates that can be used for dealing with copyright matters and crafting disclaimers. Martina acknowledged that there is more work to be done in terms of understanding legal aspects of copyright and license matters for the website. One member took on to provide an example from a Canadian university library on how to deal with such issues.

17) Constitution and Bylaws Committee report: Wei Yu, presented a report on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. He first outlined the proposed plan for the Committee in 2023, which consists of changes to address "perceived conflicts of interest" in various awards committees; codifying BITS the Information Theory Magazine into the Bylaws; codifying Joy Thomas Tutorial Paper Award into the Bylaws; and including confidentiality and conflict-of-interest language into the Bylaws.

He stated that the first item is taken up in this meeting and the other three items will be presented later in 2023. He recalled the Constitution Article IX, Section 2 with relation to voting requirements for changes to the Bylaws and that a unanimous vote is required for approving proposed motions or making any amendments to the motions (since a three-week notice was not given to the BoG).

He then discussed the rationale for proposing changes on how perceived conflicts of interest are to be handled by the Paper Awards Committee. When a committee member is a nominee of the Paper Award themselves, they are excluded from the entire process. However, that member is still listed as a Paper Awards Committee member on the website, leading to *perceived* conflict of interest for people who are not familiar with the

process. To address this issue, in 2022 the BoG adopted and implemented changes to the Bylaws. The proposed change in 2023 is a slight modification of that language, and the same language will be applied for all awards of the ITSoc. If the proposed changes pass, they will be immediately adopted by all award committees, and the changes will be communicated to the IEEE TAB after the BoG meeting in the fall of 2023.

Wei explained that for the Paper Awards Committee, the new change gives the conflicted member who is a co-author of a nominated paper the option to either remove the nomination from consideration or be discharged from the Paper Awards committee. Wei stated that the same language will apply to the Shannon Award Committee and the Aaron D. Wyner Distinguished Service Award Committee. For the James L. Massey Research and Teaching Award for Young Scholars Committee, the same rule applies also to the doctoral dissertation advisor of a nominee. The same applies to the doctoral dissertation advisor of a nominee for Thomas M. Cover Dissertation Award Committee. Wei concluded his report by noting that these rules do not apply to ISIT Student Paper Award nor Joint ComSoc/ITSoc Paper Award, since they are decided by subcommittees. In addition, since ex-officio members cannot be discharged from a committee, this effectively means that the 1st and 2nd VPs cannot receive the paper award, the President, 1st and 2nd VPs cannot receive the Shannon Award, etc., and this is in line with standard IEEE practice and the practices of our sister societies.

During the discussion, several questions were raised about the specific language used for each proposed change. Wei further clarified or justified the use of each word and instances in which they apply. For example, there was a comment that different universities may have different names for “doctoral dissertation advisor” or use a different composition or terminology for doctoral advisory panels. In addition, it was flagged that more than one person may advise a PhD student. Wei clarified that “dissertation advisor” has already been used in the Bylaws and the Committee deliberately proposes the term “a doctoral dissertation” rather than “the doctoral dissertation advisor” to account for the fact that this role may not be unique. In response to a comment to include postdoctoral supervisors in the proposed change, Wei clarified that postdoctoral engagement is typically more transient, and the specific change in the Bylaws is designed to deal with perceived ColS that would require removing a member from the committee. It should be noted that the proposed changes are not the only means to deal with Col or perceived Col and postdoctoral supervisors or other persons with Col will be appropriately excluded from deliberations by the chair of the relevant award committee. One member asked whether theoretically the President or 1st or 2nd VPs have the option to resign as President or 1st or 2nd VPs in order to remove themselves as the ex-officio members of the awards committees. The answer was yes.

Based on the discussions, it was proposed to change the language for Thomas M. Cover Award and James L. Massey Award slightly and add the term “(or equivalent)” to recognize different terminologies may be used for doctoral dissertation advisors across the world. The original and proposed amended motions and the outcomes are as follows.

Original Motion: To add the following to Article V, Section 11. James L. Massey Research and Teaching Award for Young Scholars Committee:

"Should a committee member become aware that they are a nominee or a doctoral dissertation advisor of a nominee for the James L. Massey Research and Teaching Award for Young Scholars, unless the nomination is removed from consideration, they shall be discharged from the committee, and the Nominations and Appointments Committee shall appoint a replacement as soon as possible."

Proposed Amended Motion: To add the following to Article V, Section 11. James L. Massey Research and Teaching Award for Young Scholars Committee:

"Should a committee member become aware that they are a nominee or a nominee's doctoral dissertation advisor (or equivalent) for the James L. Massey Research and Teaching Award for Young Scholars, unless the nomination is removed from consideration, they shall be discharged from the committee, and the Nominations and Appointments Committee shall appoint a replacement as soon as possible."

The amended motion passed.

Original Motion: To add the following to Article V, Section 12. Thomas M. Cover Dissertation Award Committee:

"Should a committee member become aware that they are a doctoral dissertation advisor of an author of a dissertation nominated for the Thomas M. Cover Dissertation Award, unless the nomination is removed from consideration, they shall be discharged from the Committee, and the Nominations and Appointments Committee shall appoint a replacement as soon as possible."

Proposed Amended Motion: *"Should a committee member become aware that they are a doctoral dissertation advisor (or equivalent) of an author of a dissertation nominated for the Thomas M. Cover Dissertation Award, unless the nomination is removed from consideration, they shall be discharged from the Committee, and the Nominations and Appointments Committee shall appoint a replacement as soon as possible."*

The amended motion passed.

The following three motions were voted upon without amendment during the meeting.

Motion: To add the following to Article V, Section 9. Claude E. Shannon Award Committee

"Should a committee member become aware that they are a nominee of the Claude E. Shannon Award, unless the nomination is removed from consideration, they shall be discharged from the Committee, and the Nominations and Appointments Committee shall appoint a replacement as soon as possible."

The motion passed.

Motion: To add the following to Article V, Section 10. Aaron D. Wyner Distinguished Service Award Committee:

"Should a committee member become aware that they are a nominee of the Aaron D. Wyner Distinguished Service Award, unless the nomination is removed from consideration, they shall be discharged from the Committee, and the Nominations and Appointments Committee shall appoint a replacement as soon as possible."

The motion passed.

Motion: To adopt the following change to Article V, Section 13. Paper Awards Committee:

Original version: *"Should a committee member become aware that they are a co-author of a paper nominated for the Information Theory Society Paper Award, they shall immediately resign from the Committee, and the Nominations and Appointments Committee shall appoint a replacement as soon as possible."*

Revised version: *"Should a committee member become aware that they are a co-author of a paper nominated for the Information Theory Society Paper Award, unless the nomination is removed from consideration, they shall be discharged from the committee, and the Nominations and Appointments Committee shall appoint a replacement as soon as possible."*

The motion passed.

18) Additional Discussion: Following on from previous agenda items, there were additional discussions about transparency of award processes, actual or perceived Col, and notions of confidentiality.

One member emphasized that ITSoc Officers and chairs of award committees are governed by strict Col rules and not all such details need to be codified in the Bylaws. This member stated that there are guidelines or best practices documents that are circulated among chairs and members of award committees, which help conduct rigorous deliberations. Another member identified room for making the criteria and procedures for nominations, self-nominations, and selections more open and transparent. This member stated that best practices documents should, by definition, be open to all ITSoc members.

Another member responded that it is quite hard to codify rubrics for selection processes of awards as there are many ways that excellence can be defined, demonstrated, and evaluated. However, this and other members agreed that the general criteria and procedures for identifying Cols, short-listing and final selection of awards should be made publicly available. Nevertheless, the question of what level of details should be codified and made public remained unresolved.

One member emphasized the importance of creating rubrics for ISIT Student Paper Award presentations, as it will be beneficial for students. This member alluded to successful and effective use of rubrics in evaluating student project presentations in universities. One member highlighted the Society is already moving towards more transparency and for example, nominees of ISIT 2022 Student Paper Award were given access to presentations by previous nominees.

In conclusion, suggestions to start the task of creating documents that clarify how Cols are dealt with and specify the criteria for nomination and selection of awards were made. However, the appropriate level of details for internal and external documents was left to be decided in due course.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6.30 PT, February 12.