

May 24th, 2025 | RAS AdCom Meeting

Agenda: <https://agd.ieee.org/mpt/Agenda.aspx?eid=19334>

1. Meeting Called to Order (Wensing)
2. Roll Call and Review of Consent Agenda items: (Wensing)

In attendance:

Class of 2025: Alin Albu-Schaeffer, Sabine Hauert, Yasuhisa Hirata, Lydia Kavraki, Eiichi Yoshida, Hong Zhang

Class of 2026: Gregory Dudek, Barbara Mazzolai, Tetsuya Ogata, Yu Sun, Michael Yu Wang

Class of 2027: Eduardo Bayro-Corrochano, Mariagrazia Dotoli, Dongheui Lee, Allison Okamura, Karinne Ramirez Amaro, Jee-Hwan Ryu

Society Officers (voting): Aude Billard, Frank Park, Patrick Wensing, Tony Maciejewski, Nancy Amato, Helen Wang

Society Officers (non-voting): Darwin Caldwell, Jing Xiao, Andra Keay, Ludovic Righetti, Katja Mombaur, Bram Vanderborght, Kyujin Cho, Jen Jen Chung, Seth Hutchinson

RAS Staff and Guests: Grace Zhao, Patrick Hanna, Taraja Arnold, Kyung MiBae, Terence Martinez, Nicholas Milton, Amy Reeder, Jasmine Park

3. Approval of Agenda (Wensing)

Consent agenda including:

Approval of Past Minutes:

RAS Standing Orders

Motion: IEEE Transactions on Robot Learning Phase 1 and 2 Approval

Motion: IEEE Journal on Digital Reality Approval

Details: Proposed EiCs for IEEE Robotics & Automation Practice

Motion: Reallocation of MAB Funds

Motion: MSB Budget Reallocation

Motion: TAB Budget Reallocation

Motion Passed

4. State of Society (Billard)

- Budgeting: \$9M with 2-level oversight (FAB and AdCom)
- IEEE conference sponsorships reassessed; 78 conferences no longer supported
- Emphasis on separating legislative and executive roles (COI protocols introduced)
- New chairs appointed for IROS; governance and financial model changes underway
- Partnership expansion with CoRL, Robot Learning Foundation, and Soft Robotics community
- Increased outreach to India and South America; sustainability efforts, including CFPs and carbon tracking
- Web and STB infrastructure under construction; RAS University has 4 courses near launch, with more in development

5. Financial Activities Board and Treasurer's Report (Xiao & Maciejewski)

- New members added to the FAB
- ICRA@40 contributed to previous year's loss
- Budget status: ~\$5M revenue, ~\$4M expenses, net ~\$1.1M
- Reallocation:
 - IAB returned \$15K
 - EAB returned \$47K
 - MAB returned \$24K
 - TAB received \$60K
 - STB received \$25K
- Motions included in the consent agenda; one additional for STB
- Next FAB meeting scheduled for July 22

6. Educational Activities Board (Billard)

- RAS U development ongoing; table of contents and materials in progress
- Target completion by September; interested parties should contact Aude
- Feedback included suggestions for certification, professional support, and industry-focused tracks
- \$10K in support to help faculty develop content

7. Industrial Activities Board (Keay)

- Challenges with volunteer participation due to travel restrictions
- Ongoing programs: Entrepreneurship workshops, Industry Brochure, Standards panels, Exhibitor Breakfast
- Innovation and Tech Talk Stages active at ICRA
- Proposed rewards program for industry engagement
- Future events targeted for CASE, ROSCon, Robot World
- Feedback focused on providing an RAS standardized package and marketing to exhibitors

8. Member Activities Board (Mombaur)

- Updates from 8 active committees
- IDEA and SPARX programs expanding
- 2025 Member Support Program offering travel grants and discounts for ~4500 members
- Growth in Chapters and Virtual Meetup Programs
- New Distinguished Lecturer nominations forthcoming
- Increased focus on outreach and visibility via video promotion

9. Media Services Board (Righetti)

- Social media team updates: Reduced ICRA team, focus on CASE and IROS
- Emphasis on LinkedIn; phasing out X (formerly Twitter)
- Popular science communication workshop to continue
- New website vendor (TAROS); prior agreement terminated
- Adjusted MSB budget due to website

10. Publication Activities Board (Vanderborght)

- Submission numbers rising; new EiCs appointed
- Progress on Transactions on Robot Learning and Soft Robotics, Journal on Digital Reality
- RAM rebranded with scientific journalism collaboration
- Discussed the potential adoption of continuous review model
- Discussed the potential to eliminate 6+N page rule

11. Technical Activities Board (Cho)

- Consent agenda motion passed to increase TAB budget by \$60K to support TC conferences
- Activities: cluster meetings, triennial reviews, TEABxSAC dinner (~500 attendees), TAB lunch with invited speaker
- TABxStartups received good feedback; future improvements discussed
- TAB Long Range Planning Meeting
 - TC co-chair recruitment and onboarding process discussed
 - TC retirement procedure reviewed

12. Science and Technology Watch Board (Park)

- Mission: Monitor and report advances in robotics
- Activities: Reports, RAM columns, panels, roadmaps
- Organizational committees formed with collaborations across RAS boards
- Previewed the upcoming motion to establish kickoff funds
- Discussion on AI tools for analysis and access to publications

13. BREAK (Wensing)

14. Conference Activities Board (Caldwell)

- IROS 2025: 4300 papers, 41% acceptance rate
- DEI, review process quality, and sponsorship criteria discussed
- Double anonymous review planned for all fully sponsored conferences in 2026
- Discussed budget increase for competitions

15. ICRA 2029 Proposal Introduction (Desai)

16. ICRA 2029 Proposal: Milan, Italy (Rocco & De Momi)

17. ICRA 2029 Proposal: Cape Town, South Africa (Kress-Gazit & Bryant & Murphey)

18. ICRA 2029 - Evaluation and Vote (Desai)

- Milan, Italy selected for ICRA 2029

19. IEEE Division X presentation: IEEE initiatives and collaboration between RAS and Sensors Council (Dahiya)

- Overview of IEEE initiatives: education, innovation, industry engagement
- New seed funding programs described
- Tools to support broadening engagement and STEM outreach presented

20. LUNCH - Cottonwood AB (Wensing)

21. AdCom and ExCom Photo (Arnold)

22. Governance updates (Wensing & Chung)

- Overview of proposed changes to policies and procedures
 - Updated limits on streamlined financial reallocations (limited to 25% on each line item, \$25K max)
 - New conflict of interest policies
- **Motion:** Adopt the updated policies and procedures as proposed in the Agenda.
 - **Motion to Amend:** To strike out AVPs from the proposed updated text regarding COIs.
Motion Passed
- **Updated Motion:** To adopt the updated policies and procedures as proposed in the agenda, but with all mention of AVP COIs removed from the text.
Motion Passed
- Provided a brief update on the status of our previously passed Bylaws updates

23. Committee to Explore Synergies in Automation and Robotics (CESAR) (Dotoli)

- T-ASE growth noted
- Encouraging IROS 2025 authors to present at China satellite events
- Continued work on industry partnerships and sponsorship

24. Motion for Creation of Responsible Research and Innovation in Robotics and Automation Committee (Righetti)

- Human Rights & Ethics Committee renamed and re-scoped
- New mission: Promote ethical practice, monitor misuse
- **Motion:** Motion to rename the Human Rights and Ethics Committee into the Responsible Research and Innovation in Robotics and Automation Committee and to update its mission as follows:

An important part of RAS' mission is to foster the development and facilitate the exchange of scientific and technological knowledge in robotics and automation that benefits humanity globally. This committee shall be responsible to propose concrete actions to AdCom that promote ethical practices and equitable access to robotics science and technology while fostering research and innovation that prioritize social responsibility, human rights and peaceful applications. The committee will also be responsible for monitoring potential dual-use or misuse of robotics and automation technology and propose actions to remediate the issues, from research best practices to policy advocacy. The committee composition is proposed by the chair and approved by the president. The committee reports to the president and present its activities to AdCom at least once a year.

Motion Passed

25. ICRA 2025 Wrap-up (Amato & Hutchinson)

- ~7000 registrations, 6321 checked in; Many registrants from China did not make it.
- Successful parallel sessions, inclusive VIP banquet, and community day
- Things to think about: better volunteer management, session chair assignment, and final paper processing needed

26. Awards Committee (S Hutchinson)

- Frank Park will lead the Awards Committee next year

27. Long Range Planning Committee (Amato)

- Concerns raised over sustainability of current conference publication model
- Working groups forming for review model reform, venue rotation, hybrid formats
- Discussed steps to better engage industry members

28. Ad Hoc Committee on Sustainability and Climate Change (Billard & Righetti)

- GHG emissions data discussed; travel has largest impact
- Call for proposals on the sustainability grant is open
- **Motion:** to mandate:
 - GHG impact analysis prior to conference organization using the tools developed by Ekodev and the AdHoc committee. The environmental impact should be part of the selection criteria.

- Data collection for every RAS-sponsored conference (# of participants, country of origin, mode of transportation, etc)
- Mandate yearly report on GHG emissions by RAS to keep track of progress

Motion Passed

29. Vice President Candidate Selection (Park)

30. Karinne Ramirez Amaro for VP Conference Activities Board (Ramirez-Amaro)

31. Odest Chadwicke Jenkins for VP Educational Activities Board (Jenkins)

32. Jing Xiao for VP Financial Activities Board (Xiao)

33. Torsten Kroeger for VP Industrial Activities Board (Kroeger)

34. Katja Mombaur for VP Member Activities Board (Mombaur)

35. Sabine Hauert for VP Media Services Board (Hauert)

36. Hong Zhang for VP Publication Activities Board (Zhang)

37. Allison Okamura for VP Science and Technology Watch Board (Okamura)

38. Hugo Rodrigue for VP Technical Activities Board (Rodrigue)

39. VP Candidate - Evaluation and Vote (Park)

- All VP candidates were confirmed.

40. Discussion: A balanced approach to giving back to the community (Billard)

- Options discussed: educational activities, grants, global outreach, social events
- Suggestion: limit travel grants to underrepresented countries, extend author support
- Further polling to commence offline

41. BREAK (Wensing)

42. Reserved for Adcom Discussion topics (Wensing)

- **Motion:** AdCom moves to maintain and reaffirm its commitment to advancing diversity in the technical profession, and to promoting an inclusive and equitable culture in its activities and programs that welcomes, engages and rewards those who contribute to the field without regard to race, religion, gender, disability, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. As part of this commitment, AdCom mandates the RAS President to petition IEEE at large to uphold these values, including those reflected in the existing RAS DEI statement and activities.

Motion Passed

43. New Business (Wensing)

- No new business discussed.

**44. Next in-person Adcom Meeting: 24 October 2025, Hangzhou, China (IROS)
(Wensing)**

45. Meeting Adjourned (Wensing)