

APPROVED MINUTES

Jul 31, 2024 | RAS Virtual AdCom Meeting

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

Attendees:

18 Elected Members:

Class of 2026: Greg Dudek, Barbara Mazzolai, Tetsuya Ogata, Marcia O'Malley, Yu Sun, Michael Wang

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

Class of 2024: Arash Ajoudani, Fumihito Arai, Allison Okamura, Karinne Ramirez Amaro, Inna Sharf, Kenji Suzuki

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

Non-voting Members: Darwin Caldwell, Jing Xiao, Andra Keay, Katja Mombaur, Bram Vanderborght, Kyujin Cho, Ludovic Righetti, Chad Jenkins, Jen Jen Chung, Seth Hutchinson

RAS Staff and Guests: Terence Martinez, Grace Zhao, Amy Reeder, Kyung Mi Bae, Patrick Hanna, Nicholas Milton, Suzanne Dubsky, Jasmine Park

3. Approval of Agenda (Including Consent Agenda and Standing Orders) (P Wensing) [Full agenda at: <https://agd.ieee.org/mpt/Agenda.aspx?eid=18922>]

Including

- a) Approval of Past Minutes
- b) Approval of IEEE RAS Student Leadership Award

Passed

4. Welcome and Agenda Details - Status of RAS (A Billard)

- a. See PDF slides for full presentation details
- b. Discussed RAS member Survey -- closes August 15, 2024
- c. Presented on IROS MOU progress
 - i. MOU signed already this year
 - ii. Fourth meeting on Oct. 2
 - iii. Aude will update on charter at ICRA@40
- d. Budget Management highlighted as the main topic for the present meeting
 - i. Noted: 20% underspent because of investment income – otherwise, expenses match income

- e. IEEE RAS Staff increase for TAB and IAB (While staying <20% of RAS budget)
- f. Discussion over finances
 - i. Concern over taking away 50% rule at IEEE level
 - ii. Changing the rule of accessing 3% of all reserves to 1% in future years

5. Financial Activities Board (J Xiao)

- a. See PDF slides for full presentation details
- b. Presented finance refresher
- c. 2023 budget summary: Net = Revenue - Expense = \$2.8 million
- d. 2024 Budget vs spending: Currently expecting a \$1.3 million surplus
- e. Reviewed IEEE Budgeting policy for upcoming year
- f. Suggested 2025 budget: targeted no more than 10% increase of 2024 budget
- g. Discussion:
 - i. Discussed the change away from being able to spend 3% of reserves on new initiatives in 2025 and moving forward
 - ii. Discussed how the expected surplus doesn't account for investment income.
 - iii. Discussed how surplus may be lower due to ICRA@40 spending.

6. Member Activities Board (K Mombaur)

- a. See distributed slides for full presentation details
- b. Overviewed the 2024 budget
 - i. Discussed finances of the Member Support Program (MSP)
 - ii. Covered the financial impact of the SPARX program
 - iii. Presented activities related to IDEAs awards, SAC, and Young professionals
 - iv. Presented moving the IDEAs program, SPARX, and other diversity event support initiatives under a new DEI committee
 - v. Mentioned budgeting challenges with Chapters and International Activities Committee since grants are not immediately claimed
 - vi. Presented finances of the Distinguished Lecturer Program
 - vii. Presented planned uses of MAB Discretionary Fund
- c. Budget 2025: See slides for details (\$61K increase from 2024)
- d. Discussion
 - i. Discussed ICRA@40 travel grants
 - ii. Discussed administration burden of MSP (155 hours of reimbursements and expected to grow)
 - iii. Chat discussion centered on:
 - 1. Increased coordination between MSP and CAB
 - 2. Proposal for year-round applications for MSP – an alternative is under consideration
 - 3. Discussed potential coverage of page fees via MSP.

7. Conference Activities Board (D Caldwell)

- a. See distributed slides for full presentation details
- b. Presented expectations for overspending with ICRA@40
- c. Presented IROS MOU/Charter Progress -- extremely slow and difficult
 - i. Holdup causing problems for IROS 2025 + 2026
- d. Highlighted the growing role of conference competitions
- e. Noted ongoing discussions regarding handling conflicts of interest because of AdCom and ExCom membership on ICRA bids.
- f. See slides for board budget details presented
- g. Regarding CAB income
 - i. Typical reporting time for conferences is 7 months
 - ii. Looking for AdCom input on budgeting practices for organizers
- h. Presented progress on the ICRA Handbook and considering staffing for it to be done by EOY
- i. Detailed Plan: See slides for board budget plan details
 - i. Including 100K annually to support ICRA competitions
- j. Discussion
 - i. Discussed how CAB budget for IEEE Support Staff will affect conference budgets
 - ii. Discussed a need for final conference reports back sooner since the delays make planning more difficult

8. Educational Activities Board (C Jenkins)

- a. See distributed slides for full presentation details
- b. Presented TEP plans and justification for budget expansion
- c. Presented Robot History Project and plans for activities at ICRA@40
- d. Presented RAS U and how spending will ramp up to \$384K for 2024
- e. Budget
 - i. 2024
 - 1. See distributed slides for full details
 - ii. 2025
 - 1. See distributed slides for full details
 - 2. New: \$25k budget item to get involved in TABxSAC dinner
 - 3. New: \$20k for conference co-located STEM outreach activities
- f. Discussion
 - 1. Discussed who leads the TEP programs

9. Publication Activities Board (T Martinez)

- a. See distributed slides for full presentation details
- b. Provided overview of discretionary funds and Young reviewers program
- c. Presented Open Review progress
 - i. Pilot at RoboSoft 2025
 - ii. If successful, PAB would like to allocate more funds to test it at future conferences and journals
- d. Overview of 2025 activities

- i. Separate Young Reviewers Program line item
 - ii. Additional investment into OpenReview
 - iii. RAM rework in 2025
- e. Solicited AdCom Feedback on
 - i. Journal Discretionary Fund Allocation Proposal
 - ii. Rework of RAM
- f. Discussion
 - i. Discussed how the OpenReview funding will be used
 - ii. Discussed how the Young Reviewers Program funds will be spent – focus is on events at conferences

10. Media Services Board (L Righetti)

- a. See distributed slides for full presentation details
- b. Presented goals for improving social medial strategy
- c. Noted present and planned outcomes of collaboration with Spectrum
- d. Highlighted science communication event planned for IROS 2024
- e. Updated on the website redesign (Tokiwī was selected as the contractor)
- f. Budget 2025:
 - i. New: \$10,000 for website maintenance
 - ii. Renew all the initiatives and plans from this year
- g. Budget 2024:
 - i. New budget to support everyone with design work
 - ii. New budget for the Science communication plan
- h. Discussion
 - i. Discussed setting up an ExCom/AdCom Slack
 - ii. Discussed automatic translation tools for the RAS website, videos, and conference programs

11. Industrial Activities Board (A Keay)

- a. See distributed slides for full presentation details
- b. Presented on standards activities
- c. Highlighted IAB menu for organizers that has been created
- d. Updated on manufacturing workshops
- e. Presented on plans for new Industry Advisory Group
- f. Budget: See distributed slides for full details

12. Technical Activities Board (K Cho)

- a. See distributed slides for full presentation details
- b. Updated on budget plans overall
 - i. Would like to increase discretionary fund to \$50k to include cluster chair travel
- c. Presented actions toward a TC Spending tracking system
- d. Discussed plans for TABxSAC Dinner at ICRA@40 and IROS
- e. Presented on plans for TC-specific Editorial Board listings

- f. Presented new TC Co-Chair recruitment procedure

13. RAS Motions (P Wensing)

14. Financial Motion: Approval of 2025 RAS Board Budgets (J Xiao)

- a. Approval of 2025 RAS Budget
- b. **Motion:** *That the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society (RAS) AdCom approve the 2025 budget as the 2024 budget augmented with the additional expenditures of approximately \$500,000 as per the changes presented by each Board as presented to the AdCom.*

Motion passed

- c. Discussion before voting:
 - i. A requested point of clarification was raised on whether the entire RAS budget was available, since the AdCom only saw the board budgets
 - ii. Clarification was given that RAS is only providing a first-pass budget to IEEE at this time. Planned board budgets were clarified to be copy/paste from 2024 in the anticipated submission to IEEE since this is a transition year with respect to IEEE financial policies
 - iii. Concern was raised that AdCom has not seen the first-pass budget
 - 1. Deadline to formally approve budget is August 15th
 - 2. Concern was voiced that we should pay attention to what we're submitting if we're being conservative
 - 3. Would like to see the whole budget together as a group
 - 4. Procedurally, it was clarified that AdCom needs to approve budget to get it passed to IEEE according to bylaws
 - iv. Clarification was provided that each one of the board items will start to show up in the IEEE Budget and Forecast
 - v. Comments were raised regarding the opinion that we should not have conservative budget
 - 1. Suggestion put forward to include a buffer that would cover all of these other things that haven't been covered in board budgets
 - 2. Can we add in an additional thing on top of our existing budget?
 - vi. Suggestion raised to modify the motion: Approve the current first-pass RAS budget draft + some additional amount
 - 1. Suggestion raised to add 20% or x amount to each vice president's committee lines, as the best way of approaching this
 - vii. Additional information was provided that, in the past, the first-pass budget has not been binding
 - viii. Friendly amendment to the motion on the floor: AdCom approves to submit a conservative 2025 budget that matches 2024 but with \$500k extra from boards for 2025.

15. AdCom Discussion Topic - Guidance on Budget Management for 2025 (P Wensing)

The agenda item was skipped due to time constraints.

16. New Business (P Wensing)

The agenda item was skipped due to time constraints.

17. Next in-person Adcom Meeting: 27 September 2024 (ICRA@40 - Rotterdam) (P Wensing)

18. Meeting Adjourned (P Wensing)