October 25th, 2025 | RAS AdCom Meeting - IROS 2025

Agenda: https://agd.ieee.org/mpt/Agenda.aspx?eid=19514

Notes:

1. **Meeting Called to Order (Wensing)**

2. **Roll Call and Review of Consent Agenda items (Wensing)**

   In attendance:
   - **Class of 2025:** Alin Albu-Schaeffer, Hyouk Ryeol Choi, Yasuhisa Hirata, Bengt Lennartson, Eiichi Yoshida
   - **Class of 2026:** Gregory Dudek, Barbara Mazzolai, Tetsuya Ogata, Yu Sun, Michael Yu Wang
   - **Class of 2027:** Arash Ajoudani, Eduardo Bayro-Corrochano, Dongheui Lee, Jee-Hwan Ryu
   - **Society Officers (voting):** Aude Billard, Nancy Amato, Frank Park, Patrick Wensing, Tony Maciejewski, Helen Wang
   - **Society Officers (non-voting):** Darwin Caldwell, Chad Jenkins, Jing Xiao, Andra Keay, Ludovic Righetti, Katja Mombaur, Bram Vanderborght, Frank Park, Kyujin Cho, Jen Jen Chung, Seth Hutchinson
   - **Ex-Officio Members (non-voting):** Karinne Ramirez Amaro, Sabine Hauert, Hong Zhang, Allison Okamura, Hugo Rodrigue
   - **RAS Staff and Guests:** Terence Martinez, Amy Reeder, Grace Zhao, Patrick Hanna, Kyung Mi Bae, Jasmine Park, Lukrecija LeLong, Nick Milton, Taraja Arnold

3. **Approval of Agenda (Wensing)**

   Consent agenda including:
   - *Approval of past minutes (August 5th, 2025)*
   - *Motion to approve expanding paper transfer eligibility for BioRob Conference to include all IEEE RAS fully-sponsored journals*
   - *Motion to approve Phase 1 and Phase 2 Proposals for IEEE Transactions on Soft Robotics (T-SRO)*
   - *Motion: EiC Candidate for IEEE RAS RA-M*
   - *Motion: Extending ToH Presentation Opportunities to all RAS fully-sponsored conferences*

   Motion Passed

4. **State of Society (Billard)**

- Division Director Ravinder is at the meeting
- Close to resolving IROS MOU
- Expanding industry collaboration

5. **IEEE Division X Presentation (Dahiya)**
    - Moved to over 500,000 members last week
    - Reminded the AdCom about the governance structures in IEEE more broadly, including how IEEE Technical Activities sits under the Board of Directors
    - Discussed recent IEEE-level policies and procedures changes related to its collaboration and engagement activities
        - AdCom provided substantial feedback

6. **IROS 2025 Wrap-up (Wang)**
    - Reviewed key statistics for the conference
        - 7973 total registrations, with about 4500+ from China
        - 19%+ of exhibitors from China
        - 165 exhibitors
        - Conference banquet - 5300+ participants
    - Highlighted marquee programs
        - K-12 Outreach program to allow free attendance to the exhibit
        - The university program offered 50 daily slots via a lottery
    - Presented key aspects of the technical program
        - 4000+ paper submissions. 2672 in the final program.

7. **President-Elect Candidate Selection (Park)**
    - Frank Park reviewed the election process with the AdCom and candidates

8. **Fumihito Arai - Presentation (10-min) and Q&A (5-min) (Arai)**

9. **Kyujin Cho - Presentation (10-min) and Q&A (5-min) (Cho)**

10. **RAS President-Elect 2026-2027 - Evaluation and Vote (Park)**
    - Kyujin Cho was elected by the AdCom to serve as the President-Elect for 2026-2027

11. **Financial Activities Board and Treasurer's Report (Xiao & Maciejewski)**
    - Overviewed the boards' finances as they relate to society finances at large
        - 2 reallocations across boards in 2025
        - Most boards are underspent
        - YTD Net $ is -$121,154.97
    - Emphasized that we must have a closed loop
        - Objective→spend→report
        - Pre-authorization needed for $25k+

12. Educational Activities Board (Jenkins)

- Highlighted recent successful programs
  - TEABxSAC dinner - great success at ICRA 2025
  - ICRA TEP Satellite in Chile (110 registrants)
  - Undergraduate Education Forum at ICRA 2025
  - ICRA STEM outreach activities
- Robotics history project
  - Presented on recent progress at Humanoids (12 interviews)
  - Next plans are to start on a website and data visualizations
- Technical Education Program
  - 4 programs in 2025
  - The 2026 program had more interest
    - 40 proposals in for 2026 programs
    - 10 proposals selected for 2026
  - Discussed how different proposal types (grad-focused, emerging areas, or hands-on-focused) require different evaluation criteria
- Budget: on budget
- Discussion with the AdCom focused on the timeline for releasing the videos. The first are expected by year end.

13. Publication Activities Board (Vanderborght)

- Presented progress on establishing new RAS journals (T-RL in Phase 2, T-SRO in Phase 1)
- RAMagazine EiC and deputy EiC working on revamp
- Young Reviewers Program SAC Happy Hour events have been successful
- Discussion
  - AdCom members expressed excitement about the Robot Learning Foundation partnership
  - Discussed the role and need for the soft robotics journal (strong community, existing soft robotics journal going down in impact)

14. Conference Activities Board (Caldwell)

- ICRA 2030 candidate cities: four bids across three cities, including two countries that have not previously hosted ICRA; feedback to be provided to all bidding groups.
- ICRA Handbook: first draft under review.
- IROS / IES MOU: 2026 MOU remains unsigned.
- CASE Charter: update discussed.
- Flagship conferences: significant growth noted for RoboSoft and Humanoids; conference chairs to be invited to future CAB meetings.
- Technical co-sponsorship: approval process discussed, with concerns regarding co-sponsorship of low-quality conferences.

- General feedback: ICRA site selection is a competitive process; ideas should be shared to strengthen ICRA overall, but bidding groups should not be informed of other proposals' details.

15. Media Services Board (Righetti)

- Website: approximately 90% complete, with current efforts focused on debugging and content review; launch planned before year end; Robots Guide website remains very active, with increased robots listed and expanded resources.
- IROS: four social media ambassadors participated; science and communication crash course held, with Sabine Hauert and David Navarro as primary presenters.
- MSB and T-RO writing program: initiative to summarize top papers for a broader audience, with interest in scaling the program.
- Budget: collaboration with Spectrum at IROS cancelled, resulting in underspend; additional underspend noted on website development.

16. Industrial Activities Board (Keay)

- Inaugural regional showcase at IROS 2025: featured companies from underrepresented regions (Nepal, Egypt, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador); participants showcased their work and recorded responses to questions.
- Industry partnership grants: RAS provides $50K with a $15K industry match; application deadline November 7; program intended to repeat every six months.
- Industry rewards program: developed in partnership with Hall Erickson; initial focus on long-standing exhibitors; companies to be invited annually to participate.
- Industry Advisory Committee: next meeting planned for November/December; committee feedback informed development of the industry rewards program; interest in expanding activities at additional conferences.
- IERA Award: to be held in South Korea in November.
- Global Robotics Report: planned for release by year end.

17. Technical Activities Board (Cho)

- Structural development and governance improvements: operational changes include increased TC cluster funding and efforts to reduce the number of awards.
- TC structure and programs: cluster forums were discontinued due to limited effectiveness and replaced with a video challenge and a PhD Thesis Award; the Super TC designation was restructured into Blue Ribbon and Gold Ribbon TCs, providing increased funding and visibility and incentivizing other TCs to advance.
- Policy reforms and new initiatives: establishment of a formal process to retire TCs; launch of Global Soft Robotics Day.
- Feedback: interest expressed in future development of TCs to support emerging research fields.

18. VIP Visit Unitree Robotics (Wensing)

19. Science Technology Board (Park)

- Reviewed the board purpose and mission
- Presented results of the recent review of papers on imitation learning
- Discussed future plans for the next year

20. Ad Hoc on Sustainability and Climate Change (Billard)

- Reviewed the committee's main focus areas
- Discussed the response to the new sustainability grants
- Discussed adding the Ekodev Carbon Footprint calculator to CAB handbook

21. Member Activities Board (Mombaur)

- Member Activities Board overview: MAB restructuring completed; RAS membership continues to grow, now exceeding 23,000 members.
- Expanding Collaboration and Engagement: IDEA and SPARX programs remain highly active, with strong demand and revised formats planned for 2026.
- Student and Young Professional activities: SAC and YP committees remain very active across major conferences, with new initiatives such as RAS Day competitions and expanded regional engagement.
- Women in Engineering: strong participation in WIE events; IEEE-RAS WiRA Paper Awards launched in 2025 and well received.
- Member support and chapters: Member Support Program fully implemented in 2025; significant increase in Chapter Initiative Grant applications and funding.
- Distinguished Lecturer and member services: DL program successfully reactivated; RAS services survey extended to assess awareness and identify new service opportunities.

22. Awards Committee (Hutchinson)

23. RAS MOTIONS (Wensing)

24. Reserved for Adcom Discussion topics (Wensing)

- Latin America Labs
  - Discussed Eduardo Bayro-Corrochano's desire to support robotics in Latin America though a new "Labs" ecosystem
  - Feedback expressed early enthusiasm, with the goal to form an AdHoc committee to explore/develop this idea further.
- Collaboration and Engagement
  - Discussed how Aude, Frank, Nancy, and other volunteers will come to TAB to speak at the meeting
- Journal to Conference
  - Discussed IJRR to conference transfers
    - IJRR voted against double anonymous peer review which would be difficult with RAS's policy
    - Need MOU if the partnership is pursued
- Author Discount Codes

        - Discussed policy hurdles to the current approach
        - Need more staff to expand, should explore codes
        - Consider expanding to childcare coverage

25. New Business (Wensing)

- President Billard closed the meeting with a summary of the main KPIs over the past two years and congratulated everyone on the work we've done together

26. Next Adcom Meeting: 8 December - Online meeting (Wensing)

27. Meeting Adjourned (Wensing)