Revision Approved October 2, 2026

December 8th, 2025 | RAS Virtual AdCom Meeting

Agenda: https://agd.ieee.org/mpt/Agenda.aspx?eid=19670

Revision note 9/28/2026: Item 19 had a formal motion that was missing in the original version of these minutes and is included here.

Notes:

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

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

   In attendance:

   Class of 2025: Yasuhisa Hirata, Lydia Kavraki, Bengt Lennartson, Eiichi Yoshidam

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

   Class of 2027: Arash Ajoudani, Eduardo Bayro-Corrochano, Jaydev Desai, Mariagrazia Dotoli, 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, Jing Xiao, Ludovic Righetti, Katja Mombaur, Bram Vanderborght, Jen Jen Chung, Seth Hutchinson

   Ex-Officio Members (non-voting): Allison Okamura, Hugo Rodrigue, Karinne Ramirez, Sabine Hauert

   RAS Staff and Guests: Terence Martinez, Amy Reeder, Patrick Hanna, Kyung Mi Bae, Jasmine Park, Jim Ostrowski

3. **Approval of Agenda (Including Consent Agenda and Standing Orders) (Wensing)**

4. **Welcome and Agenda Details (Billard)**

5. **State of Society (Billard)**
   - RAS membership reached a historic high, surpassing 24,000 members in October 2025.
   - Diversity concerns were noted, particularly regarding low female representation and the need for more focus on regions outside of Asia and Europe.

- Expressed concern regarding a proposed IEEE policy to modify DEI statements in bylaws due to legal risks; this change is currently on hold following pushback from society presidents

6. **Financial Activities Board (Xiao)**
    - Total budgeted revenue for 2025 is approximately $5.88M, with a projected year-end surplus exceeding $500k when including investment income.
    - A $226k loss in administrative costs was noted, attributed to using outdated 2024 budget figures that did not account for inflation or new staff.

7. **Conference Activities Board (Caldwell)**
    - The CAB currently sponsors roughly 80 conferences.
    - ICRA 2025 in Atlanta was a major success with over 7,000 attendees.
    - A new handbook for conference organizers has been completed, and site visits are planned for candidate cities for 2030.
    - A new IROS charter was signed, requiring at least 50% of conference surplus to be reinvested into conference activities.

8. **Publication Activities Board (Vanderborght)**
    - *IEEE Transactions on Robot Learning* (T-RL) is set to launch in 2026, and a new journal on Social Robots has passed its initial phase.
    - The board was testing an "Open Review" system to reduce reliance on PaperCept, but has swung back to engagement with PaperCept while keeping eyes open for other review systems

9. **Motion for Transactions on Robot Learning Paper Presentation at all fully sponsored RAS conferences and CoRL (Vanderborght)**

    Motion: Permit IEEE Transactions on Robot Learning to transfer papers to all fully sponsored RAS conferences and to present papers at Conference on Robot Learning (CoRL)

    Motion Passed

10. **Educational Activities Board (Jenkins) [Skipped]**

11. **Media Services Board (Righetti)**
    - Website Launch: The major reorganization of over 1,000 pages is complete; the new RAS website is scheduled to launch on December 2025.
    - Social Media Ambassadors: The program covered ICRA, CASE, and IROS, though recruitment was lower than targeted (6 of 12 planned ambassadors).
    - Content & Training: Launched a new science communication program to promote RAS publications to general news outlets and held research-promotion workshops at major conferences.
    - Partnerships & Tools: Utilized Loomly for consolidated social media management and maintained a content partnership with IEEE Spectrum for high-quality video production.

12. Technical Activities Board (Cho)

- Budget & Resource Allocation: The TAB budget received a $60k increase, bringing the total allocation for supporting the Society's 47 Technical Committees (TCs) to $190k.
- Leadership Diversity: Implemented a new self-nomination process for TC co-chairs, successfully increasing transparency and encouraging a broader pool of applicants from underrepresented groups.
- Support for Innovation: Launched the "TABxStartups" program, which provided 16 free registrations for startup representatives at technical workshops to bridge the gap between academia and industry.
- Governance & Tracking: Enhanced the system for verifying TC activities to ensure that distributed funds are utilized effectively and that TCs remain active and compliant with RAS reporting standards.

13. Science Technology Board (Park)

- Presented a focus group study on 760 imitation learning papers, finding that while only 10% were "notable," those were consistently found in top venues.
- Discussed the potential coverage of infusing "first principles" (mathematics and physics) into data-driven learning research.

14. Industrial Activities Board (Keay)

- Industry Activities Board overview: IAB reported a highly active year across conferences, outreach, industry data, and standards activities.
- Leadership update: Jim Ostrowski proposed as incoming VP IAB, pending AdCom approval.
- Conference activities: strong industry engagement at ICRA 2025 and other events through exhibitor programs, innovation stages, and entrepreneurship activities.
- Outreach, grants, and awards: IERA Award presented; Industry Advisory Committee established; inaugural regional industry showcase held at IROS 2025; academic–industry partnership grants and industry rewards program underway.
- Robot industry data: Global Robotics Industry Funding Report nearing release.
- Standards: active year with new standards approved or in ballot, coordination meetings held, and continued student and video competition programs.

15. Member Activities Board (Mombaur)

- Financials: Managed a $1.6M budget with a 97.5% utilization rate, leaving a remaining balance of approximately $40,000 for the year.
- Growth: Membership hit a historic peak of over 24,000 in October 2025; Asia-Pacific and Europe remain the primary growth drivers.
- Impact: The Member Support Program (MSP) served over 2,200 members across 11 conferences, marking a 70% increase in member reach over 2024.
- Grants: IDEA Grant applications surged by nearly 40% for the 2026 cycle; Chapter Initiative Grants funded 46 global projects, including new workshops in Kenya and Brazil.

- Diversity & Education: Women in Engineering (WiE) events grew to 530 participants; the SPARX mentorship program was revitalized with $100k in total funding for faculty in developing nations.
- New Awards: Successfully launched the Outstanding Women in Robotics & Automation (WiRA) Paper Awards at ICRA, CASE, and IROS.

16. **Responsible Research and Innovation in Robotics and Automation Committee (Righetti)**
    - Mission: Tasked with promoting ethical practices, equitable access, and social responsibility in robotics, while monitoring and proposing remediations for technology misuse or dual-use risks.
    - Organizational Pillars: Established a four-pillar structure focusing on Education (best practices), Monitoring (risk mapping), Governance (policy advocacy), and Capacity Building (leadership development).
    - Active Initiatives: Currently adapting UN/SIPRI materials on AI governance and international security for the RAS community; a roadmap regarding open robotics innovation and global peace is set for publication in the *RAM* special issue on Robot Ethics.

17. **Review of RAS Standing Committees (Billard)**
18. **Motion: Transition the Ad Hoc Committee on Sustainability to a Standing Committee (Billard and Righetti)**

    Motion: To establish the Committee on Sustainability as a Standing Committee (under purview of the President) with its detailed charge and composition pending formal final approval in the next round of updates to the RAS Bylaws.

    Motion passed

19. **Proposed Updates to Policy & Procedures Manual (Chung and Wensing)**
    - Jen Jen Chung outlined the geographical regions for Adcom representation: Americas, Europe/Middle East/Africa, and Asia/Pacific.
    - New rules clarify how to retain representation diversity across geographical regions and countries in the event that an elected member moves
    - Adcom members must notify the society president of any changes in affiliation affecting their representation.
    - **Motion:** To include the following text in the RAS Policies and Procedures clarifying the process for handling changes to country and/or Geographical Area of elected AdCom members during their term.

      If an elected AdCom member's country and/or Geographical Area changes during their term, they must notify the Society President preferably at least two months in advance and no later than one week after the change becomes effective. If this change results in any conditions specified in Table 1, the member will vacate their AdCom seat and the next eligible candidate from the most recent election will be

appointed as a replacement. AdCom members who vacate their seat via this process are deemed to have served a full three-year term.

The country and Geographical Area of an AdCom member are determined by the location of the candidate's primary academic or industrial affiliation. This does not concern relocation following short-term leaves, such as sabbatical or academic visits.

This provision applies to elected AdCom members of the Class of 2028 and onward (i.e., starting from the next election cycle).

Motion passed

20. Long Range Planning Committee (Amato)

- Nancy Amato discussed long-range planning, focusing on conference publication models, regional strategies, and conference challenges.
- Emphasized the importance of collaboration across boards to avoid separate discussions.
- Noted a need to address concerns about overlapping initiatives and the need for coordinated efforts.

21. Vice President Candidate Selection (Park)

22. Jim Ostrowski for VP Industrial Activities Board Presentation (3-min) and Q&A (2-min) (Ostrowski)

23. VP Candidate - Evaluation and Vote (Park)

Jim Ostrowski confirmed as VP-Elect for Industrial Activities

24. New Business (Wensing)

25. Next in-person Adcom Meeting: 11 January (Wensing)

26. Meeting Adjourned (Wensing)