

**AESS 2023 Officer Strategic Planning Meeting**  
**14-16 February - 8:00 – 5:00 pm ET**  
**Princeton, New Jersey, USA**

**Attendees:** Michael Braasch, Steve Butler, Alexander Charlish, Mark Davis, Walt Downing, Braham Himed, Lance Kaplan, Kathleen Kramer, Lorenzo Lo Monte, Michael Noble, Peter Willett

**Virtual:** Alfonso Farina, Sabrina Greco

**Staff:** Amanda Osborn

**Call to Order, Roll Call, and Agenda Approval – Mark Davis**

Mark welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda of the meeting.

**MOTION:** Sabrina Greco moved to approve the agenda of the 2023 Officer Strategic Planning Meeting. Michael Braasch seconded. Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Sabrina Greco moved to accepted the minutes of the 2022 Officer Strategic Planning Meeting as written. Michael Braasch seconded. Motion passed.

**President’s Message – Mark Davis**

Mark introduced the 2023 Officers and the 2023 Board of Governors. He noted that there has been an increase in technical area and gender diversity amongst the BoG members.

The 2023 TAB Budget highlights are continuing revenues in conferences and publications. There still is a threat of Open Access (OA). Continuing to add to our video content library.

**President-Elect Message – Sabrina Greco**

The long-term goals are to be more inclusive and diverse, increase AESS’s impact, and try to be the drives of the changes and possibly cooperation in cross-society initiatives. AESS is in a good financial situation to support new initiatives. Asking the VPs to focus on 1-2 initiatives per year with a precise roadmap and timeline with defined measures of success; and to launch a pilot initiative. Be aware of IEEE/non-IEEE activities for the future.

**Finance – Peter Willett**

Held a Finance Committee meeting last week.

Objectives include developing a plan for a comfortable reserve level. We have \$12.5 million in the bank. The second objective is exploring initiatives for contest with significant prize money. Kathleen is on an ad hoc board called Innovating Funding Models.

Looking to explore an initiative for contest with significant prize money. Bob is looking into what the threshold levels are that need to be approved by TAB Board of Directors. Discussion held on the size and target audience and ability to offer multiple prizes at different conferences.

Reviewed the reserves and summary revenue and expenses. AESS is a medium-sized society with a medium-sized reserve. There was a change in the methodology of budgets in 2020-2021 to improve transparency. IEEE overhead used to be under Publications.

*TAES 2021 and 2022 Financials:*

- Revenue - \$807k, \$1290k – Overlength page charges are a specific source of income.
- Expenses - \$208k, \$625k
- Profits - \$598k, \$638k

*MAES 2021 and 2022 Financials:*

- Revenue - \$151k, \$210k
- Expenses - \$174k, \$236k
- Loss - \$23k, \$26k

Noted that the Magazine is a benefit to the AESS members. Advertisements are low.

*Conference Publications 2021 and 2022 Financials:*

- Revenue - \$730k, \$1305k
- Expenses - \$0k, -\$651k
- Profits - \$730k, \$654k

Discussion held on the reserves plan. Dale Blair suggested twice annual expenses at Fall 2022 BoG meeting (\$8m). VP MGA suggested 50% of operating expenses (\$2m). The Finance Committee suggested one year's expenses (\$4m). Peter reviewed the various plans and possible outcomes. Conference contracts no longer include force majeure after COVID.

### **Technical Operations – Michael Braasch**

The 2023 objectives are championing the Supertopic of the Vision and Perspectives panel; Glue Tech Panel found a conference; determine Panel-led initiatives; and revise Best Panel Award procedure.

Mark, Marina, and Michael are meeting with the V&P regarding the Supertopic “Autonomy for Sustainability”. Michael is going to meet with the Tech Ops committee and Glue Tech Panel chair. Need broad direction from the BoG regarding parameters of initiatives that can be sent to the Panels. Updated the Best Panel Award procedure. They have to provide materials for the Spring/Fall BoG meetings. Michael will send out the 2022 winner's slides and reasoning for an example for future submissions. Kathleen noted they are doing something similar for the chapters. Sabrina suggested creating a template for the Technical Panels to have more standardization in evaluation.

*Action Item: Michael Braasch to create webform for Technical Panel of the Year.*

### **Publications – Lance Kaplan**

The 2023 objectives include expand offerings; codify processes by creating operating manuals for TAES/MAES; keep up with changing landscape with OA; and maintain excellence of TAES/MAES. Two outstanding action items are to follow up with Steve regarding (see recording) and creating the operations manuals. Gokhan is working on the process and paper trail for the Barry Carlton Award; currently a 3-year delay on the selection of the award.

All IEEE hybrid journals are currently part of the transformative agreement with Plan S. TAES must increase OA usage from 6% to 11% in 2023 to remain part of the agreement. TAES not on track to hit the 11%. Reviewed the top countries publishing OA – Italy, USA, and China are the predominant sources of OA papers. The possible actions are change to Gold OA; take steps to reach the 11% target; or do nothing. Creating a new OA would require expanded use of already stressed pool of editors.

### **Member Services – Lo Monte**

Provided statistics on membership overview and most populous chapters and student branch chapters. The membership is growing but the spike is due to a surge in student membership in R10; however, students in R1-7 is decreasing. Discussion on how to get students to transition to YPs. The retention of IEEE student membership has gone down by 2%. Determine the value that will attract and retain students and YP.

The 2023 goals are to continue the 2% growth in membership; grow happiness of current members and chapter activities; and grow number of activities per chapter.

Lorenzo noted the chapter funding forms should be simplified and the webpages need to be updated.

Upcoming chapter summits in Colombia are May 9 through May 11. The R10 Chapter Summit is TBD if it will be in Australia or India.

*Action Item: Lorenzo Lo Monte to send Amanda Osborn updated information for the chapter resources webpages and manual.*

*Action Item: Lorenzo Lo Monte to work with Kathleen Kramer to review and update the chapter funding forms and process.*

### **Industry Relations – Steve Butler**

Reviewed the 2023 IR Committee Members. Held a transition meeting with Mike Noble and Amanda Osborn in January. Looking to hold monthly committee meetings. Reviewed the 2022 activities and planned initiatives.

Several are rolling over to 2023 including growing industry sponsorship, serve industry members, and strengthen ties to IEEE. Discussion held on the participation of technical panels at AESS conferences.

Developed an industry panel to be held on March 17 for a 90-minute moderated discussion. Needs to be sent out to chapter chairs and industry members. Need to develop a topic and theme.

Need to identify conferences to engage industry companies and secure potential sponsorships.

The conversation around Short Courses was put on hold while figuring out who pays for them, NDAs, content, etc. Steve believes there is still a need for this.

Working with IEEE Industry Engagement Committee on the Industry Relations Platform (IRP). Mike and Stefano are beta testers for the platform. The goal is to develop a POC for these companies that we can offer short courses, etc. Also working with IEEE and the Industry Ambassadors Program. The primary push right now is engaging Senior Membership.

Walt noted that we are missing industry panels at the conference events such as DoD.

Recommendations for 2023 are to continue with the 2022 activities.

### **Awards – Fulvio Gini**

Acknowledged the 2023 Awards Committee. The long-term objectives are to take fresh look at all awards, initiate new awards, and implement changes to ensure better governance through revised processes and structures.

Introduced the Distinguished Service Award in 2023. Reviewed the current awards and 2023 selection committees and process of committee composition.

There is a scarcity of nominations for each of the awards. Fulvio recommends the six panels should contribute more substantially proving 1-2 nominations for each award; and stimulate nomination of industry people with the AESS IR Committee.

### **Education – Alex Charlish**

The first objective is to expand online educational offerings that are non-DL webinars to broaden the scope. It was a lot of work for just three webinars. Continued growth of videos on ILN and Vimeo. Discussion held on adding courses and certificates to new webinars or to the existing library of DLs.

[Action Item: Alex Charlish to write an article for the AES Magazine to advertise the VDL program and ILN to increase awareness of the program and tools.](#)

The second objective is to facilitate in-person events. A Boot Camp going to be held at FUSION Conference, International Radar Conference, and Radar Conference. Established new set of DLs for 2023-2024 term. DLs must apply/reapply. Alex created a new set of guidelines to improve consistency and basic activity expectations. Participation in the VDL program is mandatory for renewal.

The third objective is to aid members in accessing educational resources. Looking to send YPs to AESS conferences. Need to reduce the scholarship decision time to 3 months or less.

Walt mentioned that the AESS scholarship requires “no other scholarships” and recommended that it is removed to reflect the current climate of students and cost of education.

[Action Item: Alex to review scholarship language in TAB and recommend update to language to remove the “no other scholarships allowed” and to be voted on at Spring BoG meeting.](#)

Conference Catalysts is currently developing a new view that will display all of the presentation talk title.

### **Conferences – Braham Himed**

AESS can strengthen financially-sponsored conferences through improved offerings and increased number of co-technically sponsored conferences. Looking to increase recorded content through hybrid-like model with pre-recorded content (PPT with voiceover). Question is who is going to pay for it—the conference or AESS? AESS can give seed money. Recommendation is to move forward with this model for 2025 for the 100% sponsored conferences. Tutorials can be pre-recorded and added to the ILN.

Discussion held on the challenges of closing out conferences. Recommended that AESS adds a statement in conference applications that all financially-sponsored conferences “provide final report and finalize books within 6 months of conference closure”.

AESS is looking to Increase assistance to conferences in undeveloped countries through financial awards and joint activities with DLs, YPs, etc.

Action Item: Peter Willett and Mark Davis to put in \$10,000 into the standing budget for the funding for underdeveloped areas and countries for AESS sponsored events.

### **New Initiatives – Mark Davis and Sabrina Greco**

*Distributed Sensing Technology and Education Initiatives – Mark Davis*

Noted many other OUs are very busy with initiatives and funding them. Looking to serve the underrepresented regions over the next 3 years. The focus are drones, cyber security, and distributed sensing for future commercial applications. Reviewed the framework for the project. Received 9 proposals and expect to award 4 or 5 grants of \$25k by March. This year it will be a grant. They’ll have to say what they are going to do with the \$25k.

AESS student member activities have grown over the last two years – particularly in R10—and anticipating increased student growth with the new initiative. Need to develop a plan to transition from students to YP.

The action plan for the next three years is to increase student branch chapter members by 10%YOY; provide AES DL in Phase 1; and explain IEEE TAB New Initiative Policies for use of grant funds. Need proposals from AESS for Phase 2 by mid-August 2024.

*ISAC – Sabrina Greco*

First workshop was held in October 2022 in Edinburgh. Plan to hold second workshop in 2023, develop a paper for the Magazine, and co-sponsor the Summer School with SPS. In 2023, will develop an ISAC Technical Working Group, host a second workshop, and co-sponsor a Summer School. The goal is to raise student interest in AESS and ISAC.

### **Parking Lot – All**

Lance noted Daniel O’Hagan hasn’t appointed an Associate EiC. Peter suggested Bob Rassa. There was a discussion held about this position and its primary purposes (i.e. support, succession planning for next EiC, etc.).

Meeting recessed until Thursday, 16 February.

## **Day 2 – Thursday, 16 February 2023 8:30 AM**

Discussion on the future talks and panels with the ISAC initiative and working with the Sensing and Cyber Security groups. Looking to create a working group. Sabrina discussed hosting joint activities such as special sessions and workshops at conferences such as Radar. There are many ideas but need to finalize and implement the ideas. Looking to add a special issue to T-RS journal.

[Action Item: Mark Davis to send Sabrina Greco Fotis' slides and contact information.](#)

Metroaerospace conference was intended to be moved around Europe but has only been held in Italy to date. The attendees tend to be the same. Determine someone else who can organize in somewhere outside Italy. Braham noted it needs to come from the organizers themselves and not VP Conferences.

Discussion held about Glue Tech should organize a conference. Define what the panel is doing versus the chair's activities. They could organize workshops or DL talks. Michael Braasch is going to follow up with Marina to discuss these issues. Glue Tech ran a Summer School in 2022.

[Action Item: Michael Braasch to communicate with the panel chairs that AESS will financially support initiatives and to submit a proposal.](#)

ISIF (80% financial sponsor) put in \$35K into the FUSION bank account. AESS has not yet. The conference was delayed a year. IEEE wants to renegotiate the contract. The hotel would like to get out of the deal and renegotiation would put the conference in a worse situation. The account is currently frozen. ISIF provided an additional loan to pay the deposits. The papers are put on *Xplore*.

[Action Item: Lance Kaplan to send Kathy \(FUSION\) an email to introduce Braham to get information on the current situation with FUSION's bank accounts and contract.](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM ET.