# 2022 ICAPS Council Meeting

June 20, 2022, 15:00- 19:45 GMT, Remotely via Zoom

**Attendees:**

*Council Members:*
J. Benton, Erez Karpas, Michael Katz, Daniele Magazzeni, Eva Onaindia, Gabriele Röger, Scott Sanner, Shirin Sohrabi, Hankz Hankui Zhuo, Jeremy Frank, William Yeoh, Pradeep Varakantham, Laura Barbulescu

*Absent Members:*
Matthijs Spaan

*Non-Council Attendees:*
Only for agenda item 3 (representing ICAPS 2022) 15:45 GMT: Sylvie Thiébaux and Akshat Kumar

Only for agenda item 4 (representing ICAPS 2023) 16:15 GMT: Roman Bartak, Andrea Orlandini, Mauro Vallati

Only for agenda item 5 (representing ICAPS 2024) 17:00 GMT: Nathan Sturtevant, Jonathan Schaeffer, Christian Muise, Sheila McIlraith

# 1. Opening/Formalities

## 1.1 Review and approve minutes of the ICAPS 2021 Council Meeting
Approved.

## 1.2 Election of new officers
Congratulations to the new officers:
- J. Benton for his role as President Elect
- Michael Katz for accepting the role as Competition Liaison
- Erez Karpas for his role as Conference Liaison
- Eva Onaindia for her role as Secretary of the Council

## 1.3 Welcoming new members
Congratulations to the new elected members: William Yeoh and Pradeep Varakantham.

## 1.4 Thanking departing members

Thanks to Scott Sanner and Dan Magazzeni for their strong involvement in the ICAPS community. Thanks to Scott for his role as Competition Liaison and to Dan for his service as President of the Council.

# 2. Governance

## 2.1 ICAPS 2021 Report and Update (presented by Hankz Hankui Zhuo and Michael Katz)

Hankz analyzed the statistics on participation and other items:

1. 513 registrations, 507 is the highest number of attendees at a time (from Zoom records)
2. 74 students supported by David Smith's sponsorship
3. Budget balance: 2,993$

Michael analyzed the figures from the reviewing process:

1. PC: 169, SPC: 21
2. Acceptance rate: Main program (30.2%), Journal (83.3%), System Demonstrations (86.3%)
3. Desk rejections (14.4%): Anonymity breach (mostly from China), Relevance, Length, Wrong or manipulated style.
4. Program:
   a. Main program: 23 sessions, repeated twice over 5 days
   b. 2 Tutorials, 10 Workshops, 19 system demonstrations, 4 invited speakers, 6 speakers in industry sessions

Discussion (lessons learned from ICAPS 2021 and application to ICAPS 2022):

1. Breakdown of desk rejects suggests there may be issues with the communication of the submission requirements:
   a. confusion about length specification
   b. confusion about whether the +1 page is only for citations, or it can contain text
   c. etc.
   **Conclusion:** clarify requirements.

2. Issues with Easychair:
   a. Verification of authors/PCs emails
   b. Reviewers who declare conflicts are quietly removed (no notification). Some papers resulted in having only two reviewers.
   c. No desk-reject plugin yet.
3. Other aspects:
   a. Reviewer blacklists should be maintained (and trusted)
   b. Need of more reviewers

      c.   Need of a larger gap between the end of the reviews and author feedback

      d.   Add relevance item to the reviewing form

      e.   Add a separate mandatory field for questions to reviewers

      f.   Etc.

4.  Other comments:

      a.   P&L track: reviewing crisis due to seniors declining and resorting to students

**Conclusion:** lessons learned (full document) to be passed on to the next organizers

## 2.2 Treasurer's Report (presented by Jeremy Frank)

A big thanks to Jeremy for his effort in managing the ICAPS finances.

The insurance has been renewed and the state of treasury is in good shape.

We should really see funding opportunities and initiatives for the P&S community.

## 2.3 Scheduling of ICAPS (presented by Gabriele Röger)

Discussion on Sylvie's request to take a formal position about whether or not it is appropriate to schedule ICAPS in July:

1.  Council in 2008 decided to move ICAPS permanently to May/June (decision has not been passed through to the next organizing teams, this info was not placed in the guidelines)

2.  Moving conference dates involves moving submission dates that may clash with IJCAI, AAAI.

3.  We should ask the community and gather the opinion

**Conclusion (actions to be taken):**
-  Announcement in the community meeting and start discussion
-  Put a survey together to estimate attendance in Prague also including questions on:
      o  Scheduling of ICAPS
      o  Combination of virtual-physical conferences in the survey
-  Put all this info in the guidelines

## 3. ICAPS 2022 (presented by Sylvie Thiébaux and Pradeep Varakantham)

Sylvie and Akshat Kumar join the Council meeting at 15:45 GMT.

**ICAPS 2022 presentation (Sylvie):**

1. Robotics track cancelled; new track: Human-Aware P&S
2. SPC model: SPC (21), PC members (184), auxiliary reviewers (46)
3. A total of 277 submissions: an 8.63% increase in the number of submissions
4. Acceptance rate (30.7%) in line with previous years
5. Comments on the effect of submitting rebuttals
6. Presentations:
   a. Papers: 2 parallel tracks, each paper presented twice in different zones and days
   b. Posters: presented during the poster/demo sessions during the same two days of the paper presentation
   c. Demos presented twice in poster/demo sessions
7. Panels:
   a. Career Development panel
   b. Competition panel
   c. Industry panel
8. Comments:
   a. Analyze the influence of ICAPS in industry
   b. First time there is a diversity and inclusion chair (Gabriele Röger)
   c. Emphasize in the opening reception the efforts on diversity and inclusion in several dimensions (thematic diversity, gender diversity, geographical diversity, etc.)

**Conference management (Padreep):**

1. Registrations:
   a. Paid registrations (310): Student (125), Non-student (185)
   b. Free registrations (72)
2. Revenues & costs:
   a. Total revenue: 80,691 SGD
   b. Total costs: 50,829 SGD
   c. Amount to be returned to ICAPS: 29,862 SGD (20,664 EUR; 21,500 USD)
3. Budget:
   a. An increase in the sponsorships received: 47,000 SGD this year compared to 39,000 SGD
   b. Sildeslive cost increased
   c. Publication cost decreased
   d. Registration revenue decreased
4. Issues during registration:
   a. Comments on possible issues with the registration tool:
      i. There was a note on the registration page to contact the organization in case of problems

      ii.   Each conference struggles with issues in the registration (party due to own rules of the institutions)
   b.  Payment:
       i.   Many Asian and European countries accept only transactions from 3DS credit cards (non-mandatory in North American countries). Monetary Authority of Singapore has also enforced this policy of not allowing transaction from non 3DS cards
      ii.   Solution: offer Paypal option, 10-day extension registration deadline

Sylvie and Akshat Kumar leave the Council meeting at 16:15 GMT.


# 4. ICAPS 2023 (presented by Roman Bartak)

Roman Bartak and Mauro Vallati join the meeting at 16:16 GMT.

Roman presented on ICAPS 2023:

1. Change of dates due to 4$^{th}$ July is National holiday in US: new dates July 8-13.
2. Other events:
   a. SOCS will be run in a different location
   b. Summer School to be run before ICAPS main conference in parallel with workshops
   c. Studying if ACAI before ICAPS
3. The suggested hotel has been booked
4. Installations can have up to three parallel tracks (rooms of 48 seats and rooms of 97 seats)
5. Preference of physical preference but all the rooms are equipped with streaming even equipment for online talks:
   a. Council suggests physical conference with remote participation
   b. Roman suggests the possibility of having online talks (zoom session with camera) as a replacement for people who cannot travel due to covid, money issues, etc.
   c. Time for the sessions will be Prague time.
6. Poster presentation will be onsite
7. Proceedings publication: the new AAAI teams seams very responsive now and provide flexible dates; it is suggested to continue with it

**Conclusion (actions to be taken):**
- Include in the survey a question on whether people plan to attend ICAPS 2023 in person


Break from 16:45 to 17:00.

Pradeep Varakantham leaves the meeting at 17.00 GMT.

## 5. ICAPS 2023 (presented by Nathan Sturtevant and Jonathan Schaeffer)

Nathan Sturtevant, Jonathan Schaeffer, Christian Muise, Sheila McIlraith join the meeting at 17.00 GMT.

1. Expected date: week of May 31, 2024.
2. Anticipated costs (Banff centre):
   a. Initial deposit: $20,000 (maybe a little higher; paying the deposit is mandatory to be able to reserve the conference dates)
3. Accommodation costs around 225-250 CAD; less expensive accommodation in town.
4. Registrations fees:
   a. Regular fee: 700 CAD including reception dinner, banquet, breakfasts and lunches for every day (early registration around 560 CAD)
   b. Students: 500 CAD, early registration around 400 CAD
5. Remote participation:
   a. Sort of hybrid may increase expenses
   b. The Banff team says they can have recordings of the talks
6. A discussion about the minimum number of attendees for establishing the registration fees comes up. Target number of attendees could be approximately 150.
7. Sponsorship:
   a. So far $10,000 sponsorship
   b. Looking for support from industry; lots of connections with industry but most connections are related to ML rather than panning; good place to start with panning
8. Summer School planned to take place in a place contiguous at the Banff Centre or University of Alberta.

The council members vote on approval of the initial deposit of $20,000. **DEPOSIT APPROVED.**

Note: the approval contemplates small increases over the initially of $20,000 deposit. In case of a significant increase, the Council will be requested a new vote.

## 6. Discussion items

### 6.1 Diversity and Inclusion (Shirin Sohrabi)

The Council thanks Shirin for her efforts in raising awareness of diversity and inclusion at ICAPS.

- Gender Statistics: from 6:1 male/female ratio at ICAPS 2019 to 3.6:1 male/female ratio at ICAPS 2022
- Geographic Statistics: larger number of attendees from Europe and North America
- Diversity events: women @ ICAPS, underrepresented regions @ ICAPS

- Need of a report mechanism: a document that outlines the steps every organization should keep track of
- We don't have the advocate role at ICAPS 2022 – should we get back to advocates if conference turns physical?
- Code of conduct: inform the community to use the Incident Report Form to report any behaviour that violates the code of conduct or contact the Diversity and Inclusion chair (Shirin Sohrabi).
- A lot of efforts have been made behind the scenes; it is necessary we speak about this, people need to be aware of these efforts:
  - Code of conduct summary approved at the executive council meeting 2019
  - Creation of a permanent role of inclusion chair
  - Approval of conduct policy and guidelines
  - Two advocates in ICAPS 2020 and ICAPS 2021
  - Diversity and Inclusion chair in 2022 (no advocates)
  - Approval of the formulation of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- Still a lot to do:
  - Awareness of the code of conduct
  - Code of conduct to be posted at registration with link to full code, mentioned in the opening session
  - Awareness of the Incident Report Form (should be announced in the opening session)
  - Collect and report on diversity tata

## 6.2 Evaluation criteria for the best dissertation and influential paper awards (Michael Katz)

Michael Katz claims that there is not public information on the criteria and guidelines that are used by the committees to give the best dissertations and influential papers awards.

A discussion raises that identifies points in favor and against soliciting such criteria:

In favour:
- Transparency
- Avoid biases
- Helpful info for applicants

Against:

- Hard to quantify criteria (publications, citations, impact of theoretical contributions, applications, ….)
- We should trust the committee; not to create more burdens on the committee
- Seniority of the committee
- The committee does publish the reasons for the awards

<span style="color:red">The Council decides that Michael addresses the award committees and requests a suggestion of rating the nominations.</span>

## 6.3 Call for ICAPS Community Initiative and Outreach Proposals

We commented on how to design a procedure for community members to apply for funding opportunities:

1. Keep the procedure simple, identify the person to address (likely via email or a simple way)
2. Announce this initiative at the community meeting
3. The idea is to fund anything that is reasonable. NOTE: indicate amounts that are considered reasonable.
4. The call is open for any community-wise initiative and proposal.

## 7. Wrap-Up

### 7.1 Community meeting preparation

1. Diversity presentation
2. Asking the audience about the idea of alternating physical and virtual conferences (this can be then included in the survey)
3. Announcement of the survey

### 7.2 ICAPS Council Meeting 2023

The next Council meeting will be on the first day before the ICAPS 2023 conference.

### 7.2 Any other business

A few points were discussed during this council meeting such as to make conference as accessible as possible, whether to pay for workshops, alternation physical virtual, attendance in person to next conferences, etc. We conclude to include all questions of interest in the survey.