SPCOM TC Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2022

Meeting minutes taken by Waheed U. Bajwa

TC Members Attending (15): Waheed Bajwa (Vice Chair), Emil Björnson, Rodrigo C. de Lamare, Tsung-Hui Chang, Domenico Ciuonzo, Laura Cottatellucci, Mingyi Hong, Yao-Win Hong, Ya-Feng Liu, David Morales, Nuria Gonzalez Prelic, Luca Sanguinetti, Osvaldo Simeone (Chair), Christoph Studer, Antii Tölli

Non-attending TC Members (16): Tareq Al-Naffouri, Veronica Belmega, Itsik Bergel, Junil Choi, Elisabeth de Carvalho, Yonina Eldar, Kaibin Huang, Lutz Lampe, Lingjia Liu, Ana Pérez-Neira, Tony Quek, Meixia Tao, Hugo Tullberg, Xin Wang, Jun Zhang, Shaofeng Zou

Non-members Attending (2): Alle-Jan van der Veen (Vice President, SPS Technical Directions); Markku Juntti (General Chair, SPAWC 2022)

Meeting format: Virtual meeting

Minutes

- The Chair started the meeting by welcoming the four newly elected members to the TC, congratulating the two re-elected members of the TC, and thanking the four departing members of the TC, which included the Past Chair. The Chair also welcomed the newly elected Vice Chair of the TC to the meeting.
- The Chair then handed over the floor to the organizing committee of SPAWC 2022 for an update on the status of the workshop. The update was provided by Markku Juntti, General Chair, Antti Tölli, Technical Program Co-Chair, and Christoph Studer, Special Session Chair. They informed the attendees that:
    - IEEE has purchased a permanent web domain for SPAWC (ieeespawc.org) and all future SPAWC workshops will use this domain, prefixed by their year, for hosting of the workshop website.
    - There have been some administrative challenges in relation to organization of the workshop because of the slow response from IEEE administration. In particular, IEEE does not have VAT registration in Finland, which has made the financial aspects of the workshop difficult to manage. The University of Oulu is stepping in to help with some of these matters. In terms of financial sponsorship of the workshop by the industry, so far only Huawei has signed up as a sponsor.
    - The organizers are expecting around 120 participants in the workshop. There were a total of 110 papers submitted to the regular (non-invited) track of the workshop and the target is around 50% acceptance rate. In addition, 65 papers were submitted to the 11 organized special sessions.
    - The technical program of the workshop is expected to be similar in structure to SPAWC 2019, with a total duration of 2.5 days, 5 keynote talks, and additional thematic talks. There are no plans for tutorials in the workshop. One of the keynote talks is reserved for Huawei. A list of speakers for the thematic talks is ready, but the speakers will be confirmed after final confirmations of the keynote talks.
    - The workshop is expected to be on-demand as well as in-person.
- After conclusion of the SPAWC 2022 presentation, the Chair informed the attendees that the SPAWC 2023 organizing committee could not manage to attend the meeting. The discussion then moved to SPAWC 2024, with the Chair notifying that there were no proposals submitted for SPAWC 2024 initially. Since SPAWC 2021 was moved to a fully virtual workshop because of the pandemic, the Chair then invited Luca Sanguinetti, General Chair of SPAWC 2021, to re-propose SPAWC 2024 in Lucca, Italy,

the original intended place for SPAWC 2024. The floor was handed over to Luca Sanguinetti, who informed the attendees that:

- The SPAWC 2024 proposal, which will be submitted later to the SPCOM TC for a full vote, will mirror the structure of the original SPAWC 2021 proposal, with the location being Lucca, Tuscany, Italy. Luca Sanguinetti will once again be the General Chair and the Financial Chair of the workshop, while Emil Bjornson and Osvaldo Semione will be the TPC Co-Chairs. The remaining members of the organizing committee will be finalized later. The proposed dates for the workshop will be either end of May or the last ten days of June, while the workshop will be expected to be fully in person.
- Luca informed the attendees that while the budget numbers for SPAWC 2024 are expected to be similar to the original SPAWC 2021 proposal, the final numbers need to be worked.
- Markku Juntti suggested that it might be better for a dedicated person other than the General Chair to be the Financial Chair. Luca however noted that the same structure was followed for organization of SPAWC 2021 with success.

- Next, the Chair presented his TC report to the attendees as follows:
  - The TC has inadvertently violated the 30-member rule and the membership now stands at 31. This needs to be corrected in the upcoming elections.
  - A geographic and demographic breakdown of the membership was shared with the attendees.
  - Statistics for ICASSP papers associated with the SPCOM TC and SPAWC submissions were discussed, with the key finding being that SPCOM TC's share of ICASSP papers and submissions to SPAWC are on a downward trend.
  - Among the award nominations submitted by the TC to SPS Awards Board, there were three successful ones, namely, Best Paper Award, Young Author Best Paper Award, and Early Career Technical Achievement Award.
  - Upcoming schedule for the TC's activities was shared with the attendees, which included award nominations, membership elections, and ICASSP and SPAWC reviews.
  - The attendees were then reminded of the extensive paper award process that is followed by the SPCOM TC. The TC membership was also encouraged to put forth names of qualified candidates for other society-level awards.
  - The attendees were also informed that there will be a total of 15 open positions within the TC this year, with at most five (out of nine) sitting members who can be re-elected for their second term as per the TC bylaws / policies.
  - The report concluded by informing the attendees of the composition of three existing subcommittees within the TC and the need to form a new subcommittee that should review and suggest revisions to the bylaws and policies of the TC to bring them inline with recent changes within the SPS.

- At the conclusion of the Chair's report, the Chair opened the floor for discussion. One of the first topics of discussion that came up was how does the TC arrest the decline of papers submitted to the SPCOM track within ICASSP. This was followed up by related topics such as how to increase the popularity of SPAWC, how to increase the number of industry members within the TC, and how to showcase the strength of the SPCOM TC's research topics to the general signal processing research community. Several attendees took part in this discussion and put forth ideas that included:
  - The transition to 6G should lead to an increase in the visibility of SPCOM TC and SPAWC. The newly formed ISAC TWG could also help in this direction.
  - The TC could propose a larger number of special sessions within ICASSP on bleeding edge topics.
  - The TC could engage in outreach through expert sessions, columns, newsletters, etc.
  - The TC could carry out a comprehensive EDICS-level review of ICASSP submissions to understand the new trends.

- In order to follow up on some of the suggestions, it was decided to form targeted subcommittees within the TC.