

IEEE Australia Council – 2021 Annual Report

PART A - SECTION SUMMARY

A.1 Executive Summary

- Council Executive Committee Member List

Chair	Daniel Eghbal
Vice Chair	Fouad Karouta
Secretary	Sasha Nikolic
Treasurer	David Russell
Webmaster	Mike Robinson
Educational/Student Activities	Arslan Kiyani
Sections Chairs	
Australian Capital Territory	Ambarish Natu
Northern Australia	Melanie Olsen
New South Wales	Colin Elston
Queensland	Alexandra Posoldova
South Australia	Luke Rosenberg
Victoria	Mehrnaz Shoushtarian
Western Australia	Farhad Shahnia

Council Highlights

- IEEE Australia Council committee meet regularly every second month. Due to wide geographical area covered by the council, all meetings are virtual WebEx meeting. This year due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the traditional face-face meeting before R10 meeting in March 2021 was held online.
- IEEE Australia Council is a representative body of seven IEEE Sections in Australia and does not generally organize events independently rather provide coordination between Australian Sections. However, as majority of the meetings and events were held online, IEEE Australia Council established a seminar series on topics with interest among multiple societies and organized three technical seminars online which were all recorded.
- IEEE Australia Council celebrated 35th anniversary in 2021. A virtual celebration event was organized on IEEE Day on 5th Oct. Queensland and Western Australia sections organized a face-face networking function after the virtual celebration.
- IEEE AC established twomember benefit initiatives with DELL and MediBank (private Health Insurance Company) for members in 2021.
- A LinkedIn page was established to improve communication with members and better outreach to non-members. The page has proven to be useful in promoting IEEE events in 2021.
- IEEE AC WIE forum held couple of knowledge sharing sessions to foster collaboration among WIE affinity groups in Australia. The forum proposed organizing a national WIE event in 2022.
- Supports Australian Sections to submit a bid for hosting major IEEE conferences.
- Details for the SAC are available on the website and communicated to student members using social media and e-notices.
- IEEE AC also collaborate with New Zealand Council and ANZSCON (Australia New Zealand Student and Young Professionals Congress) is a typical example.
- All meetings were registered and reported on vTools.
- The Financial report for 2021 was successfully submitted to MGA before the February deadline.

PART B - ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

B.1 Membership Development Activities

- IEEE AC works with Australian sections rather than implement separate membership development activities.

B.2 Students Activities

- Total number of active student members (as of 22 Feb 2022) is 1040 (%14 of total members).
- Total number of Student Branches in Australia are 42.

While Australia Council does not have an individual student branch, some great effort has been made to improve the student activities. Here is a short summary of the ongoing work:

- Worked collaboratively on IEEE SAC Roles and Responsibilities document, which was approved by AC
- Worked collaboratively on Student Activities Plan, which was approved by the AC
- Administered Student Activities competitions:
 - Undergraduate Student Project Contest
 - Student Branch Contest
- Recruited a student volunteer for the Student Activities Team, which was formed throughout 2020
- Built (and still updating) a database of points of contact to commence social media campaigns, and generate exposure for student activities across Australia
- Launched social media campaigns, across multiple platforms, notably Facebook and LinkedIn as starting points

B.3 Awards & Recognition Activities

The Student Contests offer IEEE student members an opportunity to exercise and improve written and verbal communication skills via two different competitions.

Throughout an engineer's career, graduates are constantly called upon to communicate their ideas and concepts to others. Researching, writing, and presenting a paper provides students with invaluable early experience in expressing ideas and concepts related to their professional field.

Since the contests' primary function is to improve engineering students' communication skills, all IEEE student members in Australian universities are encouraged to participate in this important contest.

The Student Contests will be conducted for two entrant categories:

- Undergraduate students
- Postgraduate students

The IEEE Australia Council Student Branch Awards recognize outstanding student branch achievements by student members engaged in activities conforming to IEEE objectives and purposes.

These include, for example:

- Significantly improving the vitality of each student branch with regard to activities, membership, or finances.
- Effective interaction of each student branch with the local Section or Region, or IEEE technical societies, through seminars, conferences etc.
- Community involvement that benefits local schools and/or the community, the IEEE's image, and the image of engineering in general.

All IEEE student branches in Australia are eligible to enter the competition.

B.4 Communication Activities (Newsletter, Home Page, E-mail etc.)

- IEEE AC website contains all the important information <http://ieee-ac.org/> and is updated regularly.

- IEEE AC mainly communicates with section representatives rather than members directly.
- A [LinkedIn](#) page was established in 2021 as an effective platform to communicate with members and also extend that to non-members.

B.5 Industry Relations

- It is also important to note that more than half of the Section chairs (part of the IEEE AC Executive committee) and other committee members have an industry background.
- While most of Australian Sections have some level of collaboration with Engineers Australia (mainly in form of organizing joint technical events), IEEE AC is working to renew the MOU between IEEE and Engineers Australia (that was signed during the IEEE Sections Congress in 2017).

PART C - OTHERS

C.1 Special Events

- IEEE Australia Council planning meeting, 16 March 2021
 - The purpose was to plan for the activities for 2021 and minutes are available on the website
- Engineers Australia and IEEE Australia Council meeting
 - The purpose was to facilitate the discussion between IEEE HQ and Engineers Australia to renew the MOU.
- IEEE Australia Council WIE Forum meeting, 18th Aug 2021
- IEEE Australia Council WIE Forum meeting with Simay Akar, 17 Sep 2021
- IEEE WIE Consultation Meeting with Prof. Lance Fung, 24 Sep 2021
- IEEE Australia Council 35th anniversary and IEEE Day event, 5 October 2021
 - A virtual event to celebrate IEEE Australia Council's 35th anniversary across Australia with 5 keynote speakers, including region 10 director and director elect.

C.2 Relationship with National and International Societies and Non-Government Organizations (NGO)

- Standards Australia
- Engineers Australia (mainly through joint technical events and conferences)

C3. Collaboration with other IEEE Sections

- IEEE Australia Council is a representative body of seven IEEE Sections in Australia and does not organize events independently rather provide coordination between Australian Sections.
- IEEE Australia Council supports Australian hosting of major IEEE conferences
- IEEE AC also collaborates with New Zealand Council and ANZSCON (Australia New Zealand Student and Young Professionals Congress) is a typical example. ANZSCON 2022 will be hosted by South Australia Section and supported by other sections and Australia and NZ councils.
- IEEE AC coordinates the visits to Australia of IEEE Distinguished Lecturers.
- IEEE AC promote successful initiatives developed by a section and facilitate the extension to other sections. The recent member benefit initiative is an example.

C.4 Problems anticipated and suggestions for solutions, if any

Success of the council depends on number of factors of which dedicated volunteers is one of the important one. Retaining experienced volunteers and attracting new volunteers are sometime challenging.

Also, Australia Council doesn't have a funding source like sections and it's mainly funded through collecting a levy from sections.

PART D - GOALS AND PLANS

D.1. Establish a YP and EA coordinator to increase number of activities across Australia and leverage R10 support

The YP and EA coordinator roles are focused on fostering collaboration among YP and EA volunteers across the sections by enabling knowledge sharing and co-designing activities that can be implemented across all sections.

D.2. Strategic planning meeting and Future Plans

Similar to previous years, organise a planning session with upcoming section chairs in 2022 to explore the options to create more revenue to for council to defer collecting levy from Sections and invest the funding toward more activities aiming to create more value for members.

D.3. Increase presence on social media

Following the establishment of a LinkedIn page in 2021, increase the social media presence and advertise AC activities to reach out to the wider community in addition to IEEE members

D.3. Continuation of project/activity in progress and their implementation plans

In collaboration with the Sections, the Council will continue to pay attention to all students activities at Sections level and student branches, and support the 2022 ANZSCON.

D.4. Continue and expand the AC Seminar Series

The IEEE Australia Council Seminar Series was established in 2020 after the pandemic with the aim of organising virtual events on strategic topics that benefit many IEEE members across Australia. Based on the flexibility and benefits of virtual meeting platforms, this program can be extended and continued more regularly (e.g.regular monthly events).