Navigating the New RAS Publications Landscape

By Antonio Bicchi, Ken Goldberg, Eugenio Guglielmelli, Allison M. Okamura, and Frank C. Park

As we welcome the recently launched *IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters* (*RA-L*) into the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society's (RAS) portfolio of publications, members of our community will understandably have questions about the new IEEE RAS publications landscape. This article, authored by the editors-in-chief of the five major society publications—*IEEE RA-L*, *IEEE Transactions on Robotics* (*T-RO*), *IEEE Transactions on Automation Science and Engineering* (*T-ASE*), *IEEE Robotics and Automation Magazine (RAM)*, and the IEEE International Conference on Robotics & Automation (ICRA) proceedings—is intended to help our members navigate this new landscape, to offer guidance on where to submit papers, and to clarify the vitality and respective roles of the RAS publications.

RA-L is a peer-reviewed, electronic-only journal that began receiving submissions in June 2015 and will publish its first issue in January 2016. *RA-L* was established in response to the evolving needs of our community, among them the recent and rapid growth of our Society and the increasing importance of journal publications in professional evaluation. The distinguishing feature of *RA-L* is rapid publication (six months from submission to publication, including revision and rereview). High-quality, original papers reporting on archival contributions that can be communi-

cated in six pages (up to two additional pages will be allowed subject to page charges), are most appropriate for *RA-L*. A second distinguishing feature of *RA-L* is that for papers submitted within a designated time window, the authors of accepted papers will have the option of presenting their work at ICRA. This year, the window was 1 July–31 August, in which 335 manuscripts requesting this option were submitted. If you have a result of archival value that can be communicated in six (maximum eight) pages, and also wish to present the same work at ICRA, then *RA-L* is the natural destination for your paper.

It is important to emphasize that *T-RO* and *T-ASE* will continue to be the primary destinations for high-quality, high-impact research papers, especially those that benefit from additional time and space. It is often the case that significant results benefit from feedback from peers at workshops and conferences as well as from manuscript reviewers. These papers may also require more space for thorough presentation of experimental results, proofs, analysis, and comparison with prior work. For papers that have undergone the refinement process but can be presented concisely, *T-RO* and *T-ASE* will continue to accept short papers. *T-RO* and *T-ASE* strive to provide initial decisions within 90 days of submission.

RAM will continue to be the destination of choice for peer-reviewed archival articles of broad interest that report on breakthrough research developments with clear evidence of experimental vali-

dation in real application scenarios, recent trends in robotics and automation, articles of a tutorial or survey nature, general, nontechnical articles, and works oriented toward the robotics and automation practitioner that complement those works published in *T-RO*, *T-ASE*, and *RA-L*. *RAM* also strives to provide initial decisions within 90 days of submission.

For papers that report on research not yet ready for journal publication, but has the potential to evolve into a journal publication, ICRA should be the natural destination. When deciding whether to submit one's work to ICRA directly or through *RA-L*, it is important to keep in mind that a paper submitted through *RA-L* will go through a more thorough review process, possibly including a revision and resubmission cycle. *RA-L* is an archival journal, and as such, material appearing in *RA-L* papers cannot be reused in another journal paper, while this can be done with papers published only in conferences under the evolutionary publishing paradigm.

We thank Raja Chatila, Alessandro De Luca, Seth Hutchinson, and Peter Luh for feedback and advice on this editorial. As this is the first year of the launching of *RA-L*, some adjustments in the operating procedures of our five publications can be expected in the coming years. For example, we are hoping to increase the page lengths for *RAM*, *T-RO*, and *T-ASE*, to explore ways for some accepted *RAM*, *T-RO*, and *T-ASE* papers to also be presented

position is that you had a heck of a first job!

TH: Thank you very much for your thoughts and time spent with us, and congratulations on your awards—you well deserve it!

If you want to meet more excellent professionals of our society, join us at the next Young Professionals' Luncheon at ICRA 2016!

From the Editors' Desks *(continued from p. 4)*

at ICRA, and for some accepted *RA-L* papers to be presented at the IEEE International Conference on Automation Science and Engineering and other RAS-sponsored conferences.

We welcome the addition of *RA-L* and hope that this memo will help RAS members navigate the new publications landscape. More information on the scope, submissions guidelines, and procedures for the five publications in the RAS publications portfolio can be found at the links.

- http://ieee-ras.org/publications/ral
- http://ieee-ras.org/publications/tro
- http://ieee-ras.org/publications/tase
- http://ieee-ras.org/publications/ram
- http://www.ieee-ras.org/conferences-workshops/fully-sponsored/icra.