

# New Challenges for the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society

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These days, the robotics and automation field has a substantial impact on our shared future. Many current developments can be attributed to the progress we have made in the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society (RAS) due to the continued efforts of our members to make it the world's leading organization in our remarkable field. These efforts—together with the continuing education of scholars, the great scientific exchange between our members, and the open communication within the Society—have led to enormous advancements in science, knowledge, and technology.

However, these recent developments also pose substantial challenges for the RAS. We can expect to experience significant advances and growing strength within our industry, which will require sustained efforts to maintain scientific and technological leadership. We, therefore, need to increase our pursuit to increase membership. In addition, we must continue to make our conferences and journals the most influential of their kind in our field. We need to improve communication within the Society and become key partners in discourse on the overall impact of robotics and automation. Finally, we must keep strengthening our financial standing to maintain our flexibility and independence.

## Membership

We need to pay particular attention to our members. At the same time, we must strive to attract a highly diverse group of people interested in our field. The RAS should be home to all students as well as junior and experienced researchers across every region. Moreover, with a growing number of potential members, our Society should seek more effective ways to meet the expectations and needs of individual members and regions. We must continue to improve the participation and leadership in underdeveloped groups and areas.



## Publications, Media, and Conferences

In the past several years, our Society has made substantial progress in increasing the quality of our flagship conferences and journals. Still, there are several aspects we should emphasize, such as the harmonization of our flagship conferences, the International Conference on Robotics and Automation and the International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems. It will make our reputation even stronger if we can collaborate to establish the guidelines, standards, and processes of both events. This poses a challenge given the continuous growth that we are faced with; however, the cooperation between the conference leaders and our journal personnel will improve the efficiency of all of the processes involved. Inspired by the excellent results of our new *IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters*, we should aim for a tight collaboration

between RAS conferences and journals (transactions and the magazine). We should also increase our efforts to implement guidelines and procedures for dealing with ethical misconduct in our publication processes. Our overall goal must be to make our publications the number one resource in our field.

## Outreach

Due to the disruptive changes emerging in the field of robotics and automation, there are plenty of anxieties and concerns in our Society. The RAS must, therefore, strengthen its leadership in humanitarian outreach and ethical discourse. We should make the RAS the leading partner for interacting with communities to explain and alleviate ethical concerns, and we should establish the proper research strategies and solutions to address these concerns. Our goal should be to establish dedicated outreach events where ethical and societal aspects of the technology we develop are discussed with members of the community to foster our understanding of concerns and to promote the acceptance of technological improvements.

## Sustainability

We need to prepare our Society for all of these changes and continue its leadership in science and technology. In particular, this includes remaining financially independent to ensure the necessary creativity for reacting to developments within the RAS and in society more broadly.