General Assembly Meeting in Montpellier, France
August 29, 2012, 18:00-21:00

ECCAI Board: Grigoris Antoniou, Jérôme Lang, Gerhard Brewka (Chair), Ann Nowé, Patrick Doherty (Vice Chair), Mike Wooldridge

Minutes of the ECCAI 2012 General Assembly Meeting

18.00 – 21.00

1. **Welcome and Opening**

   Attendees: Gerhard Brewka (Chair), Patrick Doherty (Vice Chair), Jérôme Lang, Ann Nowé

   Excused: Grigoris Antoniou

   Minutes: Mike Woolridge

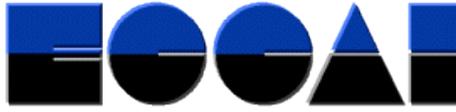2. **Approval of Minutes of Last GA Meeting**

Approved.

3. **Chairman's Report**

There is a written report which can be accessed on the ECCAI web site. The following are highlights:

- **[Financial situation]** *Very good. Close to 200k Euro in bank accounts.ECAI-2010 generated a surplus. Membership fees remain stable.*

- **[New Members]** *New country represented in ECCAI: Romanian Association of AI (ARIA) admitted at the GA 2011. Now 29 member societies.*

- **[ECCAI Travel Grants]** ECCAI awarded 26 travel grants for ECAI 2012. A marked improvement from 2010, where 25 were allocated but only 16 awarded due to lack of applications.

- **[ECCAI Dissertation Award]** The selection committee consisted of Toby Walsh (chair), Patrick Doherty, Thomas Eiter, Sarit Kraus, Luc De Raedt and Oliviero Stock. There were 11 nominations this year, a marked improvement over the 4 nominations in the previous year.

   The committee chose one winner and two honorable mentions. Juergen Sturm(Freiburg University) was the winner. Title: Approaches to Probabilistic Model Learning for Mobile Manipulation Robots.

   Honorable mentions go to: Mario Alviano (Universita della Calbria). Title: Dynamic Magic Sets; and Michael Spranger (Vrije Universiteit Brussel). Title: The Evolution of Grounded Spatial Language.
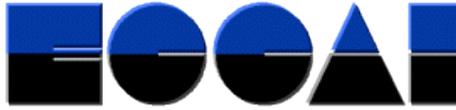
- **[ECCAI Fellows Program]** The fellows committee selected 9 out of 13 nominees this year: Jose Alferes, Gerhard Friedrich,

  Giuseppe de Giacomo, Pedro Larranaga, Nicola Leone, Barry O'Sullivan, Torsten Schaub, Andrzej Skowron.

- **[ECCAI Sponsored Conferences]** International conferences sponsored this year under the regular scheme are: ANTS-12, the 8th Intl. Conf. on Swarm Intelligence, Brussels (Belgium), and ICIDS-12, the 5th Intl. Conf. on Interactive Digital Storytelling, San Sebastian (Spain). Sponsorship under the special scheme went to ICAPS-12, the 22nd Intl. Conf. on Automated Planning and Scheduling, Sao Paolo, Brazil. The ECCAI invited speaker was Tony Cohn

- **[ECCAI Distinguished Service Award]** A new ECCAI distinguished service award was created for individuals who have made a career-long contribution to AI. The inaugural award was presented to Erik Sandewall. There will be one recipient every 2 years. In the future, selection will be made by the board with the exception of board members who make nominations themselves.

- **[ECAI Proceedings]** The IOS press contract expired in 2010, but they made a very competitive offer to continue with publication, including the provision of complete ECAI proceedings, back until 2000 online. A new formal agreement has been made between with IOS Press for 2012 and beyond.

4.   ECAI/IJCAI Coordination

IJCAI plans to move their conference to an annual event. This implies an IJCAI in Europe every 4 years. The ECCAI board considered possible responses to this and concluded that cooperation was the most reasonable option. A formal agreement between ECCAI and IJCAI has been drafted, and negotiated between IJCAI and ECCAI (Gerd Brewka and Jerome Lang representing ECCAI).

Gerd presented the draft agreement to the GA. The basis of this agreement was that IJCAI was roughly twice as big as ECAI and that decision making, risks and benefits should thus be shared on a 2:1 basis (i.e., IJCAI takes 2/3 of surplus and carries 2/3 of risk, while ECCAI takes 1/3 of surplus and carries 1/3 of risk).

A question was raised about the level of IJCAI surplus and whether this might be raised at some point. It was also queried whether the financial model proposed in the memorandum of understanding might lead to increased registration fees. It was also pointed out that further agreements would be needed with local organisers.

A vote was taken on whether to support the memorandum of understanding: 28 votes were in favour; no votes were against; 2 were abstaining. The vote was therefore carried.

5. Treasurer's Report and Budget for 2012 and 2013

Ann gave a summary of membership organisations; two organisations (Latvia and Ukraine) were currently reported to be dormant, all other organisations were active. Ann then moved on to 2011: a planned loss of approx euro 20,000 was reported. Over a 2 years period (including an ECAI year and a non-ECAI year) the budget remains status quo.

For 2012, a surplus was expected, boosted by the fantastic registration numbers for ECAI-2012. Ann then summarised the current savings arrangements for ECCAI - two accounts are used (BNP Parisbas savings account [5 years] and AG Insurance business investment plan [8 years]) to ensure the safety of holdings under Belgian law.

A deficit of about euro 13,000 was planned for 2013. A motion was made to approve the budget: 25 votes were in favour, 1 abstained, no votes were against. The budget was therefore approved.
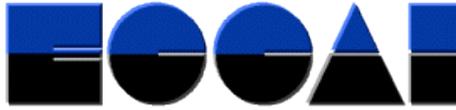
6. Status of AICom

Maria Fox (editor in chief of AI Communications) gave a report on AI Communications. Maria reported a refreshed editorial board with 16 associate members and 25 ordinary members, as well as a thesis summaries editor. Maria's feeling was that the journal did very well for articles in special issues; less well for regular issues. She reported the introduction of an online submission management system. Maria reported that turnaround times were not as low as hoped, and suggested that an annual editorial board meeting at ECAI/IJCAI might be one way to remedy this. WRT impact factor, Maria reported the 2011 impact factor had fallen to 0.5 (2010: 0.84). It was felt that this was perhaps a general problem for AI journals, e.g., with AIJ seeing falling impact factor. She then reported a programme of action to raise the profile of the journal internationally.

7. ECAI 2012 (Montpellier) Status Report

Christian Bessiere gave a brief report on ECAI-2012. In summary, the conference looked in great shape with many more delegates than planned, although the final numbers were not determined yet. This would lead to an improved financial position, although the figures would not be clear for some time.

8. ECAI 2014 (Prague) Progress Report

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Filip Zelezny and the local organizers gave a short presentation about the conference location and the current planning status. The conference will be held on

18-22 august, 2014 at the Clarion Congress Hotel on the outskirts of Prague.

Expected registration fee is 400 euro for early registration. This would imply a break even point of 475 people.

9. Selection of ECAI 2014 Conference Chair

Torsten Schaub was nominated and then chosen unanimously as the program chair for ECAI 2014. There were 28 votes in favor, no abstentions, and no votes against. He also introduced himself to the assembly.

10. ECAI 2016 Site Selection (bids from Moscow, The Hague, and Trondheim)

Presentations were made by the 3 bidders for ECAI-2016: Moscow (Russia),

presented by Gennady Osipov and Sergei Kuznetsov; The Hague (Netherlands), presented by Frank Dignum; and Trondheim (Norway), presented by Anders Kofod-Petersen.. There were many questions from the GA. After these questions, a vote took place using plurality with runoff. The first round lead to the following results: Moscow 8, Trondheim 11, The Hague 13. The runoff between Trondheim and The Hague lead to Trondheim 11, The Hague 21. As a consequence, The Hague was chosen as the venue of ECAI-16, with the BNVKI (Dutch-Belgian-Luxemburg society) as organizing society.
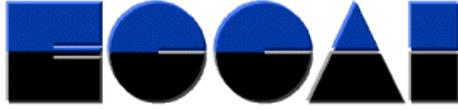
11. ACAI 2013 Site Selection (bids from London)

Anthony Hunter (University College London) presented the Proposal for the 2013 ACAI Summer School on Argumentation and Agreement in Artificial Intelligence. It is to be organized at King's College London in July 2013, by Elizabeth Black, Anthony Hunter, Sanjay Modgil, and Francesca Toni. He gave details on the provisional programme, on budget and registration fees, and on student accommodation and social events. A vote was taken: 28 in favour, no abstentions, no votes against. As a result, London was chosen as the location of the 2013 ACAI Summer School.

12. Election of the new ECCAI Board

The current ECCAI board is composed of one member whose term expires today (Gerhard Brewka) and five members who have the possibility to stay on the board for at least two more years (Grigoris Antoniou, Patrick Doherty, Jérôme Lang, Ann Nowé and Mike Wooldridge).

A first vote was taken about whether these five members would continue to serve on the board: 28 in favour, no abstentions, no votes against. As Gerhard Brewka's term expires today, a vote had to be taken so as to choose a new board member. There was only one candidate: Gerhard Lakemeyer (University of Aachen). Gerhard

Lakemeyer introduced himself. A vote was taken: 28 in favour, no abstentions, no votes against. As a result, Gerhard Lakemeyer was elected as a new board member of ECCAI.

The composition of the new board is: Grigoris Antoniou, Patrick Doherty, Gerhard Lakemeyer, Jérôme Lang, Ann Nowé and Mike Wooldridge. Patrick Doherty agreed to take over the role of president of the ECCAI Board. Mike Wooldridge will serve as vice-president.

13. Date for the next General Assembly Meeting for 2012

It was agreed that the next GA would take place in London during the ACAI summer school.

14. Any other business

None.

15. Closing

The meeting was closed at 20.50.