

COPE: Making Progress While Facing Challenges

Anisha M. Apte

We express gratitude to all IEEE Antennas and Propagation Society (AP-S) members for volunteering their time during the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope you and your families are safe during this time of crisis and that we can organize in-person technical and social events soon.

The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the biggest challenges our Society has encountered in 100 years. It has deeply affected people's health, employment, industries, and institutions and created uncertainty and inequality, particularly in the underserved populations. However, the world has taken substantial strides in the face of misfortune to reinstate normalcy.

We at the AP-S Committee on Promoting Equality (COPE) feel privileged to share our undertakings to help the underserved community.

On 17 March 2021, Prof. Weng Chew, Dr. Ajay Poddar, and Holly Brown, director of IEEE Corporate Activities, organized an AP-S COPE Zoom meeting. In collaboration with the IEEE Humanitarian Activity Committee/Special Interest Group on Humanitarian Technology (HAC/SIGHT), they focused on engineering

EDITOR'S NOTE

As the IEEE Antennas and Propagation Society (AP-S) Committee on Promoting Equality (COPE) makes progress, it gives us immense pleasure to bring this initiative to your attention via the "COPE Corner" column in *IEEE Antennas and Propagation Magazine*.



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technology for the application in humanitarian aspects and scaling further with the involvement of industries for large impact, including membership retention, membership growth, and

engagement with students, young professionals (YPs), and Women in Engineering (WiE).

A screenshot of the AP-S COPE Zoom meeting is shown in Figure 1, in



FIGURE 1. A screenshot of the AP-S COPE Zoom meeting, in collaboration with IEEE HAC/SIGHT, sister Societies, and industries.

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collaboration with IEEE HAC/SIGHT, sister Societies, and industries.

COVID-19 immunization has been ramped up and eligibility was relaxed to achieve the target of vaccinating more than 50% of the population before the end of May. We hope that things have started improving for you and your families after all we have endured the past 12 months. Our goal is to slowly transition from virtual to hybrid/in-person meetings including conferences, student design contests, workshops, and technical talks.

Dr. Ajay Poddar has been enthusiastically advocating the collaborations with IEEE sister Societies and industry partnerships for interaction, engagement, networking, and commitment for creating a volunteering service community for the special trade that teaches us to subsidize and aid underserved people. The inter-Society partnerships, student branches, YPs, WiE involvement, and industry engagement can lead to new memberships as well as it being the pedestal to leverage the appropriation of industry expertise to help identify opportunities for exploring sustainable humanitarian technology for benefiting the underserved community.

Figure 2 is a screenshot of the AP-S COPE Zoom meeting in collaboration with the IEEE Microwave Theory and Techniques Society (MTT-S) and the HAC.

Figure 3 is a screenshot of the AP-S COPE Zoom meeting in collaboration with the IEEE Photonic Society (PHO-S), the IEEE Electronic Device Society (ED-S), and the HAC.

The engagement with HAC/SIGHT opportunities will position AP-S COPE as a collaborative partner and bring greater value to members by helping to advance their careers in multidisciplinary humanitarian projects. Technology is moving at an unprecedented pace, and next-generation students do not seem to be very interested in high-tech paper publication on IEEE *Xplore*. Instead, they are looking for technology offerings for humanity, and HAC is superlatively positioned

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as a resource that can justify this need with the supplementary value to new members and membership retentions. HAC/SIGHT is prioritizing approval of the projects related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please check <https://hac.ieee.org/funding-opportunities/>.

We recommend that you visit the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) announcement; see

<https://www.uspto.gov/ip-policy/patent-policy/ip-patents-humanity>. This is an opportunity to file patents on technology addressing humanitarian challenges. This is an awards competition recognizing innovators who use game-changing technology to meet global humanitarian challenges. The program provides business incentives for reaching those in need.

Winners receive an acceleration certificate to expedite select proceedings at the USPTO as well as public recognition of their work. The awards showcase how patent holders with vision are pioneering innovative ways to provide affordable, scalable, and



FIGURE 2. A screenshot of the AP-S COPE Zoom meeting, in collaboration with the IEEE MTT-S and HAC.

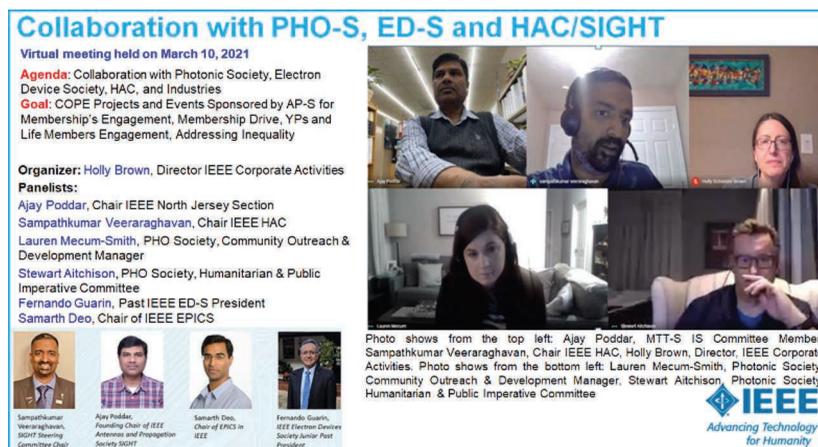


FIGURE 3. A screenshot of the AP-S COPE Zoom meeting, in collaboration with the IEEE PHO-S, ED-S, and HAC/SIGHT.

sustainable solutions for the less fortunate. Businesses are finding unique and creative ways to reach underserved markets. Their stories show that humanitarian engagement is compatible with business interests and strong patent rights, and that companies can effectively contribute to global good while maintaining commercial markets.

2021 AP-S COPE SPECIAL-PURPOSE FUND REQUEST FORM

FIRST CALL FOR PROPOSAL: SUBMISSION DEADLINE 15 AUGUST 2021

A special-purpose fund has been approved for the intention of promoting equality (in gender, race, income, and other variants) by leveraging the access to opportunities in science and technology in underserved communities. This is not ordinarily covered by the Chapter's annual funding. Examples might include the organization of a local workshop that benefits students in high school, a special field trip for mentoring the underprivileged students, a humanitarian-oriented COPE project, and so on.

The special-purpose funding is limited to a maximum of US\$500 and is available on a first-come, first-served basis. A Chapter officer can request special-purpose funding by completing and submitting an "AP-S Special Project Request Form" to the Chapter Activities Coordinator (CAC). This form is posted on the AP-S Chapters webpage (<https://ieeeps.org/chapters/chapters>); the form can also be requested from the CAC listed on the AP-S Chapter's webpage (<https://ieeeps.org/committees/current-committee-members>). Awards are prioritized based on the value of the project to the AP-S Chapter and the AP-S. Email this form to the chair of the CAC (akpoddar@ieee.org), and cc to the CAC Region coordinators: Dr. Jawad Siddiqui (jys.rpe@gmail.com), Dr. Meisong Tong (mstong@tongji.edu.cn), Dr. Malay Tripathy (malay.tripathy@gmail.com), Dr. Anisha Apte (anisha_apte@ieee

After completion of the project, the awards committee will explore follow-up activities for low-cost production of the proposed technology, which is the key requirement for humanitarian needs.

.org), and Camila Albuquerque (camila.albuquerque@ee.ufcg.edu.br).

If approved, the CAC will forward the request to the AP-S treasurer, who will then issue funds in the manner requested by the Chapter (i.e., check, wire transfer, concentration account, and so on). Chapters are encouraged to select local schools where basic facilities (PCs, books, Internet, and low-cost science project kits) do not exist. Chapters are encouraged to interact with local IEEE Sections, school administrations, and the local community for a larger collaborative support for COPE's mission.

For a long-term impact, Chapters are required to submit the annual report for receiving funding in the next year. AP-S COPE committee will select students from 10 schools from the outreach regions for consideration of awards. The objective is to motivate students and members toward promoting equality at the local school level. The name(s) of the award recipient(s) and schools will be published in *IEEE Antennas and Propagation Magazine* and on the IEEE AP-S COPE website.

AP-S COPE can support travel funding for K-12 (or equivalent) students and schoolteachers who are engaged in STEM activities and other programs per AP-S COPE agenda for presenting at the AP-S COPE meeting in AP-S sponsored events.

These steps will help CACs in promoting an inclusive and equitable culture in its Chapter activities and programs that welcome, engage, and reward those Chapters that contribute to the COPE mission. Chapters will be stimulated for humanitarian projects

that promote equality and will receive an additional US\$500 in financial support from the SIGHT and CAC budget.

The evaluation of COPE special-purpose proposals will be based primarily on serving underserved communities at local schools, proving motivation for STEM education as well as spreading the goal of IEEE, "to foster technologi-

cal innovation and excellence for the benefit of humanity." After completion of the project, the awards committee will explore follow-up activities for low-cost production of the proposed technology, which is the key requirement for humanitarian needs. The announcement of the award will be made at the annual awards ceremony at the IEEE AP-S flagship conference. The recipient will receive a plaque and a cash prize for completion of the project. The name(s) of the award recipient(s) will be published in *IEEE Antennas and Propagation Magazine* and on the AP-S website.

Chapters are encouraged to contact the AP-S CAC Region coordinators for additional funding support of up to US\$3,000. The decision will be based on case-to-case basis, supported by COPE, SIGHT, AP-S Member and Geographic Activities (MGA), and the CAC budget under the "Special Purpose" category to carry out and/or support impactful humanitarian and sustainable development activities at the local Section level. The proposals should contain, at a minimum, a detailed description of the project and a budget.

The IEEE AP-S CACs will be actively participating and interacting with COPE Committee members and will initiate outreach programs with AP-S Region coordinators and local IEEE Section and Chapter officers to ensure that the diversity of the community is represented in all aspects of Chapter officers and volunteer leaders' organization as per COPE directives and goals.

