

Editorial

How to Collaborate More Productively

IEEE, the world's largest engineering society, covers many research areas. Because of this, IEEE consists of many societies -- including ours. Each society does its best to promote the corresponding research area. For example, our Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Society is actively promoting research in cybernetics, in systems science and engineering, and in human-machine systems.

All the societies do an outstanding job in their research areas. This is great, but sometimes, by focusing too much on our own research areas, by becoming somewhat too compartmentalized, we tend to forget that the world itself is whole. To solve the world's problems, it is rarely enough to only take one aspect of the problem into account -- usually, many aspects, in particular, many engineering aspects are important. To be more successful in solving the world's problems, we therefore need more collaboration between IEEE societies -- and often also with engineering and research societies outside IEEE. We need our results to be disseminated outside our societies.

We are doing this already, but, as several speakers mentioned at the April 2016 IEEE Panel of Editors, we need to do more.

What are we doing in this direction and what can we do better? We already have technical committee that combine researcher areas from several societies. We have journals jointly supervised by several societies -- and our Society is very active in this, both by running journals in which other societies participate and by actively participating in journals run by other societies. There are also IEEE-wide interdisciplinary inter-societal publications that publish technical papers and surveys of potential interest to several societies. And, of course, many of us are active members of several societies, participating in conferences organized by different societies, publishing in different societies' journals.

Can we do it even better? Yes, and many ideas have been described at the Panel. Some technical conferences invite speakers from outside their research area, speakers whose research is of potential interest to the members of the corresponding society. Maybe with other societies -- especially the ones which are close to us in research topics -- we can have guest editorials in each other's Magazines, editorials that not only brag about the successes, but also explain the challenges -- challenges in which the other society's research may be able to help. We can have more conferences jointly sponsored by different societies.

And, of course, you, the readers, can help. If you know of a paper published by another society that is of potential interest to us, send a short review of this paper -- with a brief explanation of why this paper is of interest to us -- either to this Magazine, or, if you prefer, to our Society's eNewsletter.

You may have other ideas: great, send them to us. Ideas is what we generate professionally. Yes, usually, we generate technical ideas, but if you come up with organizational ideas of your own -- or simply report successful ideas already being implemented by other societies -- let us know. As some of you know, I am originally from Russia, and in Russia, there is a saying emphasizing the benefits of collaboration: One head is good, but two heads are better. Clearly, thousands of heads of all the society members is better yet! Let us collaborate more, and, in particular, let us all collaborate in looking for organizational ideas that will lead to more productive technical collaborations.

We are waiting for your ideas!

Vladik Kreinovich

VP Publications

IEEE Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Society