

Technical Committee Chair Guidelines

Mario di Bernardo, VP for Technical Activities

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1. Introduction

The Technical Committees (TCs) of the IEEE Control Systems Society (CSS) are at the heart of the Society's scientific mission. They serve as the primary forums for advancing research, fostering collaboration, and connecting members around specific areas of control theory and applications. This document provides comprehensive guidance for TC Chairs on their roles, responsibilities, governance procedures, and the use of annual financial resources.

These guidelines are consistent with the Society's bylaws, Board of Governors resolutions, and the decisions of the Executive Committee (ExCom). TC Chairs are expected to uphold the highest standards of scientific leadership, inclusivity, and accountability.

2. Role and Responsibilities of the TC Chair

The TC Chair provides scientific and operational leadership for the Technical Committee. The main responsibilities are described below.

2.1 Scientific Leadership

- Define and regularly review the TC's scope, ensuring it remains current and aligned with emerging trends in the field.
- Promote high-quality research activities within the TC's area, including workshops, tutorials, invited sessions, and special issues.
- Encourage collaboration with other CSS TCs, IFAC Technical Committees, and related professional organizations.
- Champion the TC's research area within IEEE CSS Day and other Society-wide events.

2.2 Membership Management

- Maintain an active and up-to-date roster of TC members via the IEEE CSS website portal.
- Actively recruit new members, with explicit attention to broad representation across varied backgrounds, including gender, career stages, geographic regions, and institutional affiliations.
- Review membership annually and remove members who have not actively engaged with TC activities for two or more years.
- Appoint TC officers (e.g., Vice-Chair) as appropriate to distribute leadership responsibilities.

2.3 Meeting Organization

- Organize at least one annual TC meeting, preferably two, one at CDC and one at ACC or CCTA.
- When feasible, offer hybrid or virtual participation options to promote global access.
- Keep minutes of TC meetings and share them with TC members.
- Coordinate with the VP for Technical Activities (VPTA) and with the relevant conference General/Program Chairs when scheduling TC sessions.

2.4 Awards and Recognition

- Establish and manage a TC Outstanding Student Paper Award, where appropriate, following CSS guidelines.
- Nominate deserving TC members for IEEE CSS and IEEE-level awards.
- Support TC members in obtaining IEEE Fellow nominations and other forms of professional recognition.

2.5 Reporting

- Submit in a timely manner a written TC Activity Report to the VPTA ahead of the Board of Governors (BoG) meeting typically held at the CDC in December.
- Contribute, when asked by the VP TA, a column to the IEEE Control Systems Magazine (CSm), summarizing the TC's recent activities, emerging research topics, or community news.
- Reports must be submitted by the deadline communicated by the VPTA. Late or missing reports may affect TC standing and eligibility for the Outstanding TC Award.
- Reports should cover: membership statistics, activities completed, activities planned, financial expenditures, and any issues or requests requiring BoG attention.

Reporting Deadlines

Autumn BoG (typically December, at CDC): report due ~8 weeks before the BoG meeting.

The VPTA Office will send reminders and communicate exact deadlines each year.

Note: Timely submission of reports is a prerequisite for eligibility for the CSS Outstanding TC Award.

3. Governance and Term Structure

3.1 Term of Office

TC Chairs serve a three-year term. A Chair may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms (six consecutive years) in the same TC.

3.2 Election and Nomination

TC Chairs are elected by TC members following a nomination process coordinated by the VPTA. Key principles include:

- All eligible TC members in good standing may be nominated or self-nominate. For the purposes of these elections, “eligible” means a regular member of the TC who has been on the TC roster for at least one year and whose membership is current.
- Nominations should actively seek candidates from varied backgrounds, including career stages, geographic regions, and institutional affiliations, to ensure TC leadership reflects the breadth of the technical community it serves.
- The election is conducted by electronic ballot.

3.3 Chair Removal and Succession

A TC Chair who consistently fails to fulfil their responsibilities — in particular failing to submit BoG reports, maintain an active membership roster, or organize any TC activity over a 12-month period — may be subject to removal. The procedure is as follows:

- The VPTA issues a written notice of concern and requests a remediation plan within 30 days.
- If no satisfactory response is received, the VPTA may recommend removal to the ExCom.
- ExCom may vote to remove the Chair; the TC's senior Vice-Chair (or an elected successor) would assume interim leadership.

This procedure is intended as a last resort and will be applied with full respect for due process.

3.4 Chair’s Responsibility for Elections

It is the responsibility of the outgoing Chair to initiate and oversee the election process for both the incoming Chair and the Secretary ahead of the expiry of their terms. If the outgoing Chair is themselves a candidate in the election, they must immediately notify the VPTA, who will assume oversight of the election process to ensure impartiality. Specifically, the outgoing Chair (or the VPTA where the Chair is a candidate) shall:

1. Open a call for nominations for Chair and Secretary no later than three months before the expiry of the current terms, notifying all TC members by email and via the TC mailing list.
2. Circulate the CVs of all nominees to TC members and allow a discussion period of at least 15 days before the ballot is held. Self-nominations are permitted. Actively seek candidates from varied backgrounds, including gender, career stages, geographic regions, and institutional affiliations, to ensure TC leadership reflects the breadth of the technical community it serves.
3. Conduct the election by electronic ballot administered by the VPTA Office, ensuring that all eligible TC members have an opportunity to vote.
4. Report the outcome of the election to the VPTA within seven days of the ballot, including the names of the elected Chair and Secretary and the number of votes cast.
5. Nominate a Vice Chair from among regular TC members immediately upon the new Chair taking office. The Vice Chair serves at the Chair’s discretion and assists with the TC’s leadership responsibilities.

Failure to initiate the election process within the required timeframe will be treated as a failure to fulfil the Chair’s responsibilities and may trigger the procedure described in Section 3.3.

4. Annual Financial Allowance

Each CSS Technical Committee receives an annual financial allowance of USD 5,000, structured in two distinct components with different intended uses.

Budget Component	Amount (USD)	Purpose & Eligible Uses
TC Meeting Allowance	\$3,000	TC meetings at CSS-sponsored or CSS-co-sponsored conferences (ACC, CDC, CCTA); hybrid/virtual meeting platforms; room bookings; AV equipment; refreshments
TC Initiatives Allowance	\$2,000	Workshops, tutorials, special sessions; partial travel support for TC-OSPA awardee; outreach; CSS Day participation
TOTAL ANNUAL TC ALLOWANCE	\$5,000	Combined budget per TC per year

4.1 TC Meeting Allowance — USD 3,000

The USD 3,000 meeting component is allocated to support the costs directly associated with organizing official TC meetings. Eligible expenditures include:

- Room booking and audio-visual equipment for TC meetings at CSS-sponsored or CSS-co-sponsored conferences (ACC, CDC, CCTA, or other approved events).
- Modest refreshments (coffee, water, light snacks) for in-person TC meetings. Questions about what constitutes eligible refreshment costs should be directed to the VPTA Office before expenditure is incurred.
- Costs for hybrid meeting platforms, virtual conferencing tools, or streaming services to support remote TC member participation.
- Printing of TC-related materials (agendas, reports) for distribution at meetings.

Expenditures NOT eligible under the meeting component include:

- Travel reimbursements or accommodation for the Chair or TC members attending conferences.
- Individual membership fees or subscription costs.

4.2 TC Initiatives Allowance — USD 2,000

The USD 2,000 initiatives component is provided to support a broader range of TC activities beyond meetings. This allowance reflects the Society's commitment to enabling TCs to be active, visible, and impactful in their research communities. Eligible uses include:

Scientific Activities

- Co-sponsorship or partial support for workshops, symposia, or special sessions organized by the TC at IEEE or non-IEEE venues (subject to VPTA approval for non-CSS events).
- Support for TC-organized tutorials at IEEE CSS conferences.
- Contribution to TC participation in IEEE CSS events, including promotional materials.

Student and Early-Career Activities

- Partial travel support (up to USD 1,000) for one TC Outstanding Student Paper Award (TC-OSPA) recipient to attend the IEEE conference where the award is presented.
- Support for student or early-career member (i.e., within 4 years of completing their PhD) networking events organized by the TC.
- Contribution to the costs of student poster sessions or mentoring events co-organized with TC activities.

Community and Outreach

- Design and printing of TC promotional materials (flyers, banners for TC booths at conferences).
- Support for TC-level outreach initiatives

Expenditures NOT eligible under the initiatives component include:

- Travel grants or conference registration fees for individual TC members.
- Student paper award prize money
- Special issues editorial support costs.
- Purchase of equipment, software licenses, or hardware.
- Any activity primarily benefiting a single institution or research group rather than the broader TC community.

5. Financial Procedures and Compliance

5.1 Pre-Approval

TC Chairs are strongly encouraged to notify the VPTA and VPFA of planned expenditures at the beginning of each calendar year and to seek pre-approval for any single expenditure exceeding USD 500. Pre-approval can be requested via email to the VPTA.

5.2 Reimbursement Process

To request reimbursement for eligible expenditures:

- Collect all original receipts (electronic receipts are acceptable).
- Complete the IEEE CSS Expense Report form on IEEE Concur
- Submit the completed form and receipts within 60 days of the expenditure.

- The VPTA review, approve, and forward the claim to the IEEE CSS VP Finance for final approval.
- Payment is typically processed within 30 business days of approval.

5.3 Year-End and Carry-Over Policy

The annual TC allowance operates on a calendar-year basis (January–December). Unspent funds at the end of the calendar year do not carry over to the following year.

5.4 Financial Reporting

TC Chairs with the help of their TC Secretary are required to include a brief financial summary in each BoG Activity Report, covering: total expenditure in the reporting period, a brief description of each expenditure, and the remaining available balance. This summary ensures transparency and supports the VPTA's consolidated reporting to the BoG. A plan should also be included of how the TC intend to spend the next year allowance.

6. CSS Outstanding TC Award

The CSS Outstanding TC Award, approved by the Board of Governors in 2025, recognizes exemplary performance and impact by a CSS Technical Committee. TC Chairs should be aware of the award criteria, as these reflect the standards of excellence expected of all TCs.

- **Prize:** Prize:
 - USD 1,000 and a Certificate, to be used for additional TC-related event or activity.
- **Eligibility:** Eligibility:
 - The TC must have been active for at least one year at the time of nomination.
 - The TC Activity Report for the relevant year must have been submitted on time.
- **Judging Criteria:** Judging Criteria:
 - Breadth and quality of activities (workshops, tutorials, special issues, sessions).
 - Effectiveness in recruiting and retaining a membership that is active and reflects varied backgrounds, including gender, career stages, geographic regions, and institutional affiliations.
 - Outstanding Student Paper Award and other member recognition activities.
 - Contribution to the visibility of the TC's research area within and beyond CSS.
- **Presentation:** Presentation:
 - Up to one award per year, announced and presented at IEEE CCTA.
 - The award committee is chaired by the VPTA and includes two BoG members.

7. Contact and Support

TC Chairs are encouraged to reach out to the VPTA at any time for guidance on governance, financial procedures, or strategic planning. The VPTA holds regular calls with TC Chairs and welcomes bilateral discussions on TC-specific challenges.

For questions regarding:

- TC governance, elections, membership, CSS Day: contact the VP for Technical Activities.
- Financial reimbursements and expense reports: contact the VP for Financial Activities and copy the VPTA.
- Conference sessions, co-sponsorship of TC events by CSS: contact the VP for Conference Activities.
- Awards and Fellow nominations: contact the VP for Member Activities.

IEEE Society Administrator (administrative and operational queries):

Jessica Fromm, Society Administrator, IEEE TA Operations & Volunteer Services

Work: (732) 562-3911 · Cell: (732) 491-5344 · 445 Hoes Lane, Piscataway, NJ 08854

fromm.j@ieee.org