

Preparing the Proposal

The Region 1 Student Activities Committee (SAC) regularly sends out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for venues for the annual Region 1 Student Activities Conference (R1 StuCon). Any Region 1 Student Branch together with their Branch Counselor, local section SAC and leadership may prepare a proposal to host the StuCon either at their school or in a nearby hotel.

The annual Region 1 Student Activities Conference (R1 StuCon) is a very big event that gathers students, young professionals, academia, and industry for a day and a half (typically starting Friday afternoon/evening and ending after an Awards Banquet Saturday evening). The registration fees from attendees are typically used to cover the competition prizes. The Region supports the housing and most of the R1SAC program with a budget of about \$25,000. Any S-PAx (Student-Professional Awareness Conference), Hackathon, or other IEEE conference experience that the Student Branch and/or local IEEE section has is very important. A successful R1 StuCon requires the hosting Branch and Section to have an understanding of conference organization as well as experience in dealing with donors and obtaining guest speakers.

The R1 StuCon proposal must be presented as a two-three page 8 ½" X 11" document and/or Power Point presentation with general information on the applicant school, a description of the possible conference location(s), indication of your local section support, a list of possible hotels for housing attendees, possible Awards Banquet locations and any special ideas your group may have for the conference program. Last year we introduced a Drones Workshop and a Hackathon both of which are likely to be repeated this year.

StuCon Dates

The acceptable window for the R1 StuCon is typically mid-March to mid-April. Selecting the exact dates for the event is one of the most important steps in the preparation of your proposal. Public and religious holidays and semester breaks or other special days must also be taken into account in terms of traveling, availability of donors and speakers, or local sport competitions and so on. As many of the Region's volunteer leadership are part of the judging teams or have other R1 StuCon committee functions, when venues are decided well enough in advance, the R1 Director may schedule a Region 1 Executive Committee Meeting to coincide with the R1 StuCon.

Venues

There will be several different competitions and events during StuCon. Some may require different locations, but mainly the locations needed for the MicroMouse, paper and oral competitions and lectures, the daily meals, the gala dinner and local housing must be considered early in the process. These places should be consulted in terms of availability and average price, since these are the major expenses in the R1 StuCon budget.

Usually, the venue for the competitions, technical activities, and daily meals is the university or campus where the Student Branch is located. It is important that the branch works through their Branch Counselor to request complimentary space and AV through the Department Chair and/or Dean's Office, as well as possible financial support.

The Campus Facilities Office typically has to be contacted regarding availability of sufficient different spaces such as AV equipped classrooms and auditoriums, air conditioning or heaters when needed, technical equipment, etc. NORMALLY, as the Department is co-sponsoring and hosting the event, there are no charges for any audio-visual or facilities usage.

Special events, such as the Friday evening Welcome Reception, possible Saturday afternoon technical visits, etc., have to be considered and taken into account in the budget if they are not sponsored by donors.

In addition, the Campus Police may need to make arrangements for parking and other permits.

Housing

Finding lodging for a large group is not easy. We typically require about 30-40 double/double rooms (student rooms are four students per room) as well as 20 king rooms for judges, etc., for Friday and Saturday nights.

Since meals and housing usually make up the bulk of the R1 StuCon budget, please obtain a rough quotation of hotel room rates for use in calculating the proposed budget.

PLEASE NOTE:

1. Only the Region Student Activities Chair (R1SAC) or his/her designee may sign any housing contracts.

NOTE on Contracts: You *CAN NOT* sign ANY contracts on behalf of IEEE Region 1. (*Note occasionally, the Student Branch Counselor or Chair or Dean, working with the R1SAC, can be authorized to sign on behalf of the Department when the facilities costs are waived or reduced or when tax exemption is through the college when arranged through the Department rather than directly through IEEE.*) Please note that IEEE is tax exempt in many states, but **not** in all.

Any contracts worth over \$25,000 must be reviewed, approved, and signed by IEEE Staff.

2. Make sure that the hotel knows that this hotel reservation is for an IEEE conference as IEEE has corporate contracts with the major hotel chains. Although several Region 1 sections have tax exemptions, hotel taxes and fees are normally not exempt. IEEE Region 1 will normally be paying for the rooms on a Master Bill. However, in some cases the college can get better rates than the IEEE (in which case we would reimburse the college), but the 'Note on Contracts,' above, applies for all contracts.

3. Housing needs to be close to the main venues so there will be little or no need for transportation to and from the hotel and venue.

In past R1 StuCons, although busses were rented for transportation to and from the venue and hotel, most attendees traveled to the conference in private vehicles and used their own vehicles where there was parking space at the venue and the hotel. Searching for hotels connected by public transport or a walking distance from local places of interest is advised, since attendees may have some free time before and after the conference.

Occasionally, but rarely, the school may have student housing available on campus. In that case housing options must be provided for judges, VIPs or other participants who might be staying in and possibly paying for their rooms at a nearby hotel.

Catering

Preparing meals for a group of 175-250 (*or more*) is usually a difficult task. Most often, the college has an internal catering company that **must** be used for on campus meals. They should be contacted regarding availability of locations, and the catering menu. Remember that if IEEE is tax exempt in your State the State and City Sales taxes should not be charged the conference. *Even if IEEE is NOT tax exempt in your State, having the meals (etc.) paid for by the department or college and then having IEEE reimbursing them may be acceptable. With taxes on the order of 5-9% (or more) this cost savings could be a substantial amount.*

We estimate the cost for food (Friday night Ice Cream Break, AM & PM breaks, lunch and dinner on Saturday, and possibly, an AM break on Sunday) to be about \$60 per person and that is the basis for the student registration charge.

It should also be noted that to accommodate all possible food requirements, arrangements may need to be made for Halal, Kosher, vegetarian, etc., meal options as well as chicken and beef.

As with housing, contracts **MUST** be signed by the R1SAC or his/her designee who will work on the final food and beverage contract with the Student Branch Counselor or College Staff member and caterer. Breakfast (*some hotels offer breakfast at no cost*) and lunch should be offered near the technical activity's venues.

There is also the need for an Awards Banquet - a gala dinner, barbeque, etc. - whose location and cost as well as transportation, if necessary, has to be considered.

Conference Location and Transportation Costs

An important point to consider when choosing a location for a Conference is the location itself. IEEE Region 1 is vast. It comprises 22 sections within the eight northeastern states of the United States (Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Vermont) so travel times can be long. It has been determined that the geo-center of Region 1 is Albany, but we have had R1 StuCons in the extreme locations of the region - Buffalo, Vermont and Southern New Jersey (please see Appendix A – R1 StuCon history).

Any transportation between the hotel and StuCon venue must be included in the StuCon budget.

All student and other R1 StuCon participants are responsible for their own local transportation costs. It is not unusual for their college and/or local section to fund the travel of some members from the student branches in that section to attend the StuCon, which sadly means that the more expensive the travel is, the fewer students that may be funded. For this reason, locations easily connected by several transportation means are preferable.

Judges, speakers and VIPs will normally be reimbursed by the Region for their travel expenses. Air travel is allowed for judges, speakers and VIPs **only** with the pre-approval of the R1SAC Chair or R1 Director. Only the Director can approve use of rental vehicles.

Organizing Team and Student Branch Conference experience

Although the R1 StuCon Organizing Committee is based, in part, on Regional leadership and volunteers, the committee normally includes at least the following officers: a Chairperson (typically the R1SAC), a co-chairperson (typically the Student Branch Counselor, other faculty leader or the local section SAC), one or more Program and Technical Activities Coordinator(s), a Competitions and Judges Coordinator, a Meals Coordinator, an Accommodations Coordinator, a Social Activities Coordinator, a Young Professionals and/or Women in Engineering Coordinator, a Patronage (fundraising) Coordinator, as well as a Treasurer (typically the Region 1 Treasurer), a Secretary (often the Regional Student Representative or RSR) and a Webmaster. Several of these organization positions may be co-chaired by Region 1 IEEE volunteers and students.

Unfortunately, organizing a conference is a very exhausting process and some of the members of the organizing committee may not be willing or able to continue their roles through the entire conference process. This is why having committee members with a known volunteering history that have been involved in the branch, section or IEEE conference activities is better than having the majority of the team as “unknown” new volunteers.

Budget

As noted above, the \$60 registration fee is intended to assure attendance and offset the cost of food and beverages. It is important to understand that the registration fee is NOT paying for accommodations or awards, etc., – these are from our not-for-profit 501(c)(3) IEEE budget. Which is typically about \$25,000.

The main items in the proposed budget will be: venue costs for technical activities (*meeting room rentals, AV, custodial and other fees – often waived by the school in exchange for several faculty/staff and student passes*), special venues, meals (breakfast, lunch and breaks), special events (dinner) and transportation. In a regular conference these costs would normally define the conference fee. Accommodations are normally NOT included in the registration for an event. For local tax purposes please be aware that the Region budget and NOT the attendee pays for conference meals and accommodation costs on a master bill, so we can take advantage of any tax exemptions available.

Patronage and Support Letters

The student branch proposal should note any conference experience and industry contacts that the local section and/or it's YP and WIE affinity groups might have, as well as any support from the University, the local section, companies, and even neighboring student branches. Letters of support, monetary or volunteer-wise, is one way to assist us in our decision as to where to hold the event. Making a list of former members of the student branch and where they are working, recent alumni, YP and WIE leadership support, as well as lists of sponsors of previous branch/section events, and collecting previous contacts is a good starting point.

Support letters from official entities are also very useful in showing the relevance of the event.

Required Information in the Proposal

1. Student Branch hosting the event
2. Contact information for the Branch Counselor and Section SAC
3. Names of /proposed/ Organizing Committee members along with their proposed roles, and contact information (email and phone number)
4. All the information listed above in this RFP

Submitting the Proposal

The completed proposal must be **emailed** no later than midnight **15 May 2019** to:

c.rubenstein@ieee.org

Proposal Evaluation Process

Each proposal will be evaluated by the R1SAC, for budget and hotel options, organizing committee members and general support, the experience of the Student Branch/section and novelties in the program. Making a brand and logo from the very beginning may strengthen the proposal.

Thank you for your interest and best of luck in providing a winning proposal.

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Region 1 Student Conference (R1 StuCon) History

(Compiled by Soon Wan – please let us know if you have additional info!)

- 1997** Princeton University: Princeton NJ
- 1998** University of Massachusetts: Lowell, Lowell MA
- 1999** Merrimack College: North Andover, MA - **April 17**
- 2000** Norwich University: Northfield, VT
- 2001** Syracuse University: Syracuse, NY – **April 27-28**
- 2002** ?
- 2003** Boston University: Boston MA – **April 26**
- 2004** Stony Brook University: Long Island, NY - **April**
- 2005** State University of New York at Buffalo: Buffalo, NY
- 2006** University of Maine: Orono, ME - **April 29**
- 2007** Fairleigh Dickinson University: Teaneck, NJ - Student/GOLD Conference - **April 28**
- 2008** Fairleigh Dickinson University: Teaneck, NJ - Student/GOLD Conference - **April 26**
- 2009** The College of New Jersey: Joint with Trenton Computer Festival - **April 25**
- 2010** Temple University: Philadelphia, PA (*Joint with R2 Student Conference*)
- 2011** Boston University: Boston, MA - **March 26-27**
- 2012** Hartford, CT Joint with R1 BoG Winter Meeting - **March 10-11**
- 2013** MIT: Cambridge MA - **April 05-06**
- 2014** New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT): Newark, NJ (*Joint w/R1 ExCom*) - **March 28-29**
- 2015** University of Vermont: Burlington Vermont (*Joint w/R1 ExCom*) - **April 10-11**
- 2016** Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) - **April 16-17**
- 2017** University of Buffalo (SUNY Buffalo); Buffalo, NY - **7-9 April**
- 2018** NY Institute of Technology: Old Westbury, LI (NYIT) – Joint w/R1 ExCom - **23-24 March**
- 2019** Binghamton University (SUNY): Binghamton NY – **8-10 March**
 - 200 Registrants (*180 Students from ? R1 Schools; apx. 20 Volunteers and Speakers*)
 - HAckathone: *4 Teams from 3 colleges registered*
 - MicroMouse: *17 MicroMouse Teams from 12 colleges registered*
 - Student Paper Contest: *7 Entries from 4 schools*
 - Ethics Competition : *5 Entries from 4 schools ? – (No T-Shirt Contest this year)*