

IFAC BIOMED Technical Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 21 August 2003 at 4:00 p.m. in Hilton on the Park, Melbourne, Australia

1. Present

BIOMED TC Members:

David Dagan Feng (Hong Kong/Australia) [Chairman]
Ewart R. Carson (UK) [Vice-Chairman]
Steen Andreassen (Denmark)
Zoltan Benyo (Hungary)
Kewei Chen (USA)
Zheru Chi (Hong Kong)
Sung-Cheng Huang (USA)
Helmut Hutten (Austria)
Hidehiro Iida (Japan)
Jesse Jin (Australia)
Adriaan Lammertsma (Netherlands)
Fabian Garcia Nocetti (Mexico)
Eckhard Salzsieder (Germany)
Koon-Pong Wong (Hong Kong) [Secretary]
Janan Zaytoon (France)
Tiange Zhuang (P.R. China)

Other Members of the BIOMED Community:

Neil Evans (UK)
Martin Hexamer (Germany) [representing Juergen Werner]

All other members of the Committee had been sent invitations to participate, but were unable to attend.

2. Welcome to the TC members

The Chairman welcomed both existing and new TC members to the meeting. Members introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting.

3. Report from the Chairman

TC Website

The Chairman reported that the TC website has been developed and it is now linked to the website of the IFAC Headquarters. The website provides an overall profile of the BIOMED TC, including scope of the TC, membership, past and forthcoming activities sponsored or co-sponsored by the TC, and the minutes and reports of previous meetings. Members are invited to provide some interesting links (e.g. members' research activities and research groups, etc). Changes in any member's contact details can be directed to David Feng or Koon-Pong Wong. The website will be regularly updated.

Membership

The Chairman reported that the number of members has been increased from 55 to some 92 representing 28 countries.

David Feng and Ewart Carson clarified that IFAC is a federation of many professional societies across different countries. Individuals can become members of the BIOMED TC either as a result of nomination by their National Member Organisation (NMO), or by invitation by the Chairman. This is different from, for example, the IEEE, where an individual can become a member upon assessment of their qualifications.

It was also noted that some countries where there was significant activity in biomedical domain were not at present represented in the current membership. It was recommended by TC members that the presence of individuals from Canada, New Zealand, Slovenia, Switzerland, and Ukraine would be particularly welcomed. Ewart Carson advised that we should approach the NMOs of those countries for nomination or identify individuals by ourselves.

Updated Scope

Issues relating to identifying some important emerging areas were discussed. In particular, BIOMED TC can have impact on four emerging areas, including model-based image interpretation, intelligent drug delivery system, telecare, and bioinformatics. There was a consensus that bioinformatics is a very broad discipline, and the BIOMED TC might play a role on quantification and modelling, complementary to the role played by the TC on Biotechnology. Sung-Cheng Huang suggested that the BIOMED TC might have a role in research on sub-cellular signal process control on different molecular levels and the suggestion was noted.

5th IFAC BIOMED Symposium

David Feng reported the preparation for the BIOMED Symposium. One hundred and one papers were accepted for presentation, among which 25 papers, in most cases one paper per country/region, were selected for oral presentation. Both groups of papers possess the same high quality in spite of their difference in modes of presentation.

It was noted that the 5th IFAC BIOMED Symposium was the first IFAC event that a Proceedings volume (with an ISBN number) instead of a Preprints volume was available to delegates at the Symposium. This kind of publication arrangement was discussed during the 15th World Congress in Barcelona with Elsevier, which had indicated support for this proposal to do away with a separate Preprints volume. It was proposed that only authors who had paid the full registration fee would have their papers included in the Proceedings volume.

David Feng thanked all TC members and members of the International Programme Committee and National Organising Committee for their help and support which they had provided to assist in reviewing submissions and organising the Symposium.

Previous and Future Activities Sponsored/Co-sponsored by BIOMED TC

The present pattern of co-operation between IFAC, IEEE-EMBS, and IMEKO TC on Measurement in Medicine and Biology in terms of co-sponsoring each other's event would be continued. It was noted that there had not recently been any conference activity organised by the IMEKO TC on Measurement in Medicine and Biology, but the normal procedures for co-sponsorship would still be applied if there were any event in this field hosted by the IMEKO TC.

The main aims for co-sponsoring events are for research collaboration, publicity and promotion across the professional societies (e.g. IEE, IEEE and IFAC). An IFAC TC member, who is an organiser or is a programme committee member of a conference, is eligible to put the IFAC logo on the conference publicity materials upon receiving approval from the IFAC Headquarters, and the event is named a “co-sponsored event”.

4. Report from the CC Chairman

Ewart Carson reported that Keith Godfrey would be representing the BIOMED TC on the TB and related meetings being held next week in Rotterdam. It was believed that identifying emerging trends and the current policy on preprints/proceedings volume publication for conferences would be discussed during the TB meeting.

5. Publications – Automatica / Control Engineering Practice

Ewart Carson suggested that 12 to 14 papers be recommended for possible publication in Automatica and CEP. Those submissions would still undergo a rigorous review process. It was noted from history that realistically only 6 to 9 authors would be likely to deliver their papers by the due date.

It was accepted that a few papers be selected from each session and that the nature of the papers (theoretical or practical) should be identified so as to fit into the main scope of Automatica and CEP. David Feng requested Session Chairs to recommend up to 3 high quality papers from the Session they chaired. Decisions would be made at the meeting held right after the Symposium was closed. For those Session Chairs who needed to leave before the Symposium was closed, David Feng requested them to email him their recommendations as soon as possible.

6. Possible Working Groups and Workshops

It was noted that there had been 3 Working Groups within the BIOMED TC in the past and that workshops on functional stimulation and on decision support had been organised in 1989 with each attracting about 50 people. It was recommended that members with similar specialties should work together. TC Members were also encouraged to provide their research profiles and links to their homepages or details of their research centres, etc.

7. Possible Research Collaborations

It was noted that in the UK the IEE had moved towards a greater emphasis on web-based activity with the expectation that significantly enhanced research activities between research groups located at different place might be encouraged. There was a suggestion that research activities of TC members could be enhanced by collaborating with industry. It was recommended that our TC members could provide information about research grant applications (e.g. linkage projects with industry, and fellowships, etc) so that collaborations between members could be explored and established, although the means and the level of collaboration (national activity or regional activity) may need to be considered.

8. IFAC2006 BIOMED Symposium

The TC had accepted the preliminary thoughts of hosting the 2006 BIOMED Symposium in France, as suggested by the French NMO representative, Janan Zaytoon, during the TC meeting held in Barcelona on 24 July 2002. The French NMO representative further elaborated his proposal about the 2006 BIOMED Symposium.

The Symposium would be a 3-day venue to be held in September 2006. Reims, which is a city of champagne located at some 140 km from Paris, was selected to host the venue which would be attractive and which is very convenient for travelling from the main Paris airports by shuttle bus. The registration fee was temporarily fixed at 450 Euro (maximum of 500 Euro). Lunches and a conference dinner (with unlimited champagne) would be provided. The registration fee also included conference publications.

There was reservation on the issue regarding the Proceedings publication. In discussion, Helmut Hutten suggested that the Proceedings volume could be printed by a university and that an ISBN could be added to the Proceedings volume, and that in this way the production costs could be drastically reduced. However the contract between IFAC and the official IFAC publisher, Elsevier, would be violated by doing so. David Feng suggested that extra editing costs could be reduced if the Proceedings were edited and typeset by ourselves before sending them to Elsevier for printing. This had been adopted in producing the Proceedings volume for the 5th IFAC BIOMED Symposium.

The form of the Proceedings was also discussed, and the choices were among hardcopy of the Proceedings, CD copy of the Proceedings, and a Book of Abstracts plus a Preprints volume. Further discussions would take place over the coming months to clarify details and a formal request for approval would then be prepared. However, there was a strong impression that TC and TB Chairs would opt for a Proceedings volume or CD volume instead of a Preprints volume. This issue would likely be discussed during the TB meeting next week or on some other occasion.

The modes of presentation (3-day single sessions involving oral and poster presentations, or 3-day parallel sessions) were discussed and a final decision would take place before the final proposal be submitted to the IFAC Headquarters for approval.

Ewart Carson mentioned that the 5th BIOMED Symposium had been scheduled very close to the IFAC Symposium on Signals and Systems Identification taking place in Rotterdam which had also included a significant number of good contributions in the biomedical domain. These would have been equally appropriate for the BIOMED Symposium. Looking forward to the 2006 BIOMED Symposium, it would be helpful if this clash could be avoided. Since the BIOMED Symposium would be planned for September 2006, it would be appropriate if consideration might be given to holding the Signals and System Identification Symposium some months earlier in that year. Janan Zaytoon agreed to explore a solution for this.

9. Any Other Business

Ewart Carson noted that TC meetings were typically held during the World Congress and the BIOMED Symposium, and the forthcoming World Congress would be held in 2005. He suggested that the next TC meeting might be held during the forthcoming Annual International Conference of the IEEE EMBS taking place in San Francisco, USA, from 1-4 September 2004. The TC members agreed with this suggestion.

10. Tentative Date of Next Meeting

San Francisco, Annual International Conference of the IEEE EMBS, 1-4 September 2004.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6 p.m.

Chairman
David Dagan Feng

Vice-Chairman
Ewart R. Carson

Executive Secretary
Koon-Pong Wong

5 September 2003