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EURON

European Robotics Research Network

Network of Excellence

Information Society Technologies Priority

DR 23.3

Final concrete proposal

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Dissemination level: PU

Call for Proposals for new EURON Board and Program.

The EU funding of the current EURON network ends at the end of April 2008. With this Call, the EURON Board is soliciting proposals from the EURON community to define the goals, organisation and activities of a new, unfunded, community-driven EURON network (called "new EURON" below, where distinction from the current EURON is necessary). This message also explains the procedure and timing with which the new EURON will be created.

This initiative of the current Board is meant to make the transition from the current funded EURON towards an unfunded independent EURON as smooth as possible. Since the new EURON will be independent, none of what is suggested below is legally binding on the current EURON members.

A. PROPOSALS

Proposals should reach the EURON Coordinator (by email to Jeanna Ayoubi <jeanna @ nada.kth.se> with a copy to <Herman.Bruyninckx @ mech.kuleuven.be>) by FEBRUARY 15th 2008, noon. There are two types of Proposals, PB and PS:

PB. Proposal for a "Candidate Board".

This type of Proposal is submitted by a team of three to five persons from the current EURON members, who want to form a "Candidate Board" for the new EURON. These persons belong to current EURON member institutes from different countries. One of them must be identified as the "Coordinator" of the new EURON.

Each "Candidate Board" prepares a detailed and concrete "Program" with its vision about the goals, organisation and activities of the New Euron.

PS. Proposal for a "Supplementary Board Candidate".

These are proposals from individuals, belonging to current EURON member institutes, who indicate their candidacy to become a member of the new EURON Board together with the members of the to-be-elected "Candidate Board". These individuals do not have to present a program; they can, however, if they so desire. "Supplementary Board Candidates" can be part of a "Candidate Board".

The new EURON Board will consist of eleven (11) people: the three to five "Candidate Board" members plus six to eight "Supplementary Board Candidates".

In order to guarantee continuity between the current and the new EURON, the new Board should at least contain three of the current Board members who have carried Work Package experience. And in order to guarantee enough opportunities to the community to have new people in the Board, the new Board can only have a maximum of five current Board members (with or without Work Package experience). These constraints are void if the total number of candidates in PS is lower than required to form a Board with 11 members, or there are fewer candidates than the minimum specified number of current Board members.

This new Board of 11 people is expected to serve for two years. The "Candidate Board" "Programs" should explain how the Board will be composed and (s)elected after these two years (or earlier, in case the new Board finds a majority to do so), and what the legal status of the new EURON will be.

No constraints whatsoever will be imposed by the current EURON after the new EURON Board is set up. This would be impossible in any case, since the new EURON will legally be an independent entity. However, from its experiences with the EURON I and EURON II networks, the current Board strongly advises "Programs" to address the following list of topics, since it deems them essential for the success of the network:

- Summer and Winter Schools: how to organise, fund and continue the EURON quality label.
- Web presence: what electronic services and repositories to offer to members and non-members, etc.
- Annual Meeting: definition of its goals and management of its organisation.
- PhD student activities: Georges Giralt PhD Award, specific targeted activities, educational information and content dissemination, etc.
- Research support: how to represent the robotics community in European research programs, how to keep the robotics research roadmap updated and synchronized with Framework Programs and Calls for Proposals, how to foster academic-industry research cooperation, decision about EURON-supported conference(s), etc.
- Industry cooperation: how to find synergies with the robot manufacturers and system integrators organisation EU-nited (www.eu-nited-robotics.net), continuation of the Technology Transfer Awards, etc.
- Composition of the Board, and its decision-making procedures.
- Definition of the requirements to be a EURON member, and the procedure to decide about admission and dismissal of members.
- Legal and financial management of the EURON network: what type of legal organisational structure to select, decision about membership fees, ownership of EURON intellectual property, etc.

B. PROCEDURE

1. Each "Candidate Board" has a webpage online (by the time of the above-mentioned deadline) to present its "Program". The EURON website will have a page with links to these webpages.

2. The current EURON opens a mailinglist (by the time of the mentioned deadline) to allow members to ask questions and to make suggestions about the "Programs" that have been submitted.

In order to take this community feedback into account, "Candidate Boards" are allowed to adapt their programs and/or to fuse with other "Candidate Boards".

In case of a fusion, there can still only be three to five members in the "Candidate Board" of the fused proposal.

3. The current EURON Board will publicly give feedback about how well in its opinion each presented "Program" addresses the above-mentioned list of topics. This feedback cannot be legally binding, since the new EURON will be independent of the current EURON.

4. The current EURON organises an election around March 15th, in which each EURON member has the right to cast the following votes:

4.1 a maximum of two votes for a "Candidate Board"

4.2 a maximum of three votes for "Supplementary Board Candidates" from the current Board

4.3 a maximum of five votes for "Supplementary Board Candidates" not from the current Board.

The number of votes in 4.2 and 4.3 is adapted proportionally if there are fewer than three candidates in 4.2

The exact voting deadline and procedure will be announced at least one week in advance, via the EURON webpage and mailinglist. The vote must be cast electronically by the contact person indicated in the EURON membership form with which the institute is accepted as a EURON member. The voting is completely transparent (i.e., not anonymous, and all votes are published on the EURON web page), in order to avoid any discussion about the result.

The Candidate Board with the most votes wins. The "Supplementary Board Candidates" with the most votes win, but the "Supplementary Board Candidates" that belong to the winning "Candidate Board" are removed from the list of "Supplementary Board Candidates". In case of a tie, the current Board votes within three working days after the general election to elect the winners among the candidates with the most votes; in case the current Board vote also results in a tie, the current Coordinator's vote decides.

It is possible that the winning Candidate Board has three or more current Board Members with Work Package experience. In that case, only two or fewer current Board member candidates with the most votes in 4.2 can enter the new Board, such that in total no more than five current Board Members will be in the new Board.

5. The newly elected Board can start its activities right after the election of the supplementary Board members, in order not to lose the momentum of the current EURON. To help the new EURON to make a good start, the new Board is offered the opportunity to organise a session at the last EURON Annual Meeting in Prague (March 28th 2008).

Sincerely,

Herman Bruyninckx
EURON Coordinator