

- 1) Technology no longer stands on its own - it's intimately tied with policy issues around the world. As president, what will you do to increase ACM's involvement in policy topics? Would you consider raising the profile of the Technology Policy Council (e.g., by including policy as a focus area for the ACM 75th anniversary celebration)?**

Technology never stood on its own (consider Kranzberg's first law: "Technology is neither good nor bad; nor is it neutral"), but I agree with you that it has taken time for many of us in the technology field to recognize the importance of being involved in policy. As a leading professional society in computing, we have a responsibility to educate both policymakers worldwide and the public about technology and its implications, and to participate in the policymaking process as a trusted source of credible information.

ACM's Technology Policy Council does good work, as do the US and Europe Technology Policy Committees. First and foremost, I would work with its leadership to understand what they need (not everything is improved by having an increased profile), and would support them with the publicity, outreach, and resources needed to achieve their priorities. I also would ask them to explore where it is feasible to extend our technology policy work to other countries and regions (including where doing so might be counterproductive and where doing so should be in partnership with or in support of local societies with greater on-the-ground expertise).

As to the 75th anniversary celebration – that program is already set and will happen before I would take office, but I'd be supportive of including policy activities in future events if that is consistent with the goals of the Council.

- 2) What ideas do you have concerning collaborations with other organizations, such as IEEE and CRA, for the purpose of advancing computer science agendas in government and society?**

I think we should be open to such collaborations – not only in the US, but around the world. And in recent years we've had more such collaborations in publications specifically, as collaborations have helped us build interdisciplinary bridges. Any such collaborations need to be examined to make sure that they actually advance the goals we're trying to pursue. ACM already does at times collaborate with other professional societies in supporting STEM education and research. And I look forward to meeting with counterparts in other organizations to understand where we can be more effective together and where we can be more effective by exercising our voices independently.

- 3) ACM Bylaws state: "The Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer shall have charge of the principal office of the Association, and shall be responsible for the general administration of the affairs of the Association". This does not seem to cohere with current practice. How do you plan to address this discrepancy?**

You are correct that this is not the current practice, and my understanding is that it has not been the practice for a long time. I think our staffing structure for supporting the organization's mission is due for a serious look – probably with assistance from outside experts – to assess its strengths, its weaknesses, and to make recommendations going forward. The goal here is not simply to “comply with bylaws” but to ensure that the structure is effective and efficient. Based on that review, I would bring a proposal for any needed restructuring (or for bylaws changes) to ACM's Council because I do believe it is important to regularly ensure that bylaws and practice are consistent.

- 4) Although ACM conferences demand that more and more PC members recuse themselves for increasingly tenuous reasons (e.g. "the paper was written at an institution where I was a postdoc for one year in 1997"), we do not actually ask PC members to recuse for explicit bias (e.g. "so-and-so was my partner, but we divorced last year.", which, by the way, is not a recusal reason right now). Would you support a rethinking of our recusal policies for conferences and journals -- and for other professional roles -- centered on the principle of fair, unbiased professionalism, in which we would express the principle, and then illustrate it with examples that are genuine issues for concern?**

I have not found that these “increasingly tenuous reasons” are common, though I don't doubt that some individual program chairs may have taken good intentions too far. ACM's Publications Board sets minimum policies for conflict of interest, and they do cover the cases you present well (see <https://www.acm.org/publications/policies/conflict-of-interest>).

Your question, however, raises two issues we do need to address. First, the fact that ACM's conference tend to inherit practices from prior years without updating them to reflect new policies and best practices (even though many of these policies and practices come from conference and program chairs themselves!). We need to improve orientation of and communication with conference leaders. Second, like our peers we have seen examples of unethical behavior in reviewing – we are actively working on a combination of technical tools and policies to address such cases (and have already had some notable cases where involved individuals had serious penalties imposed).

- 5) Many academic disciplines rely more on journal publications than conference publications, yet much of computer science still mainly uses conferences for publications. What do you see as the pros and cons?**

The relative benefits of conference proceedings and journals have changed over the years. I remember when some of the top ACM journals could take 2-3 years to publish a paper; in that era, it was clear that conference publication, with a fixed timeline, would be more effective at getting work out to the field (the same demands are met in other fields

through preprints and working papers). Today conferences and journals have similar average times-to-publication, but each still has relative advantages.

Conferences bring people together and come with presentations, interactive Q&A, and focused attention from peers. Conferences also are more effective at recruiting a large cadre of volunteers (a program committee and/or reviewer committee). In turn, they may impose significant limits on paper length and timeline. Journals provide a more flexible and developmental review process – authors can iterate with reviewers and editors to shape their work into a quality paper.

But today, we're finding the ability to merge these different approaches. Journals often have connections to conferences where authors can present, interact, and get visibility. Conferences are moving towards revision-based review processes. Journal special issues provide greater focus and tighter timelines, and journals are moving to standing distinguished reviewer committees. Conferences are experimenting with year-round review and flexible timelines. And ACM's *Proceedings of the ACM* series is providing a journal home for conferences that are willing to move to revision-based processes that adhere to all journal guidelines.

6) What will you do, specifically and personally, to increase the number of people of color and women in ACM-centered disciplines? Please address the pipeline from middle-school to high-school to college.

I will work hard to provide visibility to ACM's members who are people of color and women (and from other groups that are underrepresented) both through the individuals ACM highlights in its public relations and activities and through invitations to high-visibility volunteer positions. I will also continue ACM's collaboration with organizations working to broaden participation in computing worldwide. Personally, I will continue to perform outreach, including events at middle and high schools. But as only one person I recognize that this impact will be greatest if it can inspire such outreach by others.

As we move beyond personally to organizationally, it is critical that ACM continue partnering with organizations that help bring high-quality exposure to computing and related content to school children. ACM already does work with such organizations, but we need to continually monitor the success of these partnerships and evaluate opportunities for new partnerships that we feel can be effective, mindful of the goal of increasing diversity in computing worldwide.

7) Diversity policies are adopted by several ACM venues. How will ACM quantify, track and evaluate their effects, particularly in conjunction with potentially conflicting goals, such as scientific excellence? Will ACM reject excellent scientific articles, if the articles do not conform to diversity policies (e.g., like the ones explicitly stated in ACM SIGMOD's 'inclusion and diversity' policy)?

I don't believe diversity goals conflict with the pursuit of scientific excellence. To the contrary, we advance the science and practice of computing most effectively when we welcome and engage broad participation and draw the best work from whatever source. I am not aware of any SIGMOD policy that would reject articles based on "conforming to diversity policies" and would want to hear specifically about such policies to ground any response in the actual details of the policy and example.

More generally, quantifying, tracking, and evaluating is indeed important – goals that aren't tracked usually also aren't achieved. Each goal and situation requires crafting the right mechanism, but here are some examples: (a) for a goal of ensuring that we're recognizing the contributions made by the full range of individuals in our field, I would support tracking the demographics not only of awardees, but also of nominations; if the nominations are not broad, we won't have the candidates to evaluate for awards; (b) for a goal of ensuring that ACM's own committees and boards are diverse, I would track the demographics of both members and those invited to membership; chairs who have significant underrepresentation can then be offered help in identifying qualified individuals who can be evaluated for invitation.

8) Many members have the feeling that the ACM does not adequately and equally represent the interest of all its members but positions itself rather as a US association with clear focus on US policies. How much of that do you think is perception and how much reality? What do you plan to do to change both the perception and the reality?

ACM's reputation as a US organization is a mix of reality and perception. ACM has made huge strides in the past 15-20 years in the geographic distribution of its conferences, in the geographic distribution of its volunteers (including editorial boards, program committees, and central leadership activities), and in its engagement with issues in Europe and Asia. At the same time, ACM is very much US-based and American in culture, both in its staffing and in its activities, and it is an English language society (even though we can publish non-English content in our digital library).

It is also the case that ACM serves de facto as one of the leading US computing societies (together with the IEEE Computer Society), while ACM's role in other countries is often viewed as being in competition with local computing societies.

I think it is important to address both the perception and the reality. If the perception does not change, we will not be able to attract the involvement needed to change the reality. Part of this is consistent communications and marketing. We need to regularly promote the diversity of our leadership and events, and we need to stop promoting as "member benefits" those benefits only available to US member (even if we choose to have a set of "location-specific benefits"). But part is about changing the reality. I plan to convene a task force on global engagement to explore just what ACM's role should be and how it relates to national and regional computing societies. Then we need to take

clear action to provide (either ourselves or through partnerships) the level of engagement and service that members worldwide deserve.

- 9) Candidates for this kind of position in ACM as well as other organizations, promote diversity and inclusion, but their communications are in English language. I am aware that it is a common language among scientists and technicians. Nevertheless that practice is against diversity and inclusion: it promotes leaving behind other languages (against diversity), and it discriminates against non-English speakers (against inclusion). So, what are your thoughts about that topic? [I'm a non-native English speaker, so I might have written this poorly, but that is part of the problem I'm trying to raise awareness of.]**

Your question is clear; the answer to it is less so. It is not feasible today for ACM to conduct business and communications in all the world's languages, or even in the 23 or so that would represent first languages for half of the world's population. While one might wish that English proficiency would be optional in the field, and for practitioners there are still many languages in which excellent texts are written or into which they are translated, the research literature is still heavily English dominated with a few other languages having a significant number of articles (and with a few notable exceptions, these languages are not among the most-spoken ones generally).

While I'd like to believe that advances in machine translation will help address this problem, I have little confidence that will happen in the near term. Cooperative agreements with national and regional societies and organizations to support translations can be effective (we've done some of this with China). But I think this is an area where I need to learn more and hear more from experts and from those with first-hand experience.

- 10) What will you do to open access to ACM's publications / the Digital Library to researchers, teachers, and practitioners in the global south (the majority world)?**

We're already doing a great deal to open the ACM Digital Library to low-income countries, including a recent agreement with EIFL, which provides no cost unlimited DL Access and OA publication rights for Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Congo, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lesotho, Malawi, Moldova, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

More generally, ACM is on a path towards institutional subscription-based open access that will provide open access everywhere.

- 11) When will the ACM Digital Library be open to all, no ACM membership required, no copyright or other encumbrances? Will the ACM Digital Library eventually be available without fee or login to the general public, and if so, on what timeframe?**

The ACM Council (ACM's Elected Board of Directors) set a goal of transitioning in a sustainable way within five years. Right now we're still on track to achieve that goal. The plan, known as ACM Open, depends on institutions subscribing as authors (rather than as readers) so that subscription fees are based on the number of articles published. Authors from non-subscribing institutions will eventually have to pay to publish (though we continue to provide waivers for those unable to afford such fees).

At this point, 200 institutions have subscribed to ACM Open and about 20% of articles are being published open access. We are pleased with the rate at which national governments and university consortia are signing up. As things are going right now, we would hope to convert to a fully OA ACM Digital Library around the end of 2025.

12) ACM charges the same APC (for publishing in journals and conferences) from researchers in wealthy countries (like Switzerland, USA, and Luxembourg) and developing countries (like Botswana, Argentina, Brazil, and Ecuador); note that the GDP/capita in these countries is in different orders of magnitude. (There is a policy of not charging researchers in some very poor countries.) Would you consider doing more to reduce APC charges in developing countries? If so, how? If not, why not?

As you note, we already do provide free OA publishing in some very poor countries. That said, the current APC model is based primarily on APCs being options for most publications (except for a few Gold OA venues which have processes for fee reductions or waivers). As we move to the ACM Open model, we are looking at how to provide reasonable cost institutional subscriptions to institutions in developing countries at rates that are affordable. As I note above, some of those are at no charge, but some of those will need to be at discounted rates. The short answer is yes, I would consider doing more within the context of transitioning ACM to open access. First and foremost we have, and need to maintain, the commitment to never exclude peer-reviewed publications based on ability to pay. And second, we need to make sure we're communicating that message effectively through our editors, program chairs, and materials.

13) Should ACM expect all conference publications to include the specific discussion of potential ethical/societal impacts of the research methodology and/or proposed research artifact or application and use that as part of the review criteria? Why or why not?

I think discussing ethical and societal impacts is a good thing to do, and I support conferences that have made that a part of the review criteria. At the same time, I believe it is important to respect the diversity of topics and venues within ACM and it is generally unwise for ACM to impose expectations rather than instead highlighting the benefits of best practices and allowing our SIGs and conference organizers (and journal editors) to

make their own decisions informed by and responsive to the needs of their community.

I also recognize that in some areas of computing it may be very difficult for authors of work to carry out a meaningful assessment of the ethical and societal impacts of their work. Doing so may be more appropriately a function carried out by others with greater expertise on the implications and/or the impacted community. This is another reason to encourage discussion of how to be responsible without directing a specific solution.

14) Related to Question 20 of the first question round, do you have thoughts on changing ACM membership levels and the way members are honored? While many peers rightfully are named Fellow or Distinguished Member, other applications for individuals for these levels fail in a non-transparent way. No feedback is given to those nominated but not selected, questioning whether their work is appreciated by the community and whether ACM is the right community for them. Do you see any evidence of selection bias in these committees?

I don't have thoughts on changing ACM's membership levels, but would be happy to hear suggestions as to how the current tiers (student member, professional member, senior member, distinguished member, and fellow) may not meet the needs of segments of our membership. While I have not been part of the Distinguished Member process, I have served on and chaired the ACM Fellow selection committee. There are three reasons for which the majority of otherwise-qualified people do not get selected as fellows. First, many of them simply are not nominated. Certain universities and companies, particularly in the US, Europe, and Asia, are very good at getting their members nominated. But large numbers of good people work at institutions that are less successful and in many cases are not nominated. (I would note that many also are ineligible because they are not members.) Second, many nominations fail to see out clearly how an individual's work has made a significant impact on the field. Simply enumerating papers published or systems on which a person worked is not enough to document how this person's work made a big difference. Third, too many nominations come with poor letters of endorsement.

While the process is not as transparent as many would like, it also protects the confidential endorsements provided. I would need to understand how meaningful feedback could be provided to nominators that (a) didn't out the less-than-enthusiastic endorsers, and (b) didn't overwhelm the committee with extra work. If that could be achieved, I would support it.

15) The selection of the 2020 Turing award winner was controversial, adding salt to the injuries of those community members who were hurt. What did ACM learn from this and how do you plan to put any lessons learned into actions?

I think ACM learned the lesson that we, as a society, are judged by the people we choose to elevate with awards—and that we're judged by the much broader

characteristics than the technical contributions we seek to honor. The responsibility is broader than simply the question of whether an awardee has made discriminatory comments (or taken discriminatory actions) – but it certainly includes looking at the individual's conduct and reputation as a whole.

The lesson is broader too. It also reflects the importance of ensuring that the diversity of contributions and contributors (across all dimensions – sub-discipline, geography, demographics, and more) reflects that diversity of those who have made the highest level of contributions to our field.

I think the lessons are already being institutionalized. Nominators, endorsers, and award committees are now on notice about the importance of evaluating whether those being considered for awards have lived up to our own code of conduct. The challenge is to make sure that this lesson doesn't fade into being thought of as "another checkbox" by keeping the message fresh and in focus.

16) Does the ACM have a right to discriminate against award nominees that express an opinion on their own personal social media accounts, private emails, or even in published articles?

In some ways, yes. Free speech is not freedom from responsibility or consequences. Nobody has a right to an ACM award or recognition. If a nominee chooses to make statements that conflict with ACM's values as expressed in ACM's Code of Conduct, against ACM's rules, or against other laws or norms of society, then ACM absolutely has the right to choose not to recognize that individual or even to rescind past recognition. Similarly, ACM has the right to ban someone from an ACM conference for statements that convey threats to those who might attend. ACM has the right to ban someone from participating in the publications process (as an author or reviewer) for statements that convey an intent to violate ACM's rules. That isn't discrimination – that's upholding the standards of the society.

17) Do you have any plans to stimulate younger children (ie, age 5-12) in our field as a long term strategy for bringing in more people into our field? For example by sponsoring Bebras Challenge or other similar endeavors?

I don't have specific plans in this area, but I think it is important for us to invest in exposing children to computing, not just to bring more people (and more people from backgrounds now underrepresented in the field) into the field, but also because we all benefit when those who go into other fields have some basic understanding of computing.

In general, I think we do best in these endeavors when we support partners who have expertise in the space (like our partnership with Code.org), and when we don't simply sponsor activities but also educate our membership about opportunities to become

engaged in those activities.

I would encourage anyone interested in proposing such partnerships to bring them forward to ACM's leadership (whether me or Yannis after the election), keeping in mind that we should strive to collectively support programs that have a broad, global reach.

18) Do you think ACM should actively reach out to members that volunteer for events such as the ICPC or the International Olympiad in Informatics, and ask them to become distinguished members and fellows based on their outreach work?

There are really two different questions here. The first is whether service activities should be sufficient basis for becoming a distinguished member or fellow, and the second is whether we should more pro-actively reach out to encourage people to apply.

The first is an emphatic yes, but with the note that it is only very high levels of service that receive such recognition (just as it is only very high levels of professional achievement in research, practice, or teaching that do so). Pretty much every year there is someone recognized for Fellow based largely on service to the field; many such people started with volunteering for events and then took on progressively greater responsibilities.

The second question is different. We do not ask people to become distinguished members and fellows – we solicit nominations. I think we should be clear that we invite those who know of individuals with long and distinguished records of service to nominate those people.

19) ACM members will not have access to O'Reilly's learning platform anymore from July 1st. I believe this is a huge benefit of being an ACM member and losing it would be catastrophic. Is there anything you could do to change this? If not, do you have a plan for compensating for the loss of O'Reilly library by partnering with platforms like Udemy, A Cloud Guru, MasterClass, Pluralsight or others?

I'm both glad that you felt access to the O'Reilly platform was valuable and sorry that we were not able to retain that benefit (I don't know the details of the negotiations, but I do know that we tried hard to find a way to retain the access but O'Reilly wasn't willing to – probably a sign that they also felt it was a huge benefit). We continue to look for other professional development resources (you probably know we have a large number of courses and ebooks through SkillSoft, but we continue to have discussions with other providers as well).

20) ACM is the leading society for computing professionals world-wide, yet its membership system fails to properly accommodate the many people with one-word names, forcing them to use false names to join. Were you aware this is a problem? Would you be willing to address this?

I was not aware that ACM did not support one-word names for membership (I do know that we have individuals with one-word names represented and displaying correctly in the ACM digital library, including at least one ACM Fellow). Yes, I would be willing to address this issue.

21) Yannis Ioannidis mentioned regional offices. For Yannis, could you elaborate a bit on this? How many staff people would you propose for each office and what job descriptions/skills would you especially target? Do you have a proposal for specific countries/cities for these offices. For Joe, what do you think of the proposal of regional offices? Is this something you would support as well? If so, could you see it working and if not, why not?

I agree that ACM is not structured to provide the same level of service to members, volunteers, and activities outside the US as it provides within the US. Regional offices could be part of that solution, but I don't think they're the entire solution. Given that ACM is (and appropriately should be) a very lean organization, we would need to make sure that regional offices were not simply "front doors" to the organization but that they had staff that were integrated into the functions of the organization as a whole (e.g., the SIG Services team that supports SIGs and conferences might be well-served by having staff in offices in Europe, East Asia, South Asia, etc., but only if those staff were part of the entire process of supporting all SIGs and conferences. In such a structure, I could imagine that several regional offices might well have a group of 2-5 staff collectively engaged in publications, conferences, membership, communications and marketing, IT, etc. This is not an easy transformation; there are many benefits to the close-working team environment at ACM HQ. But I think it is one worth exploring.

22) When discussing the ACM DL, Joe Konstan said "I feel the problem is the lack of solid investment in and prioritization of the user experience." A report by an ACM Task Force that was publicized in early 2021 also questioned the skill set in ACM Headquarters and the lack of clear strategic vision for the DL project. Do you agree with the conclusions of the Task Force? If so, what would you do as ACM President to address these issues? If not, why not?

It would not be appropriate for me to comment on the skill sets of specific individuals, but I agree with the Task Force report that the DL project was understaffed and seemed to be more focused on new features than on providing a robust, usable system. The first steps towards addressing that were splitting off a separate DL Board to provide member oversight and the creation of a separate ACM DL department to focus on DL development. The DL Board is off to a good start with close, focused oversight of DL priorities.

The next steps need to include both a strategic plan (what are the key priorities for the

DL) and a set of metrics that can be used to assess progress towards those priorities. That's what I'd expect from the DL Board, and that'd what I'd use as President to ensure that we are not only appropriately staffing the project, but also focusing on the top priorities.

Closing comment – thank you to all of you who submitted questions, and to our hosts for organizing this effort!