

Funding Policy for Students and Young Professionals to attend R8 SYP Congresses

Document drafted by R8 SAC and YP teams on April 2018.

To prevent last minute cancellations or no-shows - unfortunate situations that happened in previous editions and led to an expense of extra resources not needed otherwise –, as well as to guarantee congress attendance at all sessions, a new funding policy has been implemented.

R8 Student Activities Committee and Young Professionals Subcommittee will evaluate which applicants are eligible for funding and create a list to be delivered to R8 OpCom. Based on the available budget for that year, R8 OpCom will decide to how many of those selected the funding will be granted.

After funding is approved, the participants will need to pay the full fee upfront to complete their registration. If the participant complies with the funding agreement (included in this document), the fee will be reimbursed by the Region 8 Treasurer after the congress takes place to the account number provided by the applicant.

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1. Objectives of a Student and Young Professional Congress

Region 8 Student and Young Professional Congresses and a Cross-Sectional Student and Young Professional Congresses have different goals and should thus aim at a different audience. This document will focus on Region 8 SYP Congresses.

The objectives of holding a flagship as the R8 SYP Congress every 2 years include (but are not limited to):

- Ensure continuity of the good work of established Student Branches and Young Professionals Affinity Groups;
- Encourage international collaboration with other Student Branches and Young Professionals Affinity Groups beyond neighbouring Sections;
- Give perspective on to where the volunteer's OU stands among the several Regional OUs;
- Provide a stronger involvement with the different leadership levels within IEEE (meet the President, meet the Regional Director and so on);
- Offer the chance of directly influence the future direction of the Regional activities.

2. Goals of R8 funding a Student and Young Professional Congress

Every even year, Region 8 allocates budget to fund a limited number of participants to attend the Region 8 Student and Young Professionals Congress. With that funding, the Region is looking to:

- Enforce a diverse audience
 - Diversity of Sections represented;
 - Diversity of representation within a Section (multiple Student Branches / Young Professionals Affinity Groups);
 - Balance of Students versus Young Professionals;
- Fund those who could not afford to attend otherwise;
- Fund those that are exemplary volunteers (as a recognition/reward of their work);
- Fund those that plan on continuing to be volunteers in the near-future, so they have the time to pass the message and train their fellow volunteers back home after attending the Congress.

3. Selection Criteria

The objectives/goals defined in Section 1. and 2. result in the criteria described below.

3.1 Regional Geographic Distribution

In order to guarantee that all Sections get a fair chance of participating in this Congress and receiving funding from Region 8, a limited amount of spots per Section was defined. The number of spots is based on the ratio of IEEE Student, Graduate Student and Young Professional members of each Section with the respective total found in Region 8.

3.2. Eligibility

There are small differences between the eligibility criteria for Students and Young Professionals which come from the administrative rules of the OUs (Student Branch or Young Professionals Affinity Group).

3.2.1. Students (may include Graduate Student Members)

In order to ensure a diverse representation of Region 8:

- Only one applicant per branch will be considered for the first selection round;
- Priority to Student Branch officers is given. If two officers of the same branch apply for funding, then the endorsement letters provided by the Student Branch Chair and the Section Chair will be used to make a final decision (see **Additional Material**). The same holds if more than one person from the same Student Branch (and not a member of the executive committee) applies for funding;
- The applicant must have not participated (funded or not) in a Student and Young Professional Congress (formerly Student Branch Congress, SBC) before.

With the goal of funding Student Branch representatives that are already acquainted with IEEE, for more than two years, and are active but need to learn the next step to bring their OU to the top:

- The Student Branch of the applicant must have submitted the last two annual reports, 2015-16 and 2016-17, by the end of February 2018 (<https://sbr.vtools.ieee.org/>);
- The respective Student Branch should have a minimum of 12 registered Student or Graduate Student members;
- The main officers (Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) of the applicant's Student Branch must have been duly reported and have a starting date not older than Jan 1st 2017 (<https://officers.vtools.ieee.org/>);
- Applicants registered to Student Branches in probation are not eligible to be funded.

3.2.2. Young Professionals (may include Graduate Student Members)

In order to ensure a diverse representation of Region 8:

→ Only one applicant per Young Professionals Affinity Group will be considered for the first round of selection.

→ Priority to Young Professionals Affinity Group ExCom officers is given. If two officers of the same Affinity Group apply for funding, then the endorsement letters provided by the Young Professionals Affinity Group Chair and the Section Chair will be used to make a final decision (see **Additional Material**). The same holds if more than one Young Professional from the same Section (and not a member of the Young Professionals Affinity Group ExCom) applies for funding.

→ The applicant must have not participated (funded or not) in a Student and Young Professional Congress (formerly Student Branch Congress, SBC) before.

With the goal of funding Young Professionals representatives that are already acquainted with IEEE, for at least two years, and are active but need to learn the next step to bring their Young Professionals Affinity Group to the top:

→ The Young Professionals Affinity Group to which the applicant belongs must have submitted the minimal 2 reports per year in the past 2 years, 2016 and 2017, by end of February 2018 (<https://meetings.vtools.ieee.org>);

→ The main officers (Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) of the applicant Young Professionals Affinity Group have been duly reported and have a starting date not earlier than Jan 1st 2016 (<https://officers.vtools.ieee.org/>);

→ The respective Young Professionals Affinity Group should have a minimum of 6 active Young Professionals;

→ Applicants associated with Young Professionals Affinity Groups flagged at risk of being dissolved are not eligible to be funded.

3.3. Additional Material

If the number of eligible candidates surpasses the number of available spots per Section, additional material will be used to prioritise the ones to receive funding. The material listed below is not mandatory, but it is strongly recommended that all applicants submit as much as possible from the following:

- Received awards since 2015 (accompanied with their corresponding certificate);
- Website or other Social media page that demonstrates the activities of the OU;
- Section Endorsement letter, provided by the Section Chair;
- If not themselves, an endorsement letter by the OU Chair.

Priority will also be given to less wealthy Student Branches in Region 8, i.e. taking into account the number of members assigned to that Student Branch, which reflects on their yearly rebate. Applicants coming from wealthy and active student branches will be given lower priority for funding.

4. Conditions for reimbursement

All participants to whom funding is approved should complete their registration and pay for their fee. The fee will then be reimbursed **after** the event takes place. In order to be entitled to the reimbursement, the applicant must participate in the entirety of the Congress programme, including but not limited to plenary sessions, key note talks and all assigned workshops.

All participants will be able to “check-in” in each session by scanning their badges. The database of attendance will be updated real-time. After the Congress finishes, the funded participants that complied with the attendance requirement will receive an email to provide the bank account details to which the reimbursement should be made.

If the applicant is not financially able to pay for the registration, he/she should send an email to r8sac@ieee.org and r8yp@ieee.org, explaining the situation with strong supporting arguments. A solution can be arranged with the Section based on a case-to-case basis.

NOTE: Funding will only cover the registration fee and nothing more! If the applicant decides to choose for the registration **without** accommodation, this additional expense will **not** be reimbursed. Travel costs to the Congress (and local venues, if not included in the registration fee) are to be covered by the applicant’s Section.

5. The funding application process

1. Read this document carefully and check that all criteria are met.
2. Apply for funding in the R8SYP website.
3. Wait for confirmation.
4. If your application was:
 - a. **Approved:** finish your registration process by paying the registration fee. Attend the R8 SYP Congress and have lots of fun! If you comply with the attendance requirement, your reimbursement will be completed right after the Congress.
 - b. **Rejected:**
 - i. But you would still like to participate: start-up a new registration and follow the steps explained on the website until you complete your payment. Attend the R8 SYP Congress and have lots of fun!
 - ii. And you are not going to join us: no further action required. We hope to see you in 2020!