

Hello Candidates,

There are a few questions that have been raised several times by various members of VACETS. They have been discussed but no conclusion has been reached. As candidates for the VACETS board, please give us your opinion, and plan for these issues:

1) Membership fee: Should we institute a membership fee for VACETS? why or why not?

Membership fee should not be a burden for members. Therefore there can be some different criteria. Members, based on honor system, can select one of the criteria below with no questions asked from VACETS administrations:

a. For those who work in a company that pays for his/her professional membership. This is one way to help VACETS. A fee ranges from \$100-\$300 is normally not a problem. How about a nominal fee of \$200/year?

b. For those whose company will not pay, \$20/year should be reasonable to help pay the logistic costs.

c. For students or one with hardship, \$5/year should be reasonable to show the support and the commitment.

2) How to encourage others to participate in VACETS activities? Most members of VACETS (may be except student members) are accomplished professional with busy work and family life's, what can VACETS do to attract and keep them involved and interested? And how do we start?

If I talk for myself why do I want to participate, I would want to make sure that:

a. Time is not waste: i.e. certain activities should be selected to respond the need of the public for which the volunteer (i.e. myself speaking out loud in this case) thinks that it's worth his/her time with VACETS, because s/he may as well donate the time to other organizations.

In addition, volunteer would not want to spend negative time to involve with other activities that in nature cost negative energy (i.e. conflict, argument, plain talk, etc.) but rather use his/her time effectively in productive tasks.

b. Good output: VTIC events are good examples of good activities. Others could be in VACETS's radar include those that other organizations cannot do so well (such as science, technology, etc.) due to their functional limitations or their nature of business (i.e. ASIA or Thuy Nga Paris are media orgs but they try to stand up to the tasks of educating the audience).

c. How to start? There is a need from the public (based on my interaction w/ the media and other VNmeses and organizations) to have successful professional people to:

i. share their success stories – many orgs will be willing to pay for the costs to host the logistics

ii. create a mentorship environment for peer professionals, parents, students, etc. to pose questions. Internet and face-to-face meetings are both encouraged. Internet for immediate/quick-turn-around responses. Face-to-face meeting via local chapter

meetings enforces the bonding also helps via referral process with friends bring friends to the VACETS meetings.

3) VACETS is mostly an Internet organization, and for that to work, we need a better presence on the Internet. In the past we have our website and the many forums (fora ?). Most of the time the website is out of date (and the look is kind of boring) because we don't have dedicate resource to maintain and support it. Most of the forums are also dormant because of lack of interest or lack of resource to keep it interesting. How would you propose we correct this?

Some effort is already on going. The web should have some basic info about VACETS but also should be relatively good resource for mentoring with full and timely responses from VACETS members. Focus on certain forums that we can deliver well in the long term. One forum to start is the mentoring. Other communications can be in form of emails (small talk, time sensitive) and periodic news letters (broadcast) or broadcasted emails.

4) No funding source: without a membership fee or any other source of funding we have been struggling to organize any activity (e.g. VTIC & Technical Journal) and have been depending on volunteers and hit/miss corporate sponsorships. What are your plan for future activities and how do we pay for them?

- a. If membership fee is chosen as an outcome from question 1, VACETS will have some basic support.
- b. If there is no membership fee, then VACETS can get sponsorships from different resources such as corporate advertisement, sponsorships, grants, etc.
- c. VTIC05 fund raising was a success with corporate sponsorship and ticket sales. The sponsorship can be extended to other non-technical firms if necessary provided the core is not compromised.

5) Marketing: Most of Vietnamese professionals do not know VACETS. We have been recruiting them mostly by words of mouth. It is a chicken and egg problem: without a good membership we will not be known but if we are not known then it's difficult to attract the membership. How do you propose we break this cycle?

I do not see why this is a problem. Personally I propose:

- a. Promote the mentorship forum that involves professionals, parents and students. This forum alone will draw enough attention provided the info are useful. Many PTA, VSA, corporate email aliases, media are willing to host VACETS talk show to promote the contents of such forum. I can help to connect to media, PTA, VSA, etc.
- b. Publications & publicity on media, newspapers, magazines, etc. : VACETS members contribute valid and useful papers on magazines such as Viet Mercury News, signing as VACETS member with VACETS website to promote VACETS. The publications can be selected from VACETS quarterly e-journal and/or VTIC conference topics. Example: anh Tanh Pham was on air on San Jose local radio

program to explain in Vietnamese his VTIC05 speech. He received many great feedback & attention from the Vietnamese audience.

Thank you for your responses.

Thank you for those great questions. I am sure when you raised those, you also have some good thought & suggestions already.

Luc Nguyen

Congratulations to all candidates and thanks for standing for election. Could you please share your thoughts on the following.

1. What do you think should be short-term (6-mo or so) objectives for Vacets? What steps should be taken for us to get there? Please be specific.

VACETS immediate goal is to build a strong core team to re-establish VACETS infrastructure and identify one or two short-term delivery/deliveries. To name some for consideration:

a. Build a strong core team:

b. Infrastructure:

- Web site is the most important. This is the face of the entire organization.
- Communication channels among core team members and general members. VTIC05 relies on its communications among team members to track and respond, also relies on email lists and media to broadcast to participants.
- A long term mailing address

c. Identify some deliveries: such as a mentorship forum, along with 1a, 1b above.

2. How would you go about recruiting new members considering Vacets' limited resource?

Some brought it up and rightfully so that we need to attract college students etc. In your view, what do we have to offer them?

a. I would refer to answers to question 5 from Dr. Luc Nguyen.

b. The value of VACETS is the vast professional and academic connection that the parents and high school students need to consult about their future colleges/universities and career advices. VACETS also can provide the current college students the on-going coaching to choose the right career even if they already selected a direction.

Example 1: Most college freshmen & sophomores are not sure of their electives even though some may have the ideas to be engineers, doctors, biologists, lawyers, etc. Professional advices can help them to narrow down to, say law degree with focus in trust & will practices, or EE with focus in networking.

Example 2: Most junior and senior needs the skills and experience to gain the competitive market value on their resumes and on the real job hunting. VACETS with working professionals will provide the pool of hiring for intern or new grads

or industrial advisories who can either serve to be senior project advisors or master project advisors. Also the working professionals can post their company job openings to the VACETS job forums.

Example 3: An extension of example 2, VACETS can host periodic seminar to train colleges or new grads or even professionals who are changing the career competitive skills and strategies to tap into the current job market. Speakers could be VACETS members or VACETS guests or affiliations. What we need: commitment from each VACETS core member to provide help in those activities.

c. VACETS needs to affiliate w/ other organizations such as Teacher Assc., Law Assc., media, etc. This means VACETS must participate other orgs' activities as well. It is vital for the participation to create the broader connection & synergy. In the short term VACETS can be self sustain, however, in the long term, it is necessary to reach out otherwise VACETS cannot scale.

3. Vacets has noble cause but good cause alone can't move an organization. We need means for participation.

Besides tech conferences, what other programs or activities on or off line do you think can attract interest of, if not galvanize, geographically diverse (and busy) members?

a. I would refer to answer 2c to question 2 above.

b. Virtual team, i.e. helping via internet forum, can help to maintain the forum from anywhere. Local chapters, depending on their capacities and demand, can host local activities. For now, Bay Area and DC areas could be the focus. Members from other locations can help by maintaining the online activities while the local chapters can spare more bandwidth for the "physical" activities. Examples of online activities: forum Q&A, online mentorship, planning, editing, preparation of events, inviting guest speakers, contacting the press, online interviews/presentations, etc.

Examples of "physical" activities: dealing with the facilities, verify the proof of 1st proceeding print from the printshop (even though the mass delivery of the proceedings can be shipped by UPS to addressees), facilitate the guest speakers arriving locally, participate other peer-organizations activities, etc.

Again thanks for your time and spirit of volunteerism.

Chanh