

# SIGAda

The ACM Special Interest Group on Ada

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Dear SIGAda Members:

We are pleased to dedicate this issue to the proceedings of the 11th International Real-Time Applications Workshop (IRTAW 11), which was held in Quebec, Canada from 9-12 April 2002. This workshop has provided real benefit to the Ada community by addressing issues to make the Ada language effective in achieving real-time requirements. SIGAda thanks the IRTAW for this important contribution.

In the June issue of Ada Letters, I reported on the possibility of a liaison agreement between ACM SIGAda and ISO/IEC JTC1/SC22 WG9. This will likely soon be a reality. WG9 is that body in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) responsible for the Ada standards. Mr. James W. Moore, Chair of WG9, had invited ACM SIGAda to become a Category C Liaison with WG9. When the agreement is ratified, SIGAda members will have a greater role in the evolution of the Ada programming language. The SIGAda officers view this role to be of great value to our membership and extremely important to the Ada community.

At the last SIGAda Extended Executive Committee (EEC) Meeting on 1 October 2001, Mr. Moore presented an invitation for SIGAda to enter into a Category C Liaison with WG9. Category C liaisons are organizations, which make an effective technical contribution and participate actively at the WG level. The SIGAda EEC was unanimously in favor of pursuing such a liaison. Since then, we have worked with WG9 in preparing a document to request such a liaison. It is titled: ***Request for Establishment of Category C Liaison between SC 22/WG 9 and the Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Ada (SIGAda)***. It is presented on pages 132-133.

The ACM Executive Committee (EC) approved this liaison agreement on 18 June 2002. On 21 June, 2002, WG9 unanimously approved **Resolution 42-5**: *In accordance with 3.3.1.1 of the JTC1 Directives, ISO/IEC JTC1/SC22/WG9 confirms the Category C liaison request of ACM SIGAda contained in N407 and forwards the request to SC22 for its consideration and any actions needed to effect approval of the liaison.* A similar resolution was made for liaison between Ada-Europe and WG9. At the 26-30 August 2002 meeting of SC22 in Saariselkä, Finland, SC22 unanimously approved the SIGAda and Ada-Europe Requests for Category C Liaison in **Resolution 02-06**, in part reading: *JTC 1/SC 22 approves the request from WG 9 for Category C Liaison with the Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Ada (SIGAda) and directs the SC22 Secretariat to forward this request to JTC 1 for approval, along with the rationale contained in SC 22 N3426.*



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Before this liaison agreement can be final, it must be approved by JTC1. However, the Chair of WG9 intends to proceed with implementation of the liaison arrangements in anticipation of approval by JTC1. We strongly believe that such a liaison will be important to the SIGAda community, as it will provide us with the opportunity of having input to the evolving Ada language specification.

The benefits to SIGAda are identified in the draft. In addition, this will also provide extra value to a SIGAda membership, in that:

- SIGAda members will be allowed to see the draft WG9 documentation for the next Ada Standard in its early stages. [This documentation has not been made available to us before.]
- SIGAda members will be allowed (collectively) to comment on the draft WG9 documentation, thus potentially impacting the standard;
- SIGAda members will have an important role in the management of Ada Application Program Interfaces (APIs); and
- SIGAda members (collectively) can play a more active role in the evolution of the Ada standard should they choose to do so.

We are already addressing ways in which SIGAda and Ada-Europe can work more closely with WG9. One of the first initiatives is to address a method to manage Ada APIs. Currently the vast majority of Ada bindings to APIs fall into the category of unmanaged. These Ada bindings are frequently hard to find. Once found there is frequently little information concerning how to best use the API nor information on lessons learned from its use. Frequently these bindings do not evolve with updates to the base API, needed maintenance, or Ada language changes. ISO/IEC JTC1/SC22 WG9 has requested that SIGAda and Ada-Europe propose a mechanism for managing Ada Bindings that are not covered already via formal standards. These Ada Bindings can then be recommended by ISO/IEC JTC1/SC22 WG9 as *defacto* standards for use in Ada application development. A *very* draft plan, the *Plan for Ada Application Program Interfaces (API) Management*, has been proposed that would provide a lightweight process to manage Ada Bindings available to the Ada community without the formalism required by an ISO standard. The intent is that Ada-Europe, SIGAda, and WG9 can work together to provide a valuable service to the Ada community for managing Ada bindings to APIs. The draft plan is presented in pages 134-138 of this Ada Letters. There is no consensus on this plan and any final plan may look totally different. Please look it over and provide comments to Mr. Clyde Roby at <roby@ida.org> and <colket@acm.org>. If you are interested in serving as the APIWG Chair or Co-chair for an API, please contact Mr. Clyde Roby. He has volunteered to serve as Acting Chair of the APIWG and is planning a workshop at SIGAda 2002 in Houston, Texas.

We are planning for our next conference to be at Houston/Clear Lake, Texas from 8-12 December 2002. The venue will be at the Holiday Inn/NASA, right across the way from the NASA Space Center. We are planning a NASA SIGAda 2002 activity, which should be interesting. For more information, please see: <http://www.acm.org/sigada/conf/sigada2002>. I am looking forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely yours,



Currie Colket  
Chair ACM SIGAda

