

Translation & Computers

An international association for machine translation

At last year's Symposium on Japanese-to-English MT (December 7, 1989, Washington, D.C.), Professor Makoto Nagao presented a concrete proposal for the establishment of an International Association for Machine Translation. He and the others who are involved in promoting this initiative are committed to creating a forum for the exchange of information and the setting of policy and standards or guidelines through a process of mutual agreement that involves the participation of all concerned--developers, vendors, users. The text of Professor Nagao's proposal is transcribed below.

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Prospectus

1. Purposes

1.1 The International Association for Machine Translation (IAMT) brings together users, developers, researchers, sponsors, and other individuals or institutional or corporate entities interested in machine translation (MT) for the purpose of promoting and fostering, by every available means, the development and active use of MT systems. The IAMT offers opportunities and occasions to exchange information, study

MT technologies and applications, and discuss and establish reference criteria or standards in areas of common interest to its members.

1.2 The specific concerns of the IAMT may include:

1.2.1 Collection and compilation of information

The IAMT may serve as a repository for historical and current documentation on MT, converting the texts to machine-readable form when and as feasible.

1.2.2 Exchange of information

The IAMT may serve as a clearinghouse for current information of interest to MT users and developers, including:

- For users: translation market trends, available MT systems, types of MT applications, introduction of MT systems, approaches to text file input, pre- and postediting strategies, evaluation of MT, etc.
- For developers: theories of MT, MT technologies, improvement of MT, approaches to dictionary-building, data bases and other files available for exchange, etc.

1.2.3 Dissemination of information

The IAMT may publish information of general interest in the field of machine translation, such as:

- A regular Newsletter on MT
- An MT handbook, including agreed definitions of terminology Bibliographies

1.2.4 Standardization

The IAMT may develop and propose reference criteria and standards in such areas as:

- Common document format for MT input
- Exchange format for dictionaries
- Design of controlled language
- Evaluation of MT output and MT systems

2. Activities

2.1 The IAMT shall convene the biennial General Assembly of its membership. The Assembly shall preferably be held in conjunction with the MT Summit, a technical forum which is open to the general public and which shall also be convened by the Association.

The IAMT may also undertake the

following activities:

- 2.2 Sponsorship and support of workshops, symposia, and conferences on MT and related technologies and applications.
- 2.3 Organization of tutorials and training courses on MT applications and skills involved in the use of MT.
- 2.4 Organization of tutorials and workshops on MT technologies.
- 2.5 Establishment of technical committees, special interest groups, and study teams.

3. Membership

Membership in the IAMT shall be open to active or potential MT users, developers, and researchers, and to any other individuals or institutional or corporate entities with interest in the purposes of the Association. There shall be three categories of membership: (1) individual, (2) corporate, and (3) institutional.

4. Organization

- 4.1 The IAMT is the federation of the Regional Associations for machine translation (one each in Europe, the Americas, and Asia).
- 4.2 The organs of the IAMT shall be the General Assembly, which is the supreme governing body of the Association, and the Council, which executes the decisions of the General Assembly and carries out the business of the Association.
- 4.3 The IAMT shall have a permanent Secretariat. The location of the Secretariat shall be decided by the General Assembly.

5. Regional Associations

- 5.1 The Regional Associations carry out their own activities in addition to participating in those of the IAMT.
- 5.2 The Constitution of each Regional Association shall reflect the principles of trisectoral representation and limited tenure of office.
- 5.3 Each Regional Association shall have its own Regional Board, elected according to the provisions of its Constitution.
- 5.4 Three individual members, to be known as Regional Representatives, shall be chosen by the Regional Association to serve on the Council, representing, respectively, the user, supplier, and research sectors. One of its three Regional Representatives shall be the

Chairman of the Regional Board.

- 5.5 The Regional Representatives shall serve for a period of two years. They may not serve more than two terms in succession.
- 5.6 The Regional Associations shall each designate an editor of the IAMT Newsletter, to serve for a period of two years. No editor may serve more than two terms in succession.

6. Council

- 6.1 The Council is responsible for implementing the activities indicated in Section 2 above.
- 6.2 The Council shall meet at least once every two years at the time of the MT Summit. When decisions need to be made in the interim, balloting shall normally be by mail or facsimile.
- 6.3 The Council shall have ten members, consisting of three individual members (Regional Representatives) from each Regional Association--one each from the user, supplier, and research sectors--plus the Editor-in-Chief of the Newsletter.
- 6.4 The nine Regional Representatives shall each serve for a period of two years and may be reappointed by their respective Associations. They may not serve more than two terms in succession.
- 6.5 The Council shall elect from among its ranks a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall serve as the Officers of the IAMT. The office of President shall rotate every two years between the three Regional Associations.
- 6.6 The Officers of the IAMT shall serve for a period of two years. They may not serve more than two terms in succession.

7. Other Committees

The Council may establish technical committees, special interest groups, and study teams to execute the responsibilities and activities indicated in Section 2 above. These committees and groups shall be composed of appropriate specialists from the Regional Associations.

8. Newsletter

- 8.1 The Editorial Board of the IAMT Newsletter shall be composed of three editors, one from each Regional Association designated by the respective Regional Board.

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8.2 The Council shall select the Editor-in-Chief of the Newsletter from among the three editors designated by the Regional Associations. The remaining two editors shall have the title of Associate Editor. All editors shall serve for a period of two years, and no editor may serve for more than two terms in succession.

9. Financing

9.1 The financial resources of the IAMT shall be derived from: (1) the dues of its individual, corporate, and institutional members; (2) fixed contributions from the three Regional Associations; and (3) other sources.

9.2 The IAMT dues of corporate and institutional members shall be higher than those of individual members by a ratio of ten to one.

9.3 The IAMT dues shall be collected by the Regional Associations.

9.4 During the first few years following inauguration of the IAMT some of the expenses of the Association and the Regional Associations may be covered in part by special contributions from governmental institutions, corporate and institutional members, and other sources.

9.5 Each Regional Association shall have, in addition, an Activity Fund, consisting of dues from its individual, corporate, and institutional members plus any contributions from its members, regional governmental institutions, or other sources.

9.6 The Council shall prepare an annual budget that will include line items for secretariat services and publication of the Newsletter. To the extent that resources permit, the Council may decide to cover up to one-half of the travel expenses so that its members may attend its biennial meeting.

10. Affiliates

The IAMT may seek appropriate affiliations with other associations, such as the *Federation internationale des traducteurs*, the Association for Computational Linguistics, etc., and also national associations. □