

IFAAMAS Board Elections 2016 Statement

Bio Matthijs Spaan is an assistant professor of Computer Science at Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands. He holds a PhD degree in Computer Science (2006) and an MSc degree in Artificial Intelligence (2002), both from the University of Amsterdam. After graduating, he was a research scientist at Instituto Superior Técnico (Lisbon, Portugal) and held a Marie Curie fellowship at Delft University of Technology.

His research focus has been on designing algorithms for planning under uncertainty. In particular, he addresses the challenge of developing intelligent agents using models like the Partially Observable Markov Decision Process (POMDP) and its multiagent extensions. He has applied his algorithms in several application domains such as robotics, smart energy systems as well as transportation and traffic.

Service to the community Matthijs attended the past 10 AAMAS conferences and he served on the AAMAS PC 2008–2012 and on the SPC since 2014. He has taught 4 AAMAS tutorials and co-organized 4 workshops. In particular, he has been involved in the MSDM workshop series on multiagent sequential decision making under uncertainty. In 2015, he chaired a AAAI Fall Symposium on Sequential Decision Making for Intelligent Agents. He is the editor of AI Magazine’s Worldwide AI column and has been on the editorial board of JAIR since 2011. He has been releasing open-source software such as Perseus and the Multiagent Decision Process toolbox and has been maintaining a repository of benchmark problems.

Goals If elected, Matthijs aims to represent the AAMAS sub-communities that focus on decision making, planning, reinforcement learning and coordination. By participating in other AI conferences and collecting opinions and ideas, he intends to ensure links with sister conferences such as ICAPS are promoted.

If the AAMAS conference wants to keep providing a high-quality program, a sufficient number of strong submissions and thoroughness of reviews are of the utmost importance. To help address the former, he would like to ensure that AAMAS is a welcoming venue for autonomous agents operating in isolation, besides for multiagent systems. To improve overall review quality, a potential solution he would explore is allowing re-submissions with access to original reviews (similar to the current AAAI/IJCAI setup, but extended to high-quality sister conferences), as it can significantly reduce reviewing effort.

Finally, Matthijs is committed to promoting diversity in gender and geographical spread. He believes such efforts should be focused on students to help them develop their academic careers and in this way shape our future AAMAS community. To attract students, appealing benchmark problems should be defined based on actual application domains.