

Nominee: Zinovi Rabinovich

Bio: Zinovi Rabinovich is an Assistant Professor at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), which he has joined in 2017 after holding an industrial position for 5 years as a Senior Algorithms Engineer at Mobileye Vision Technologies Ltd. His sustained publication record highlights two key directions of his research agenda: social behaviour analysis; and choice manipulation. Zinovi’s academic record also includes post-doctoral appointments at the University of Southampton (2007-2010) and the Bar-Ilan University (2010-2011). His PhD is from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2008).

Involvement with AAMAS and the AI Community at large: 2003 Conference was Zinovi’s first AAMAS, and he has religiously attended and submitted papers for the community’s review since then. Even during his industrial employment he reserved time for scientific research and research community contributions, though his job responsibilities did force him to miss the 2013 and 2016 conferences attendance. Zinovi has served as a reviewer, PC and SPC member for AAMAS, AAAI and IJCAI, but also saw it important to contribute his expertise to some local and specialised venues, such as the MICAI, IEEE-SMC, EUMAS and PAAMS. He supports the community’s workshop programs in the same manner, having served as a PC member across sub-areas (OptMAS, SecMAS, AMEC, MSDM, etc.) and was honoured to be an Advisory Committee Member for MSDM Workshop. He has also contributed to the establishment of two successful conference tutorials series: “Voting and Candidacy Games” and “Decision Making in Multiagent Settings”

Goals and Issues of Interest:

De-politicisation of AI research: With the AI methods being adopted further and more widely by industrial and societal institutions, concerns regarding the ethics of AI deployment have surged and were captured by political actors. The publication of the EU White-paper on AI casts this problem into sharp relief. Historically, politicised government regulation of research did not promote scientific discovery or the safety of its applications. It is Zinovi’s understanding that the political capture occurred due to how uninformed is the general public about AI research. As a member of the IFAAMAS board, Zinovi will promote wider public outreach to ensure that AI research is well understood and accepted outside our research community, shifting AI development out of political spectrum. Demo sessions that are open to public and competition events have helped the general public to relate, and we should expand on those opportunities. Especially, where autonomous and (social) multi-agent systems are concerned.

Ethical Research into Ethical AI: Our purpose, as scientists, is to make human life more fascinating and enabled, and we commonly fear the misuse of our discoveries. But it little profits to discuss ethical AI in a detached, high-brow manner of prevention and control of AI. True ethical problems are like the proverbial Kobayashi Maru test – no outcome is correct, only how we face it. To do so, we must bring in some outside help – philosophers, anthropologists, psychologists. Together, we may move forward to develop methods, means and principles of construction of AI that can proceed/survive beyond the ethical, hence non-resolvable, decision situations. Both technically, and as a part of human society. In this respect, Zinovi will support engaging researchers from the fields of philosophy, psychology and anthropology to partake in AAMAS and facilitate wider knowledge transfer and discussion between our fields.