

SIGAda

The ACM Special Interest Group on Ada

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Dear SIGAda Members:

ACM SIGAda and ISO/IEC JTC1/SC22 WG9 are in the process of establishing an exciting liaison agreement. Working Group 9 (WG9) is that body in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) responsible for the Ada standards. Mr. James W. Moore, Chair of WG9, has invited ACM SIGAda to become a Category C Liaison with WG9. If 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.

First, some background. 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. For us, 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 draft 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)***. The current draft is presented on pages 47 and 48 of Ada Letters. Contrary to the statement in the Draft, it has not been approved by anyone on either the SIGAda side nor on the ISO side. It has been circulated through the SIGAda Executive Committee for comments and all comments received have been coordinated with WG9 and incorporated in this draft version.

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 [All ISO standards must be updated every 10 years or they will be deleted. This prevents a standard from becoming irrelevant to the needs of the community].

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; and
- SIGAda members (collectively) can play a more active role in the evolution of the Ada standard should they choose to do so.



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It probably should be mentioned that ACM SIGAda has already played an active role with the standardization of Ada. The Ada Language Issues Working Group (ALIWG) provided a forum for addressing proposed language changes long before the Ada-9X group was established. Other SIGAda Working Groups played a vital role in special areas. For example, the SIGAda Numeric Working Group (NUMWG) addressed the need for a standard way to address high-quality transcendental and complex math functions in Ada. The work of the Ada Run Time Environment Working Group (ARTEWG) resulted in an important annex in the Ada 95 Standard. Similarly the work of the Ada Semantic Interface Specification (ASIS) Working Group (ASISWG) to address a standard way to access the information in the Ada compilation environment resulted in ISO/IEC 15291:1999 Information technology - Programming languages - Ada Semantic Interface Specification (ASIS).

Please look over the Draft Request for Category C Liaison. Think about ways you might want to get involved and perhaps the mechanisms we will need to provide real value to the evolution of Ada. This will significantly improve our capability to impact the evolution of Ada. Before the liaison can be approved, it needs to be approved by both ACM and ISO. The following summarizes the necessary steps for approval:

For ACM SIGAda, I expect that the following steps will take place:

1. Formal Approval by SIGAda Executive Council; if you would like to provide input, please send an email to the SIGAda EC at <SIGAda_EC@acm.org>. The ballot will be cast on 24 May 2002 (need 3 weeks before the next WG9 meeting, scheduled for 21 June 2002).
2. Formal Approval by Headquarters ACM.

For ISO, I expect the following steps will take place:

1. Approve the Request for Liaison amongst WG9 on 21 June 2002; Submit to Subcommittee (SC22) for their September meeting;
2. Approve the Request for Liaison at SC22; Submit to Joint Technical Committee (JTC1);
3. JTC1 forwards proposal for Liaison to ISO/IEC Information Technology Task Force (ITTF);
4. ITTF Approval;

We are extremely pleased that ISO/IEC JTC1/SC22 WG9 has honored us by requesting we become a Category C Liaison. We believe that it is a strong indication of ACM SIGAda's value to the international Ada community. We believe such a liaison will be valuable to our membership and potentially attract new members.

Before signing off, I would like to remind you of the pending Ada-Europe 2002 Conference. It will be in Vienna, Austria from 17-21 June. See: <http://www.auto.tuwien.ac.at/AE2002/>. Also, we are planning for our next conference to be at Houston/Clear Lake, Texas from 8-12 December 2002, pending approval by ACM. The venue will be 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

