

17 December 1998

Mr. Rajkumar Buyya
School of Computing Science
Queensland University of Technology
825, PLAS Lab, Level 8, S Block, Gardens Point Campus
Brisbane, Australia. QLD 4001

Dear Mr. Buyya,

It is with pleasure that I confirm the formation of the **Task Force on Cluster Computing**. The Technical Activities Board (TAB) reviewed the formation request on 18 November 1998. As Vice President of Technical Activities, I am also pleased to **appoint you as Chair** of the Task Force until your first election is held.

A Task Force (TF) is an ad hoc subcommittee of the TAB. The purpose of a TF is to foster new activities in a particular technical discipline and to determine whether additional effort and a larger organizational structure (such as a Technical Committee) are appropriate. Per the *TAB Handbook*, a task force is expected to either increase their scope of activities such that establishment of a TC is warranted, or the task force will be disbanded. A TF is expected to have a finite term of existence, normally a period of 2-3 years. Continued existence beyond that point is generally not appropriate.

I must advise you however, that there was considerable discussion in the TAB about the scope of your proposed Task Force vis-à-vis the activities of the following existing TCs: TC on Distributed Processing (TCDP), TC on Parallel Processing (TCPP), and the new TC on the Internet (TCI). TAB members were concerned that the scope of the Task Force on Cluster Computing could significantly overlap the scope of the other TCs. This might result in a severe fragmentation of membership among all four entities and contention for planned activities such as conferences and workshops, resulting in low attendance at the events planned by all the mentioned TCs. As VP for Technical Activities, approval of your new Task Force was at my discretion, but to ultimately become a new TC, the approval of TAB and of the Board of Governors will be required.

Therefore, I request that you take direct action to contact the chairs of the above mentioned TCs to discuss how you might work together with them to achieve compatible, if somewhat overlapping, scopes. Planned cooperation will be to the benefit of the members of the three TCs and your TF. In the future, a new Technical Council might be considered. Technical Councils are formed for various reasons. Primarily, they are formed because a TC becomes very large and needs to be restructured to better manage the subordinate topic areas, or they are formed to create cooperation among similarly oriented TCs where the synergy expands the effectiveness of each. The second case is what I envision as a possibility for your TASK Force and one or more of the other three TCs. At least such a possibility must be considered as you work to become a TC.

The TF Chair is an ex-officio member of the TAB Operations Committee (OpComm), and is permitted to vote. The budget for a TF is derived from the

TAB general fund, so the TC entitlement formula *does not* apply to TF activities. Funds for TFs are limited, but may be made available up to \$3,000. Task Forces, like TCs, are required to submit, in January of each year, an annual report for the previous year and a budget request for the following year. TFs should design a rich plan for activities and organizational structure to carry out this plan, and should consider a variety of activities that include but are not limited to:

- publishing a newsletter, electronically accessible version preferred;
- conducting workshops, symposia, conferences and tutorials;
- working with existing TCs on various initiatives;
- developing awards for technical excellence, student awards, etc. within the technical discipline; and
- providing a forum for discussion of technical topics.

As a TF Chair, your attendance at OpComm meetings is essential. The tentative meeting week schedule for 1999 is: 17 February in Houston, TX; 9 June in Richmond, VA; and 17 November in Portland, OR. If you are not able to attend, an alternate representative from your TF is encouraged to participate.

Please refer to the TAB Handbook (<http://computer.org/tab/hnbk/toc.htm>) and contact the Volunteer Services Coordinator, Tracy Woods, for assistance with your role and TF activities.

Congratulations on behalf of the Technical Activities Board of the IEEE Computer Society. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Ron Waxman
Vice President, Technical Activities

cc: Fred Douglass, *Chair of TCI*
Sartaj Sahni, *Chair TCPP*
Joe Urban, *Chair TCDP*
Anne Marie Kelly, *Director, Volunteer Services*
Tracy Woods, *Volunteer Services Coordinator*

Enclosure