Nomination for the IFAAMAS Board — Yair Zick

Bio: Yair Zick is an assistant professor at the College of Information Systems and Computer Sciences, UMass Amherst, where he directs the Fair and Explainable Decision making (FED) group. Prior to that, he was an assistant professor at the NUS School of Computing. He obtained his PhD (mathematics) from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore in 2014, and a B.Sc (mathematics, "Amirim" honors program) from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research interests include computational fair division, computational social choice, algorithmic game theory and algorithmic transparency. He is the recipient of the 2011 AAMAS Best Student Paper award, the 2014 Victor Lesser IFAAMAS Distinguished Dissertation award, the 2016 ACM EC Best Paper award, the 2017 Singapore NRF Fellowship and the 2021 IJCAI Early Career award.

Service in the AAMAS/AI Community: I have been an active member of the AAMAS community since 2011. I published 11 AAMAS papers (plus three AAMAS short papers), and several more in sister conferences such as AAAI and IJCAI. I served on the AAMAS program committee as PC, SPC and AC since 2014. I also regularly serve as PC, SPC and Area Chair in AAAI, COMSOC, EC, IJCAI, SAGT and WINE, and review for MAS/AI journals such as JAAMAS, ACM TEAC, JAIR, AIJ and MOR.

I co-chaired several AAMAS workshops. These include the CoopMAS workshop (2016–2017), the AAMAS-IJCAI Agents and Incentives in AI Workshop (AI^3) 2018, the 2019 Fairness in Multiagent Systems workshop (FAMAS), and the Games, Agents and Incentives Workshop (2020-2023). In addition, I co-chaired the Computational Fair Division workshop at IJCAI 2023.

Focus Areas:

Better Review Practices: The success of AAMAS as a conference largely depends on our ability to provide members of our community with a transparent, effective review process. To achieve this, I propose the following steps.

The AAMAS review process is not standardized between tracks (and sometimes not even within tracks). I will advocate for better reviewing practices, including mentoring activities for junior program committee members, creation of online tutorials, and guidelines for senior program committee members/area chairs. I will help steer our community towards the utilization of better review mechanisms. Open reviewing platforms (such as OpenReview or HotCRP) offer better functionality, fine-grained control over workflow, and provide greater transparency about important aspects of the paper assignment process. This will help ensure that papers are matched to qualified reviewers, and that we maintain a balance of reviewer fit across tracks. Finally, I will move to create conference reviewing data more accessible. Data accessibility is a crucial element in offering a better understanding of reviewing best practices, assignment mechanisms, and community needs (e.g., where should we focus PC recruitment efforts).

Broader Impact: I believe that the AAMAS community should maintain its central role in the broader AI community. Core machine-learning venues are experiencing a surge in publication volume, fueled by popular interest in AI. One unfortunate consequence of the rapid growth of ML is a general inclination to reinvent well-studied concepts. For example, ideas from cooperative game theory have had significant impact in ML explainability, federated learning and more; the MAS community has long studied these concepts in the CS context, and yet has not been a key player in this space. It is important that our community plays a more central role, with the objective of continued contribution to the social good.