

The North American Operations Research Societies

Each of the operations research societies that exist in North America has similar goals. The purpose of these is to promote the advancement of knowledge, interest and education in operations research by providing mechanisms for the exchange of information through the organization of conferences, the promotion of advances in the field, and the production of books, journals, magazines, videos, web materials and other media that describe the developments, technologies, and successes of the field. Multiple prizes are awarded by each society honoring such achievements.

Each of the societies is also part of a larger world-wide umbrella organization known as the **International Federation of Operations Research (IFORS)** (see <http://www.ifors.org>). IFORS is divided into regions, and the two societies that are officially part of the North American (NORAM) group are: **The Canadian Operations Research Society (CORS)** and **the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS)**. **The Mexican Institute of Systems and Operations Research/Sociedad Mexicana de Investigacion de Operaciones (IMSIO/SMIO)** does not belong to this regional group but rather to the Association of Latin-Iberoamerican Operations Research Societies (ALIO), which includes societies representing Bolivia, Chile, Columbia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela as well as the Spanish Society of Statistics and Operations Research.

The Canadian Operations Research Society (CORS) (<http://www.cors.org>) was established in 1957 (the same year that IFORS was created) and held its inaugural meeting in 1958. CORS serves its members through a variety of publications and services including its quarterly *Bulletin* (started in 1962); its journal, *Information Systems and Operations Research* (INFOR), which is published jointly with the Information Processing Society of Canada published quarterly; a traveling speaker program; an annual Graduate Student Conference; and grants to attend teaching effectiveness workshops. In addition, CORS honors its members with a variety of awards including the Harold Larnder Prize for international distinction in operations research; the CORS Award of Merit; the CORS Service Awards; and the CORS Practice Prize. CORS holds an annual conference that is often held jointly with “sister organizations” such as the Information Processing Society of Canada. CORS includes a variety of sections including Atlantic, Québec, Kingston, Toronto Student, Southwest Ontario, Waterloo Student, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Vancouver Student.

The Institute of Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS) (<http://www.informs.org>) is the largest operations research society in the world. INFORMS holds two major conferences per year as well as a variety of smaller meetings that are organized by its many special-interest groups, societies, and fora. The fall meeting, known as the National meeting, is primarily a forum for operations research academics and has the largest attendance of any operations research meeting world-wide. The other meeting, labeled the Analytics Conference, is directed towards practitioners. The Analytics Conference includes tutorials and workshops related to the use of advanced analytics within business and government; workshops for operations research analysts on soft skills that enhance one’s ability to communicate ideas and results to management; and presentations by major industry figures on operations research successes as well as an executive forum. In addition to these meetings, INFORMS often plans a

summer International meeting with is usually organized jointly with another operations research society.

INFORMS is composed of two former organizations: The Operations Research Society of America (ORSA), which was founded in 1952, and the Institute of Management Science (TIMS) founded in 1953. Both of these organizations had similar objectives, although ORSA was often perceived to be more engineering and academically oriented with a strong military focus, whereas TIMS was considered to be more business and applications focused with a stronger international perspective. From the time of their establishments, these societies often held joint conferences, had many officers in common, and produced joint publications. In 1974, the organizations held their first joint National meeting and continued to do so until the merging of the organizations in 1995. The discussion of merging the two organizations took place as early as 1957 (Lathruup) and in 1975, a “Blue Ribbon Committee” was formed to identify how the two societies could cooperate more effectively (see Blumstein, et al. 1976). For a historical description of the merging of these two societies and how it was finally accomplished, see Keller, R. and Kirkwood, C.W. (1999). For a more complete description of the activities of the professional societies see Assad and Gass (2004) and Salveson, M.E. (1997).

INFORMS publishes multiple journals (*Decision Analysis, Information Systems Research, INFORMS Journal on Computing, Interfaces, Management Science, Manufacturing and Service Operations Management, Marketing Science, Mathematics of Operations Research, Operations Research, Organizational Science, Service Science, Transportation Science, and INFORMS Transactions on Education*) as well as a tutorial and book series. It publishes three magazines: *OR/MS Today, Analytics*, and *OR/MS Tomorrow*. Other programs include a speakers program, a high-school teachers’ program, a History and Traditions Committee that encourages and facilitates the collection and preservation of materials relating to the history and traditions of OR/MS, a doctoral colloquium, a teaching effectiveness colloquium, and young practitioners’ workshop. INFORMS is divided into communities: currently there are 10 societies (*Applied Probability, Computing, Decision Analysis, Health Applications Society, Information Systems, Manufacturing & Service Operations Management, Marketing Science, Military Applications Society, Optimization, Simulation, and Transportation Science & Logistics*), 22 subdivisions, 5 fora (interest groups that are neither discipline or geographical), and 31 regional groups. These entities hold their own meetings as well contribute substantially to the content of the national meeting.

The institute recognizes the achievements of its members through a variety of prizes, including the John von Neumann Theory Prize; the INFORMS President’s award; the INFORMS Fellows awards; the George E. Kimball Award for distinguished service; the INFORMS Prize for the Teaching of OR/MS Practice; and the INFORMS Impact Award. Many other prizes are awarded through the subdivisions.

Almost from the beginning, CORS and INFORMS worked to jointly to organize meetings and have provide each other’s members with reduced prices for membership and journal subscriptions. More recently, these two societies have worked with ALIO to organize joint meetings that encourage collaboration and dissemination among the Americas.

There are a number of “sister” organizations with research interests that are closely aligned with those of INFORMS and CORS. The most closely aligned is The Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE), which is the world’s largest professional society dedicated solely to the support of the industrial engineering profession and individuals involved with improving quality and productivity. Founded in 1948, IIE is an international, nonprofit association that provides leadership for the application, education, training, research, and development of industrial engineering. For more on this organization, see <http://www.iienet.org>. There are many other organizations that also represent individuals whose research technologies are closely related to those of operations research analysts. We end this short note with a listing of those organizations and their websites:

- [Academy of Marketing Science](http://www.ams-web.org/) (<http://www.ams-web.org/>)
- [AGIFORS \(Airline Group of the International Federation of Operational Research Societies\)](http://www.agifors.org/) (<http://www.agifors.org/>)
- [Academy of Management's Operations Management Division](http://om.aomonline.org/) (<http://om.aomonline.org/>)
- [ASQ \(American Society for Quality\)](http://www.asq.org/) (<http://www.asq.org/>)
- [DSI \(Decision Sciences Institute\)](http://www.euro-online.org/) (<http://www.euro-online.org/>)
- [HIMSS \(Healthcare Information Management and Systems Society\)](http://himiss.org/) (<http://himiss.org/>)
- [IFIP \(International Federation for Information Processing\)](http://www.ifip.or.at) (<http://www.ifip.or.at>)
- [LMI \(Logistics Management Institute\)](http://www.lmi.org/) (<http://www.lmi.org/>)
- [MORS \(Military Operations Research Society\)](http://www.mors.org/) (<http://www.mors.org/>)
- [The Mathematical Programming Society](http://www.mathopt.org/) (<http://www.mathopt.org/>)
- [PMSA \(Pharmaceutical Management Science Association\)](http://www.pmsa.net/) (<http://www.pmsa.net/>)
- [POMS \(Production and Operations Management Society\)](http://www.poms.org/) (<http://www.poms.org/>)
- [SCS \(Society for Computer Simulation International\)](http://www.scs.org/) (<http://www.scs.org/>)
- [SDP \(The Society of Decision Professionals\)](http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/) (<http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/>)
- [SIAM \(Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics\)](http://www.siam.org/) (<http://www.siam.org/>)
- [SIM \(Society for Information Management\)](http://www.simnet.org/)(<http://www.simnet.org/>)
- [SJDM \(Society for Judgment and Decision Making\)](http://www.sjdm.org/) (<http://www.sjdm.org/>)
- [SOLE \(Society of Logistics Engineers\)](http://www.sole.org/)(<http://www.sole.org/>)
- [TRB \(Transportation Research Board\)](http://www.nas.edu/trb/)(<http://www.nas.edu/trb/>)
- [WSC \(Winter Simulation Conference\)](http://www.wintersim.org/) (<http://www.wintersim.org/>)

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