Bilevel Optimization Society

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Back from Pittsburgh

This summer marked a milestone for our community. From 2 to 5 August 2026, the **International Conference on Bilevel Optimization (ICBO 2026)** took place in Pittsburgh, the first conference organized under the auspices of the **Bilevel Optimization Society (BOS)**. Around one hundred researchers, half of them students, spent four days together in tutorials, talks, and discussions.

The **BOS Business Meeting** was held on Monday 3 August. It was the occasion to take stock of where the Society stands: at the time of the meeting, BOS counted **529 memberships**, distributed as follows.

Europe	211	South America	37
North America	149	Africa	25
Asia	106	Oceania	1

In terms of career stage, 226 members (42.7%) are early-career researchers and 252 (47.6%) are more senior researchers; 31 members (5.9%) come from industry and 20 (3.8%) from other sectors. Academia and research thus account for 90.4% of the membership.

In this issue we report on ICBO 2026, remind you of the call for papers for the **EJCO special issue** that came out of it, and cover Seasons 1 and 2 of the **BOS Webinar Series**. We also launch two calls addressed to the entire community: one for institutions interested in hosting **ICBO 2028**, and one for proposals to create the first **Special Interest Groups**. A final reminder closes this issue: memberships must be renewed by **31 December 2026**.

ICBO 2026 in Pittsburgh

International Conference on Bilevel Optimization (ICBO) 2026
Dates: 2–5 August 2026
Location: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA
Hosts: University of Pittsburgh (Pitt) & Carnegie Mellon University (CMU)
Chair: Bo Zeng (Pitt) **Co-Chair:** Ramteen Sioshansi (CMU)
Program Committee Chair: Martin Schmidt (Trier University)
In numbers: ∼100 participants, of whom about 45 students; around 80 presentations; 24 sessions; 3 plenary talks; 4 summer-school lectures

The conference opened on Sunday 2 August with a full-day summer school at CMU, and continued at Pitt with three days of scientific program. It had a vibrant and enthusiastic atmosphere, with a strong balance among continuous, mixed-integer, and applied contributions, as well as many excellent talks and plenary presentations. The social events were another highlight, including a well-attended welcome reception on Monday and conference dinner on Tuesday; a memorable moment was Industrial Engineering



Figure 1: Participants of ICBO 2026 – photo taken by Prem Shenoy

Department Chair Lisa Maillart's humorous analogy between Pittsburgh's double-deck bridge and bilevel optimization.

Plenary Talks

- **Leonardo Lozano** (University of Cincinnati, USA), *Decision diagram-based approaches for linear discrete bilevel programming.*
- **Amy Greenwald** (Brown University, USA), *The promise of bilevel optimization in machine learning (and economics).*
- **Shoham Sabach** (Cornell University, USA), *A decade of progress in convex bilevel optimization.*

Summer School

The summer school consisted of two lecture series of two parts each, addressed in particular to students and early-career researchers:

- **Zhaosong Lu** (University of Minnesota, USA), *Recent advances in first-order methods for continuous bilevel optimization.* The slides are available on the conference website.
- **Oleg Prokopyev** (University of Zurich, Switzerland), *Some perspectives on mixed-integer bilevel optimization.*

Thank You to the ICBO 2026 Committees and Sponsors

A conference of this size is the work of many hands. The Society thanks the two committees that made ICBO 2026 possible.

Program Committee

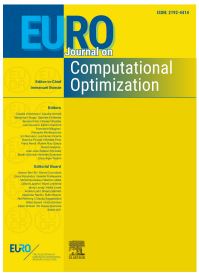
Martin Schmidt (Chair), Margarida Carvalho, Kaiyi Ji, Ivana Ljubić, Jacqueline Morgan, Ted Ralphs, Ramteen Sioshansi, Anton Svensson, Sonja Wogrin, Alain Zemkoho, Bo Zeng, Jin Zhang.

Local Organization

Bo Zeng (Chair), Ramteen Sioshansi (Co-Chair), Tanveer Hossain Bhuiyan, Wei Gu, Jourdain Bernard Lamperski, Zhengsong Lu, Woody Zhu.

Our thanks also go to the session chairs, to the local staff at Pitt and CMU, and to our sponsors, **SAS**, **Lehigh University**, and the **University of Pittsburgh**, whose support made the conference possible.

Call for Papers: ICBO 2026 Special Issue



On the occasion of ICBO 2026, the ***EURO Journal on Computational Optimization*** (EJCO) has launched a special issue devoted to **Recent Advances in Bilevel Optimization**. Submissions are open and are warmly invited from participants of ICBO 2026 as well as from the broader bilevel optimization community.

Bilevel optimization is a highly active field of research in mathematical optimization with a rapidly growing range of methodological developments and applications. This special issue presents recent advances in bilevel optimization, building on contributions to ICBO 2026. It covers new theoretical and computational approaches, including mixed-integer, nonlinear, stochastic, and robust bilevel optimization, as well as connections to inverse optimization, game theory, and machine learning. Applications span a wide range of areas, including energy systems, security and interdiction, transportation, and artificial intelligence. The special issue aims to reflect the breadth and current momentum of this dynamic research field.

Guest Editors
Martin Schmidt, Trier University, Germany (Lead Guest Editor)
Margarida Carvalho, Université de Montréal, Canada
Ted Ralphs, Lehigh University, USA

Important dates
Submission portal opened: 5 September 2026
Submission deadline: 15 December 2026
Editorial acceptance deadline: 15 August 2027

How to submit. Manuscripts are submitted through the Editorial Manager portal of EJCO, https://www.editorialmanager.com/ejcomp/default.aspx. At the *Article Type* step of the submission process, authors must select **VSI: Bilevel Opt**. All manuscripts undergo the standard peer-review process of the journal.

BOS Webinar: Season 1 and Season 2

The **BOS Webinar Series** completed its first season in spring 2026: six bi-weekly sessions and nine talks covering theoretical, computational, and applied aspects of bilevel optimization. Season 1 was coordinated by **Kuang Bai** (Hunan University), **Yasmine Beck** (ESSEC Business School), and **Nagisa Sugishita** (HEC Montréal). The list of speakers from **Season 1** is as follows.

14 April	Stephan Dempe (TU Bergakademie Freiberg)
28 April	Martina Cerulli (University of Salerno); Kübra Tanınmış (Koç University)
12 May	Miguel F. Anjos (University of Edinburgh)
26 May	Bo Lin (University of Toronto); Mohammad Sadegh Salehi (Independent Scholar)
9 June	Didier Aussel (University of Perpignan)
23 June	Sebastian Vasquez (Carnegie Mellon University); Noah Weninger (University of Waterloo)

All talks were recorded and are available from the webinar schedule page, together with the detailed program. If you missed a talk, or would like to point a student to an introduction to a topic, this is a great place to start.

Season 2, coordinated by Yasmine Beck and Nagisa Sugishita, is currently running and takes place every two weeks until 8 December 2026. Below is the speaker list.

1 September	Sanyou Mei (HKUST); David Villacís (Loyola University Andalusia)
15 September	José Fernando Camacho Vallejo (Tecnológico de Monterrey)
29 September	Federico Battista (University of Southern California); Eneko Clemente (University of Zurich)
13 October	Yongjia Song (Clemson University)
27 October	Dorothee Henke (University of Passau); Lasse Wulf (University of Southern Denmark)
10 November	Zhaosong Lu (University of Minnesota)
24 November	Nagisa Sugishita (HEC Montréal); Vladimir Stadnichuk (University of Kassel)
8 December	Jacqueline Morgan (University of Naples Federico II and CSEF)

Some sessions are recorded and available on the website.

The schedule and speaker list for **Season 3** will be announced soon. The organizers welcome suggestions of speakers, in particular early-career researchers presenting recent work. Send proposals to webinar@bileveloptimization.org.

Call for Hosts: ICBO 2028

Planning for the next edition of the conference starts now. ICBO is a **biennial** conference, and the Society is looking for institutions willing to host **ICBO 2028**.

- **Who can apply**: any institution or group of institutions able to host a four-day conference of the size of ICBO 2026, that is, of the order of one hundred or more participants.
- **Expressions of interest**: write to icbo@bileveloptimization.org by December 31, 2026 with at most three paragraphs (maximum 1 page) expressing your will to organize this event. Formal proposals will be invited following the expressions of interest.

Call for Proposals: Special Interest Groups

Bilevel optimization is a broad field, and our membership reflects that breadth: continuous and discrete, stochastic and robust, theoretical and applied. **Special Interest Groups (SIGs)** are the instrument foreseen in our bylaws to give visibility and structure to these specific interests within the Society, and COBOS is now inviting the community to propose the first ones.

- **Purpose**: to promote, to the extent possible, the varied interests of our members, for instance in continuous bilevel optimization, mixed-integer bilevel optimization, or specific application areas.
- **What a proposal contains**: the objectives of the group and the collaborative activities it intends to pursue, the names of the coordinators, and a list of initial founding participants.
- **How a SIG is created**: either by unanimous action of COBOS, or by a petition addressed to the Chair of the Society signed by at least **5% of the membership** (at the current membership level, roughly 27 members).
- **Submission**: proposals are accepted on a rolling basis and should be sent to sigs@bileveloptimization.org

We encourage groups of members who already collaborate informally, for instance around a seminar, a benchmark library, or a software project, to consider formalizing that activity as a SIG.

Membership Renewal

Under the bylaws, memberships run until the end of the calendar year of the most recent ICBO. Since ICBO 2026 has now taken place, **all memberships must be renewed by 31 December 2026**. Renewing takes a minute and is done through the membership form on our website:

- **Join or renew**: membership form

Membership remains free of charge and is what gives you the right to vote in Society elections, to petition for the creation of a SIG, and to receive this newsletter.

Looking Ahead: Elections and Transition

As foreseen in the bylaws, the term of the current Chair, **Alain Zemkoho**, concludes on **31 December 2026**, and **Ted Ralphs** takes over as Chair of the Society in **January 2027**. The remaining transition steps are:

- **January 2027**: the formal Nominating Committee is constituted.
- **Mid 2027**: elections open for the positions of **Chair-elect**, **Secretary**, **Treasurer**, and **Webmaster**.
- **January 2028**: handover and official transfer of all BOS records.

If you would like to contribute to the running of the Society, this is the moment to start thinking about it. Candidacies from all parts of our community are welcome.

Stay Connected

- **Website**: `https://bileveloptimization.org/`
- **Email**: contact@bileveloptimization.org
- **LinkedIn**: `https://www.linkedin.com/company/bilevel-optimization-society/`

Thank you for being part of the Bilevel Optimization Society.

Credits

This issue was prepared by Margarida Carvalho with contributions from Yasmine Beck, Victor Bucarey, Ted Ralphs, Nagisa Sugishita, Johannes Thürauf, Alain Zemkoho and Bo Zeng.