

An underwater photograph showing a vibrant marine ecosystem. In the foreground, several large, dark-colored fish are swimming near a rocky reef. The reef is covered in various types of coral, including branching and brain coral, and is populated by smaller fish and sea urchins. The water is clear and blue, with sunlight filtering through from above, creating a bright and lively atmosphere.

ASC BRANCH GUIDE

Photo by [Saira](#) on [Unsplash](#)

NOVEMBER 2019

Australian Science Communicators
Authored by: Lisa Bailey



AUSTRALIAN
SCIENCE
COMMUNICATORS

So you're running a branch of ASC

A handy guide to help you out

First – congrats! ASC has been running across the country since 1994, and it takes passionate and dedicated volunteers to keep vibrant active branches delivering activities that best serve the local members.

Frequently ASC-ed Questions

What format should our State/Territory branch take?

It's up to you. Each branch can have its own rules and constitution if they so choose, as long as it doesn't contradict the [national association constitution](#). There are a few guidelines:

- Branches can be formed with no less than ten members.
- All branch committee members must be ASC members.
- Committee members and position holders must be elected at a branch General Meeting.
- To hold a General Meeting, the Constitution states you must have twenty members present (including proxies) or one quarter of your total branch membership - whichever is lesser - to form a quorum.
- The only formal position a branch needs to elect is a representative for the National Council, however a branch can decide to have other office holders, including a President and a Treasurer.
- By-law 4 in the Constitution states: "Members within a state or territory, or a region within a state or territory, may, with the approval of the Committee, form a Branch of the Association, elect office bearers, maintain their own financial accounts and hold meetings. Branches may have their own rules or constitutions, but wherever any discrepancy exists, the Constitution of the Association shall prevail."

How do you run an AGM?

A local AGM should be run, as the name suggests, annually. A useful template for running an AGM can be found on the [ASC website here](#).

How do we get funding for our local branch?

Each local branch is entitled to capitation funds from membership fees – 10% of the fees from each state member. This is calculated at the end of the calendar year (using a current membership list in November or December). In order to have the capitation funds released to the state/territory branch account, the following needs to happen:

1. Members of the state executive committee must be current financial members of ASC.
2. Forward minutes of the branch AGM and treasurers report to the National Executive exec@asc.asn.net.au
3. Receive capitation!

What should a Treasurer's Report look like?

It should show, clearly, the incoming and outgoing expenses for your branch over the year. It doesn't need to be complicated or follow any particular standard, a simple excel spreadsheet is fine. [See an example here.](#)

How else can we get funding?

You can also apply for a grant of up to \$500 to run a particular activity for a state branch. This can be applied for at any time by emailing the Executive committee with the following information:

- The type of activity you are proposing
- The intended audience
- How the activity provides value to ASC members
- How the activity could provide value to ASC members in other states (eg write up for SCOPE, video recording/livestream)
- Overall budget and funding sought.

But how else can we get funding?

By running workshops and events and charging ticket sales, or applying for locally available grants (like National Science Week grants). This is a great way to show value for members (by making events or activities heavily discounted or free for members vs non-members).

How does our state branch bank account work?

This may differ from state to state as it is not controlled by the national executive. This will require some background information from your past treasurer or president.

What types of activities could our branch run?

The most common response to member surveys about the value of ASC membership is networking. So regular catch ups can be enough on their own. Then there are a huge range of activities that branches have run in the past including:

- Storytelling workshops
- Improv workshops
- Grant writing/evaluation
- Careers evenings
- Writing freelance
- Journal clubs
- Pecha Kucha nights
- Behind the scenes tours of local facilities
- Knowledge and skills sharing between state members

The scale and frequency of state activities are set by the state branches.

What kind of communication channels are there for ASC?

SCOPE: monthly newsletter that goes out to members. You can submit article ideas, event promotion details or job opportunities to appear in SCOPE by emailing the editor editor@asc.asn.au

ASC-list: one of our most popular member features, [the mailing lists](#) are free to all and user-managed. Quick link to both lists is here: <http://lists.asc.asn.au/mailman/listinfo>

Click on either list name to view Archives and manage subscriptions. These lists are unmoderated and are publicly searchable on the internet. Note that list posts cannot be deleted later so please be careful that the information contained in your posts is suitable for the public domain forever more. We have archives of all messages sent since 2002 for both the [ASC-List](#) and [ASC-Media](#) lists. Free to subscribe, [pay to post](#).

ASC Website: ASC members can register to contribute to the website – [details for this here](#).

ASC Twitter: <https://twitter.com/auscicomm>

ASC Closed Facebook Group: This is quite an active group, with members sharing information about upcoming events/jobs and general articles of interest to science communicators. The group is closed and you must request to join, if you have an interest in science communication you are accepted. Both current and non-members are able to post in the group.

Each of these channels are managed by ASC members, if you are interested in volunteering to assist in any of these roles contact Kali on office@asc.asn.au

State Branch Facebook Groups:

South Australia- <https://www.facebook.com/auscicomsa/>

Victoria - <https://www.facebook.com/Australian-Science-Communicators-Victoria-2164274013836728/>

Canberra - <https://www.facebook.com/ASC.Canberra/>

SE QLD <https://www.facebook.com/seqauscicomm/>

QLD group page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/104541307925/>

WA - <https://www.facebook.com/AuSciCommWA/>

These are administered by the local branches

Do we have public liability insurance?

Yes, you can find the certificate of currency in the [Google Drive here](#).