

# Australian Science Communicators Annual General Meeting Agenda

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**Date:** 29 November 2013                      **Start time:** 6pm (AEDST)

**Venue:** CPAS Green Couch Seminar Room, Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science, The Australian National University

## Items for Discussion

1. Confirmation of members attending, apologies
2. Notification of proxies
3. Minutes of 2012 AGM
4. President's report
5. Treasurer's report
  - a) presentation of statement of accounts
  - b) determination of annual membership fee
  - c) determination of capitation to be returned to branches
  - d) determination of honoraria
  - e) appointment of auditor
  - f) appointment of public officer
  - g) discussion of part-time General Manager's position
  - h) preview of 2014 budget
6. Election of 2014 ASC President
7. Motion to amend the Constitution
8. Branch matters and annual reporting
9. Discussion on the continuation of ASC-run conferences
10. An update on the 'professionalisation' process for ASC and discussion on a code of ethics
11. Announcement of ASC Life Member
12. Any other business

# Australian Science Communicators Annual General Meeting Minutes 2013

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**Date:** 29 November 2013                      **Start time:** 6pm (AEDST)

**Venue:** CPAS Green Couch Seminar Room, Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science, The Australian National University

*[Meeting opened at 6.10pm]*

Meeting chaired by Claire Harris as Acting President, with Rod Lamberts as initial 2013 President

## Items for Discussion

### 1. Confirmation of members attending, apologies

- 16 members attended with voting rights, 1 member attended as an observer (see attached list)
- 19 members offered apologies

### 2. Notification of proxies

19 members sent their proxies to member attendees (see attached list)

### 3. Minutes of 2012 AGM

- Rod Lamberts moved to accept minutes; Joan Leach seconded → motion carried, minutes accepted

### 4. President's report

- (see attached report for details)
- Rod Lamberts: first part of 2013 Presidency
  - Key themes: professionalism, code of conduct and accreditation
    - Will Grant took on the professionalisation consultation
  - Media presence for ASC – greater representation of ASC and science communication in the media
  - Unfortunately due to illness, Rod had to step down, and Claire Harris took up the Acting President role
- Claire Harris: second part of 2013 Presidency
  - Changes in the Executive meant a change of priorities and workloads – some portfolios were reallocated and some were put on hold
  - One of the major items was recruitment to fill Webmaster, Scope Editor and the General Manager position, which included finalising the contract and advertising the position
    - There were two applicants, but one subsequently withdrew and the other submitted an alternative proposal that did not meet the job specifications
  - ASC has worked hard to connect with Inspiring Australia and other organisations involved in science and science engagement, helping to develop our profile and impact
  - Branch activity has been high and there has been some significant turnover at the branch level

- Rod and Claire extend their sincere thanks and acknowledgements to the Executive, National Council, conference committee, Scope editors past and present, the webmaster, branch committees and branch presidents and the Executive Officer
  - In particular, they wish to thank and acknowledge Jesse Shore who is retiring from the Executive
- Sarah Lau moved to formally table thanks and acknowledgement of Jesse Shore on behalf of all ASC members; Claire Harris seconded → motion carried

Discussion:

- Toss Gascoigne: does the Executive wish to comment on recent discussions on the e-list and are the members of the Executive taking any steps to respond?
  - Claire Harris: at the national level, we are always monitoring and keeping abreast of member discussion and considering how to incorporate this into the priorities for ASC
    - Much of the discussion has helped advance the conversation on issues identified across ASC
  - Will Grant: in terms of the future of ASC and some of the bigger questions about the purpose of ASC, we have started to talk about this, but we haven't been able to conclude the business of determining what the ASC is meant to be
    - Regular, ongoing, structured conversations about the future of ASC will be essential
    - We should also acknowledge that ASC won't always be the perfect fit for members and an aim shouldn't be to retain all current members
  - Claire Harris: there has been progress on some issues, such as raising the profile of ASC and promoting the role of science communication (including through Inspiring Australia) and reviewing the organisation's vision
    - A member survey has also been developed around questions of membership value and the future of ASC – this will hopefully be rolled out soon
  - Rod Lamberts: finding other ways for ASC to engage with members is important (an example might be regional quarterly updates)
  - Will Grant: reporting on these issues and progress could have been improved in the past year and will be a focus for the next Executive
  - Claire Harris: ASC is designed to be a very open organisation and every item of official communication (e.g. Scope) invites this engagement
- Joan Leach: recent Inspiring Australia meetings and discussions seem to indicate that the relationship between national activities and research funded by Inspiring Australia may not be widely known amongst the science communication community
  - Inspiring Australia has identified that the upcoming priority will be to communicate the outcomes of all funded activities and research
- Toss Gascoigne moved to accept President's Report; Will Grant seconded → motion carried

## 5. Treasurer's report

- Pete Wheeler: there have been some major changes in our financial, tax and legal operations to ensure we comply with the not-for-profit model
  - The accounts will be audited in coming months and therefore the Treasurer recommends the AGM note and consider the statements and the National Council receives the audited accounts for consideration and approval
- (see attached report for details)
  - Revenue has primarily come from membership subscriptions, with other revenue from Inspiring Australia grants and bank interest
  - Major outgoings include the employment of an Executive Officer, IT costs (YourMembership software), legal costs, audit costs, and bank and merchant fees
    - \$4000 is allocated to honoraria
  - Travel expenses have been limited to \$1000 only due to the efficiency of the Presidents combining ASC business with travel funded for other reasons
  - Approximately \$21,000 has been spent on the conference, although it is important to note that ASC conferences traditionally turn a profit and give ASC a degree of financial security

- Net equity is approximately \$85,000 and ASC is in a sound financial position heading into a significant expenditure item (the conference)
- Claire Harris: wish to officially thank and acknowledge Kali Madden for her outstanding work in the past year, particularly her activeness in bookkeeping and financial reforms, and for acting in the Treasurer's role whilst Pete was on leave
- Claire Harris moved to accept the Treasurer's report; Rod Lamberts seconded → motion carried
- Pete Wheeler moved for the AGM to empower the National Council to review and approve the audited accounts; Claire Harris seconded → motion carried

**a. presentation of statement of accounts**

- Item deferred from AGM for approval and acceptance by the National Council

**b. determination of annual membership fee**

- Pete Wheeler: the last time the membership fee increased was in 2007, and this was only \$10 – therefore a small increase could be considered
- Teresa Belcher: at the recent WA branch AGM, members agreed a small increase would be acceptable, but that student membership should remain as low as possible
- Ian McDonald: although not officially surveyed, ACT members would be unlikely to support an increase
- Will Grant: could the membership fee be indexed to CPI – a small increase every year is likely to be more acceptable than a major jump every few years
- Toss Gascoigne: there is never a good time to put subscription fees up – an alternate model would be to propose something like a 5% increase every two years, to address inflation
  - Kali Madden: membership would still have to be paid annually and it would be unlikely that people could pay for multiple years
- Ian McDonald: if there was a clear reason to increase membership fees, then this would likely be more acceptable – at the branch level, the ACT branch doesn't spend all of its allocated money every year, so an increase in fees may not seem reasonable to members
  - More national activity would justify an increase in fees
- Will Grant moved that the membership fee increase in line with CPI; Toss Gascoigne seconded → motion carried
- Claire Harris: ASC would benefit greatly from someone in a business development role, to look at this issue of membership fees versus value, capitation, and ASC's financial viability and not-for-profit status
  - Another factor to consider in ASC's financial operations is that complying with income tax developments, which will put more pressure on the bottom line
- Claire Harris moved that the AGM empowers the National Council consider an increase in membership fees as applicable and review capitation once an audit of branch accounts and reserves has been completed; Will Grant seconded → motion carried

**c. determination of capitation to be returned to branches**

- Pete Wheeler: capitation to branches will happen in coming weeks (likely around Christmas)
  - Kali Madden: in previous years, many branches failed to cash the capitation cheques
- Pete Wheeler: the current arrangement is that 10% is returned to branches and 10% goes into a fund for bidding by branches for activities intended to raise profile or membership
  - This fund needs to be better advertised to branches
- Pete Wheeler moved that capitation arrangements remain unchanged for the ASC financial year; Ian McDonald seconded → motion carried

**d. determination of honoraria**

- Pete Wheeler noted that the following honoraria are payable, in recognition of those who take on these roles:
  - Honoraria of \$1000 payable to the President, Secretary and Treasurer
  - Honorarium of \$150 per issue to Scope Editor for the publication of Scope

- Honorarium of \$1000 payable to the Webmaster
  - Pete Wheeler moved that honoraria arrangements are continued; Rod Lamberts seconded → motion carried
- e. appointment of auditor**
- Pete Wheeler: legal status, income tax issues and not-for-profit status – will be appointed once everything is sorted out This item will be held over until
  - Pete Wheeler moved that the next Executive appoint the auditor on behalf of the AGM; Claire Harris seconded → motion carried
- f. appointment of public officer**
- Pete Wheeler moved to keep Will Grant as the Public Officer; Sarah Lau seconded → motion carried
- g. discussion of part-time General Manager's position**
- Claire Harris: over the past two years, the Executive put in place all the legal and administrative requirements to recruit a General Manager, however, after a recruitment process in 2013, the position was not filled
    - There were two applications – one was withdrawn by the applicant and the other did not meet the job specifications
    - The Executive discussed reallocating funding to project-based work instead of an ongoing role
  - Kali Madden: A business development manager (pro bono consultant) could review the intention and operations for a General Manager position for ASC.
- h. preview of 2014 budget**
- Pete Wheeler: a full budget will be prepared shortly and submitted to the National Council for consideration
    - There are working forecasts at the moment to cover considerations around the conference and Inspiring Australia commitments
  - Rod Lamberts: ASC officially thanks Pete Wheeler for his significant work as Treasurer and thanks Kali Madden for her bookkeeping and work in managing the transition of work and records from the outgoing Treasurer.
- 6. Election of 2014 ASC President**
- Assoc Prof Joan Leach has been nominated for the 2014 President's role
  - Joan Leach: in the next year, I see the following priorities:
    - Maximising the benefit of the upcoming conference to build on the work already invested in it
      - Consolidating ASC's work and direction with major national trends and Inspiring Australia findings
    - Initiating discussions and action on Special Interest Groups and maintaining progress on ethics and professionalisation
      - The Science Communication Education and Research Network (SCERN) within ASC works well as a Special Interest Group
      - There are already international discussions about ethics in science communication, and ASC could take on some of this information
      - Professional development and professionalisation – there are other opportunities to explore, particularly in partnership, and in emerging formats e.g. MOOCs
  - Joan Leach was nominated by Claire Harris and was seconded by Nancy Longnecker; Joan accepted the nomination; a majority vote was conducted → Joan Leach was formally voted in for an annual term as ASC President
  - Will Grant: what needs to happen in terms of filling the Past President's role? (Jesse Shore is stepping down from the Executive and there are two Presidents from 2013)

- Toss Gascoigne moved that the two potential candidates discuss who will take up the Past President role, with the other candidate recommended to the National Council for an alternative Executive role; Will Grant seconded → motion carried

## 7. Motions to amend the Constitution

- (see attached proposal for details)
- Pete Wheeler: according to legal advice, as the Constitution stands, the ASC is not within the not-for-profit status
  - The proposed amendment will also go to lawyers to check it meets the requirements for a not-for-profit group
- Claire Harris moved the amendment of the Constitution as proposed, Rod Lamberts seconded → motion carried

## 8. Branch matters and annual reporting

- Sarah Lau: a new initiative this year is to introduce branch summaries of annual activity to then compile into an 'annual snapshot'
  - This will help illustrate the diversity of activity across Australia – Claire Harris prepared a template to assist with gathering this material
  - Branches are also working over the next 12 months to bring branch AGM dates into line with the national process
- Ian McDonald: has there been any further progress on identifying whether each branch needing their own ABN?
  - Pete Wheeler: this has not been identified yet – Pete and Kali need to investigate as part of a wider audit of branch activity, funds and reporting requirements
    - Also needs to happen in line with reviewing income tax and not-for-profit status
    - Will be advanced over the next 12 months

## 9. Discussion on the continuation of ASC-run conferences

- Claire Harris: recent feedback and discussion among members is being compiled for consideration by the Executive and a business development consultant, who can assist in reviewing the need for a conference against the role in raising ASC's profile, generating revenue and forming a focal point for Australian and international practitioners and researchers
  - This kind of review would also consider the best options for supporting a diverse member base across the country
  - Pete Wheeler and Kali Madden are considering options for business development assistance through the pro bono model of CPA volunteering for not-for-profits (NFPs)
    - NFPs need a brief to potentially secure a volunteer to assist ASC
  - Traditionally, financial and business knowledge has not been one of the core areas of expertise in the ASC leadership group
  - Evaluation from the upcoming conference will feed into the review of the conference purpose and benefits
- Pete Wheeler: Are we web streaming the conference?
  - Kali Madden: A notice will go out next week inviting people to register for online web streaming – if there are enough registrations then the committee can hire a crew to make this happen
    - Will Grant: This is a great option, but it does cost for a quality production and this needs to be communicated
    - Kali Madden: It will cost approximately \$20,000 to run livestreaming, and we have priced registration at \$200 for an individual ticket
  - Pete Wheeler: a live streaming and video conferencing company could be approached to sponsor this service

## 10. An update on the 'professionalisation' process for ASC and discussion on a code of ethics

- (see the attached report for more information)
- Will Grant: through consultation, focus groups, discussions with current and non-members and reviewing e-list discussions, Rod and Will canvassed a range of issues around professionalisation, professional associations and a code of ethics
- Key findings:
  - A code of ethics is clearly supported, but there is dissent amongst members when it comes to specific wording – we need to recognise members work for different organisations with different intents
  - The intention of a code of ethics is to defend members, but we need to be prepared for how members would wish to respond to someone breaching the code
  - There is support for different professionalisation factors (e.g. accreditation, insurance) but this is not consistent across those consulted
    - Additionally, a massive shift in the direction of ASC and membership costs to support some of these things would be challenging to manage and introduce
- Recommendations:
  - Shift the discussion to talk about the future of ASC as an ongoing concept, rather than 'professionalisation'
  - Spend more time examining and incorporating lessons and findings from ASC's history over the past 20 years
- Discussion:
  - Toss Gascoigne: instead of a strict 'code' and set of rules, could there instead be guidelines on communicating?
  - Pete Wheeler: one of our biggest issues is to define a one size fits all definition for ASC – could we explore different levels of membership (e.g. bronze, silver, gold, platinum) to meet differing needs?
  - Toss Gascoigne: At the original meeting of what would become ASC, at the Press Club in February 1994, it was voted 18 to 1 in favour of allowing anyone to join
    - We are a loosely linked organisation but this is a wonderful and useful opportunity
  - Will Grant: We also need to also consider what is achievable and the timeframes associated with change

## 11. Announcement of ASC Life Member

- Claire Harris moved that David Ellyard be appointed as an ASC Life Member to thank him for his outstanding and numerous contributions to ASC over more than ten years as President and Treasurer; Rod Lamberts seconded → motion carried

## 12. Any other business

- Toss Gascoigne moved to formally thank and acknowledge the outgoing Presidents and the current Executive; Joan Leach seconded → motion carried
- Claire Harris: special thanks to Ian McDonald, the ACT branch of ASC and the Centre for the Public Awareness of Science at the Australian National University for hosting the 2013 AGM

*8.07pm meeting closed*

# Australian Science Communicators Annual General Meeting Attendees

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LAST	FIRST	MEMBER?
Campbell	Anne	1
Gascoigne	Toss	1
Grant	Will	1
Harris	Claire	1
Howe	Marc	1
Lamberts	Rod	1
Madden*	Kali	0
McDonald	Ian	1
McKinnon	Merryn	1
Walker	Graham	1
Wong	David	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>10</b>

\*observer – non-voting

## Official satellite meeting attendees

LAST	FIRST	LOCATION	MEMBER?
Lau	Sarah	Perth	1
Wheeler	Pete	Perth	1
Ebeling	Wiebke	Perth	1
Belcher	Teresa	Perth	1
Leach	Joan	Brisbane	1
Longnecker	Nancy	Brisbane	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>6</b>



# Australian Science Communicators Annual General Meeting Proxies

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LAST	FIRST	MEMBER?	PROXY TO
Bickford	Sophia	1	Sarah Lau
Donnelly	Emma	1	Sarah Lau
Dooley	Phil	1	Claire Harris
Econnect Communication		1	Toss Gascoigne
Gottschalk	Kirsten	1	Pete Wheeler
Jurkiewicz	Alex	1	Claire Harris
Lange	Corinna	1	Sarah Lau
Legg	Jacinta	1	Sarah Lau
Longnecker	Nancy	1	Sarah Lau
Medvecky	Fabien	1	Sarah Lau
Nisselle	Amy	1	Sarah Lau
Rifkin	Will	1	Sarah Lau
Ridley	Michelle	1	Pete Wheeler
Rive	Meg	1	Sarah Lau
Scitech		1	Sarah Lau
Searle	Suzette	1	Ian McDonald
Shore	Jesse	1	Sarah Lau
Stutchbury	Robyn	1	Sarah Lau
Yardley	Chris	1	Ian McDonald
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>19</b>	

# Australian Science Communicators Annual General Meeting President's Report

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## **ASC President report for Annual General Meeting, 29 November 2013**

Prepared by Claire Harris and Rod Lamberts

### **Summary from Rod Lamberts**

My functional tenure ended near the end of May with a major health incident. VP Claire Harris stepped in as acting national President after I stepped down officially in early July when it became clear I would be unable to return to the role. My initial platform when elected in November 2012 was to start to addressing the following:

#### **Professionalism**

- code of conduct
- ethics / disciplinary committee
- accreditation of people and training

ACTION - Appointment of Dr Will Grant as VP with carriage over this, first round of EOI and calls for submission conducted. See separate document prepared by Will.

#### **Media presence/ exposure**

Plans to explore increasing media presence and exposure of the ASC. For example, when matters of significance to science communication emerge (like L'Aquila), part of the raising of the profile and contribution of sci comm should be statements from the ASC via its President.

ACTION - Had begun conversations with the Exec and National council on this when I was taken ill. Discussion continued within the Exec including the development of a communication approach review and plan, led by Claire Harris, VP.

#### **Explore the nature of membership**

- greater profile
- what are the benefits?
- survey of current (and past) members
- Are there new types of people who might benefit from membership?

ACTION - none initiated while I was in the chair.

#### **Broadly:**

- want to provoke ASC to think about what this whole multi-faceted profession of science communication is/ means.
- encourage internal reflection about what the ASC is/ should/ could be

### **Summary from Claire Harris**

From the time when I took on the President role in July 2013, the Executive was exploring some key initiatives as Rod has outlined above. In addition to developing those activities, we ramped up on a number of other initiatives both important for our members and also our external profile.

National conference preparations have been vibrant and busy. Working with the PCO and the Program Committee (Claire Harris, Kali Madden, Jesse Shore and Nancy Longnecker), the ASC conference will kick some new goals. Based on past feedback we know that professional development, networking, online engagement, posters and conference proceedings are all desired. For the first time, we will have a poster session and a (modest) conference

proceedings. The program features the Chief Scientist of Queensland and the esteemed (and ASC past President) Ian Lowe.

We have also maintained our relationship with the Inspiring Australia team at the (now) Department of Industry through a range of funded projects, communication activities and the recently-formed Science Sector Group.

Membership numbers have remained at a high level and we have a number of corporate members. Our branches have had a busy year, most notably leading many National Science Week activities.. Turnover of Presidents and branch reps is always a challenge but the branches have all maintained activities and regular meetings. Many of our branch reps are also Inspiring Australia officers or otherwise connected with their IA reps in their state.

Our General Manager position, which was a position the Executive of 2012 also worked to get off the ground, was not filled despite our best efforts to recruit. The applications received and the process provides a great basis for potentially re-advertising the position or reconfiguring it (and the budget) for specific projects.

We have also managed quite a bit of change within the Executive team and juggled illness and various commitments. The Executive has oscillated between 6 and 3 Executive members through the year, which has lead to members of the Exec taking on extra workloads. However, our meetings (every 1 or 2 months) were positive and productive and a particular highlight was the opportunity to meet face-to-face after the Big Science Communication Summit in Sydney in June.

As workloads of Executive, National Council members and the Executive Officer are an ongoing issue, we recommend that the 2014 Executive be made up of 7 members, the maximum allowed under our constitution. It is heartening to hear that we have many people interested in Executive positions for 2014.

A special mention must be made to Jesse Shore who has served as President of ASC in 2010, 2011 and 2012 and duly assisted the 2013 Executive. We thank Jesse for his vision and commitment.

It has been a busy and exciting year with lots of events at branch-level and with the Big Science Communication Summit and of course leading into our national conference. We need to build on the growing profile and ability of the ASC to encourage discussion about science communication issues of national and local importance. And we need to be ever mindful of what the ASC does and can provide to our members and to wider society who are grappling with how science, technology and innovation should be discussed and debated.

## **Highlights**

### **1. Significant operational and administrative matters**

- 1.1 The Executive completed some significant tax compliance and not-for-profit status investigations.
- 1.2 Insurance arrangements were updated to cover ASC structure and operations.
- 1.3 New information/file sharing tools for the Executive and National Council were setup.
- 1.4 A significant amount of recruitment was done for the General Manager position and the ASC Communication team, including bringing on two outstanding candidates in the webmaster and Scope editor positions.

### **2. Discussion of professionalisation and ASC membership**

- 2.1 Will Grant and Rod Lamberts researched how other associations conduct honour/ethics codes and professionalisation.
- 2.2 A number of consultations with members about the professionalisation process including the event with the Victorian branch 'Professionalisation & Advocacy: Raising the bar for ASC?' (June).
- 2.3 A members survey was drafted, bringing in questions from the 2004 survey (by Metcalfe and Gascoigne) and this will be run in 2014 following some further work to finalise it.

### **3. Scope newsletter**

- 3.1 Sally Miles has served as Scope Editor since mid-2011 and stepped down officially in June 2013. [We thanks Sally for her contributions to ASC](#). We had begun [recruitment for a new Scope Editor](#) in April 2013. ASC was lucky to have Victoria Leitch start in July, with her first issue going out end-July.
- 3.2 Scope moved to MailChimp in March resulting in a far superior system for developing and distributing issues and an improved user experience. Since MailChimp was implemented, seven issues have gone out (March to October) to an average of 480 subscribers. Open rates are more than double the average open rates of organisations like this.
- 3.3 We also began recruiting for writers for Scope and also the ASC website and Inspiring Australia updates and have about 8 writers contributing and enjoying writing for Scope.

### **4. Website and online platforms**

- 4.1 With the stepping down of James Hutson in November 2012 we were without a much-needed webmaster. We began a recruitment process and got Alex Jurkiewicz on board in July.
- 4.2 Alex has completed three major projects: a Wordpress core upgrade, website performance improvements with Cloudflare and the design and launch of our new conference website.
- 4.3 Upcoming major projects for Alex are a major ASC web presence re-launch and easing pain points in our back office management.
- 4.4 ASC social media channels were audited and Twitter has been revitalised. In 2014, we will explore if we can have more help to manage our social media platforms.
- 4.5 The YourMembership platform for our online community has been developed further with branches now using this to track and contact members. This will be further developed in 2014.
- 4.6 The ASC-list continues to be an important hub for conversation and debate with the formation of various Special Interest Groups (like the 'Grumpy Old Communicators' group, which set up its own LinkedIn page).

### **5. Inspiring Australia strategy and wider engagement**

- 5.1 The ASC has recently invited members to join the team posting the IA messages. The invitation is a powerful reminder to ASC members and our e-list readers of the ASC-IA communication project.
- 5.2 The National Audit completed in 2012 continues to gain profile with people downloading it from the ASC website, it being discussed at events such as the Big Summit and in Adelaide at an event run by the branch featuring two of the authors.
- 5.3 Inspiring Australia contracted ASC, along with ScienceRewired, Science in Public and CPAS, to build and maintain a community site for the discussion of science communication issues. To date the site has been built, CPAS has provided original science communication content (in the form of blog posts and a regular Google Hangout known as SCOM BOMB) and the community of engaged readers / watchers is gradually growing.

- 5.4 ASC President invited to be a member of the Non-Government Science Sector Group, and advisory group for IA which included representatives from the RiAus, the Australian Science Media Centre, STA, the Office of the Chief Scientist, & CHASS.
- 5.5 ASC President invited to the Australian Museum Eureka Prizes, Prime Minister's Awards for Science and an Academy of Science post-PM Awards breakfast.
- 5.6 ASC has also been approached about being involved in the World Federation of Science Journalists' conference and the PCST conference.

## **6. Branches and National Council**

- 6.1 The branches have experienced quite a bit of turnover in 2013 with many branch reps committing an extraordinary amount of time to National Science Week. Some highlights are provided below but a fuller account will be published in the inaugural 'ASC Snapshot 2013' report.
- 6.2 The National Council provides a great deal of management and feedback on the running of the ASC. The National Council met every 3 months in 2013 and discussed a range of matters.
- 6.3 ACT ran 6 events with a particular highlight being the 'Mayday! Re-examining Canberra's deadliest plane crash' event which attracted 150 people.
- 6.4 Victoria ran 7 events with a particular highlight being the 'Giants of Medicine - Health Literacy: Public Health & Evidence-based Medicine' which attracted 240 attendees.
- 6.5 South Australia ran 9 events with a particular highlight: the 'Alternative Medicine versus Science: Winners and Losers' forum attracting 60 people.
- 6.6 Western Australia ran 10 events with a visit to the WA museum after hours for 'Museum and Mummies Night' being a highlight.
- 6.7 SE Queensland ran 3 key events and has maintained an active small group of branch reps and members. One highlight was National Science Week Science Trivia Night, attracting about 80 participants. SEQ's newsletter and event emails now reach a total of 148 subscribers, up from 123 in 2012.

## **7. Big Science Communication Summit**

- 7.1 ASC was a supporter of the Big Science Communication Summit and as part of this, six ASC members were able to join the social media team, to drive discussion and debate, and to attend the event.
- 7.2 Participation in this event provided a great opportunity for ASC members to meet each other and for the organisation to increase its external profile with members and Executive representatives (particularly Will Grant) having visible roles in panel discussions.

## **8. National conference**

- 8.1 The national conference (every 2 years) is one of the key activities for the ASC Executive and the 2014 program is shaping up to be extremely engaging with exciting social events.
- 8.2 We received a record number of abstracts with over 150 abstracts submitted.
- 8.3 For the first time, we will have a poster session and a (modest) peer-reviewed conference proceedings, further increasing the credibility of the science communication profession.
- 8.4 The conference will provide a platform for celebrating 20 years of the ASC and we will also announce the Unsung Hero of Australian Science Communication, which is running now for the second time after a successful 2013 award to Guy Nolch.
- 8.5 ASC has a partnership arrangement with Science Communicators Association of New Zealand for the first time. This relationship will be featured at a special breakfast event at the conference.

## **9. Thanks and acknowledgements:**

We have special thanks for the many people who contribute to ASC at a national level — and some of you are in attending this AGM:

- 9.1 We thank and acknowledge Jesse Shore who is retiring from the National Executive. Jesse has served as Past President in 2013, capping off many years of service as President of ASC in 2010, 2011 and 2012. We thank Jesse for his vision and commitment.
- 9.2 Sally Miles has stepped down as our Scope editor after more than two years of great work.
- 9.3 All those on the National Council
- 9.4 Kali Madden, as Executive Officer, for her enthusiasm and tireless work in contributing to the running of the Association, engaging with members and managing the conference.
- 9.5 Victoria Leitch for her editorial contribution to Scope.
- 9.6 Those on the conference program committee: Kali Madden (Director), Claire Harris (Convenor), Jesse Shore, Nancy Longnecker.
- 9.7 Alex Jurkiewicz for his contributions to managing the website.
- 9.8 To all the branch committees and their hard working presidents
- 9.9 Special thanks to Ian McDonald, the ACT branch for organising this AGM and CPAS ANU for the venue.
- 9.10 The members of the National Executive, who all put in many hours: Will Grant, Jesse Shore, Sarah Lau, Pete Wheeler.

Claire Harris and Rod Lamberts

29 November 2013

DRAFT

# Australian Science Communicators

## Annual General Meeting

### Treasurer's Report 2013

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This report summarises the Annual Accounts for the ASC for the year ending 31 August 2013. In the coming months these accounts will be audited as we work through some regulatory issues the association is facing. For now, I ask that the meeting note and consider the statements and other aspects of this report and authorise the National Council to approve and adopt the accounts once the audit is complete.

For clarity, the accounts are divided into "core operations, funded mostly by "subscriptions" and "projects", with funding from external sources.

**Income:** During this period income to the ASC came from three primary sources. These were membership subscriptions, totalling \$34,313; bank interest, totalling \$2,709 (significantly more than previous years); and Inspiring Australia grants, totalling \$46,860k.

The Inspiring Australia (IA) grants relate to several projects including the National Audit (ongoing), the distribution of IA updates (ongoing) and the development of an online presence for the IA community including the website "No Funny Business".

**Expenditure.** The major items of expenditure relate to the administration of the association, delivery of the conference and IA related projects. Administration related expenditure included \$18,513 for the employment of the Executive Officer and \$7,342 for IT costs, most of which related to the *YourMembership* software which underpins the ASC membership management infrastructure.

During this period legal advice and insurances cost the ASC a total of \$3,890, we spent \$1,077 auditing the 2011-2012 accounts, and we incurred \$1,028 in bank and merchant fees. \$4,370 was paid in the form of honoraria and only \$401 was spent on travel related expenses thanks to ASC Presidents using non ASC work trips to conduct ASC business. Capitation is yet to be issued to branches for this period but this will occur in the coming weeks.

Our 'core' operating expenses for this period totalled \$46,636 (slightly up on last years \$39.8k), indicating a loss on trading of just under \$10k.

So far \$20,714 has been spent on the conference. Traditionally conferences have been a significant source of revenue for the association, with profits providing a degree of financial security and the ability to conduct many more activities in the intervening years.

In this period \$22,662 was spent on IA related projects with expenditure of \$15,773 for the delivery of the National Audit and \$6,889 for the early development and delivery of an online presence for IA.

**Balance sheet:** Assets held by the ASC across our two bank accounts equated to \$93,875 for the end of the financial year in question. Liabilities included our accumulated GST debt of \$7,119, \$ 3,145 of capitation owed to branches and \$1,650 for a National Science Week grant being held on behalf of the ACT branch.

Summing up, this gives the ASC a net equity at the end of the financial year of \$85,106. This indicates a sound financial position for the ASC as we head towards the biennial conference. I commend this report to the November 2013 AGM.

*P. Wheeler*

Pete Wheeler, ASC Treasurer

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# Australian Science Communicators Annual General Meeting Accounts – Profit and Loss Statement

## FINANCIAL YEAR 2013: PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT

### Core operations

#### Income

Membership fees	34313			
Bank interest	2709		37022	

#### Expenditure

##### Administration

	IT costs	7342		
	Secretariat	18513		
	Other administration	161	26016	
GST			8213	
Communications			1342	
Insurance and Legal Advice			3890	
Auditing			1077	
Bank and Merchant Fees			1028	
Honoraria			4370	
Subscriptions			299	
Travel			401	46636
<b>Balance on core operations</b>				<b>-9614</b>

### Projects

#### National Conference

Income	0		
Costs	20714		-20714

#### IA National Audit

Carried forward	19015		
Income	2860		
Costs	15773		6102

#### IA Communications

Carried forward	25000		25000
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#### IA Online Community

Income	44000			
Costs	6889	37111	47499	37885

### Total balance on trading

**37885**

# Australian Science Communicators Annual General Meeting Nomination for President – Joan Leach

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Assoc Prof Joan Leach has been nominated by Claire Harris and seconded by Nancy Longnecker.

## **Assoc Prof Joan Leach**

[j.leach@uq.edu.au](mailto:j.leach@uq.edu.au)

I am keen to become ASC's next President and to work with the National Council and executive to further strengthen ASC in 2014. I have already given some thought about a few of the issues (some discussed quite recently in the ASC online community) that I would pursue over the next year, if elected President.

First, though, a bit of background on me might be useful. I am Associate Professor and Convenor of the Postgraduate program in Science Communication at the University of Queensland. Having moved from Imperial College, London (Science Communication Group) and prior to that, the University of Pittsburgh (Rhetoric of Science Program), I am about to celebrate my 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Brisbane. Over that time, I have cemented my place in Australia's science communication community both on the academic front and on the practical front. I have global experience in science communication research and training and I frequently serve as reviewer, committee member and examiner for programs, PhDs and projects around the world. I publish in the field and have edited a tier 1 journal where I continue to serve on editorial board. I am also involved in Federal steering committees and have collaborated on practical science communication projects around the world. While I am first and foremost an academic, I always have an eye on applicability.

I am enormously proud of the growth of the field of science communication; some of my first students in science communication are now at the top of the field in media organisations, scientific institutions, NGOs, consultancies, and academia. Part of that pride resides in the diversity of what my students have done. I see Science Communication as a big umbrella that covers activity in science journalism and media, community engagement, informal education, advocacy, policy, evaluation, and research (and probably much more besides). I have always thought that this was the strength of the field. I also am currently on the National Committee for the History and Philosophy of Science at the Academy of Science. I have advocated strongly in this group that science communication is central not only to science, but also contributes to a broader awareness of what science means (and has meant), what the nature of science is, and how communication is central to both the doing and the dissemination of science.

Finally, why do I want to do this now? Over the last few years, my involvement in the "Inspiring Australia" strategy has meant opportunity to work with a wide range of ASC members. I value my fellow academic colleagues in Australia enormously (indeed, we rely on each other) and I've been inspired by what ASC members do when they are given resources and encouragement. I have been active in supporting the 2014 ASC conference in Brisbane

and think some of our important conversations will have pride of place then. I also have had the opportunity while visiting colleagues to go along to regional ASC meetings (some very robust, others needing a bit of a boost) and am aware of the different issues on the burner across the country. I have personally gained from being a member of ASC and of the science communication community in Australia—I have gained knowledge, insight, and professional support from ASC. I will now put my hand up in hopes of returning some of what I've gained.

## **The Issues:**

### **Raising awareness of the field**

While I think the field of science communication is increasingly recognised and respected, the ASC needs to be a continual presence on the national scene. ASC should be the 'go to' organisation when policy-makers and other institutions have questions about the field. I was somewhat taken aback in 2012 when the Office of Learning and Teaching wanted to create guidelines for Science Communication teaching and practice—and had no idea whom to ask. This is just one example of how important it is to have an advocate for the organization across research, teaching and learning, and engagement. Members in the ASC do all of these things and the organisation needs that recognition. I will make it a priority to move ASC and its members to the front of minds of key organisations when they are thinking about science and communication.

### **Benchmarking/Certification/'Professionalisation'**

This issue is part of a conversation that Rod Lamberts and Will Grant pursued at the start of this year. I would like to pick up this conversation with members. On the one hand, we now have data from Inspiring Australia about the kinds of engagement and communication that goes on in Australia. We are well-placed to benchmark our activity globally and part of ASC's mission has been to make these activities and their evaluation visible to ASC members (thank you Jesse Shore, Jenni Metcalfe, and Nancy Longnecker). Certification and professionalisation in the field are trickier matters worthy of cautious investigation. On a practical front, though, one interesting emerging trend in MOOCs is to use them for continuing professional development and even certification in key or emerging skills (I recently did the data visualisation course from the Knight Centre in the US). AusSMC is great partner here in online briefings and I know ASC members who do similar things. This will be something I will explore with members over the coming year.

### **Special Interest Groups**

At least one of these already exists within ASC. The SCERN (Science Communication Education and Research Network) spearheaded by Professor Sue Stocklmayer at ANU met 4 years ago in Canberra. The conversations that started there have continued and have actually placed this network in good stead for helping to impact and participate in (and even constructively criticise) the "Inspiring Australia" programs when they arrived. Online,

members seem to have an appetite for more of these. I will make it a priority to investigate what ASC can do to 'seed' more of these productive networks of members.

### **Ethical Guidelines/Code**

I have listened to the debates about ethical guidelines for science communication with great interest. Some of you may know that Iowa State University held its 3 conference on Science Communication Ethics in 2013 (and are putting together a useful volume from the discussions there). This issue has local interest as well as global interest—it seems time we put it higher on the agenda for ASC. We can certainly pursue this in February at the ASC conference in Brisbane as well as at regional meetings and online. A national guideline does not seem out of reach. More conversation about applying such a guideline is probably needed. I'd be very keen to have those conversations.

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# Australian Science Communicators

## Annual General Meeting

### Motions to change the ASC Constitution

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#### **Reason for proposed amendments:**

##### **Summary:**

The definition and regulation of not-for-profit (NFP) entities is changing (see the link below for details). These changing rules caused the ASC to seek legal advice to ensure the association is constitutionally sound both now and in the future. The advice ASC received was that the constitution of the ASC does not adhere to the requirements for NFP status and so changes were recommended.

Major legal changes affecting Australian not-for-profits:

[http://www.bartier.com.au/Docs/Bartier\\_Bulletin\\_on\\_ACNC\\_Oct\\_2012.pdf](http://www.bartier.com.au/Docs/Bartier_Bulletin_on_ACNC_Oct_2012.pdf)

The legal advice ASC has received suggests that regardless of an organisation's legal structure, to be a NFP (whether tax exempt or tax paying):

- i. An organisation cannot operate for the profit of its committee members or members while its operating nor when it is wound up.
- ii. The constitution of the NFP needs to prohibit the distribution of profits or assets to committee members and members while it is operating and when it is wound up (unless the distribution is made to another NFP with a similar purpose).

Obviously the ASC does not operate for the profit of committee members or any members, but this is not defined within the constitution, which governs the way the association is run. The proposed amendments to the constitution will directly address this issue and ensure the ASC is compliant with the requirements of a not-for-profit entity as defined by the regulators at this time.

**Motion to change the Constitution** – Motion made by Pete Wheeler and seconded by Claire Harris. It is proposed the constitution is amended with the additional outlined below.

Note: This information has been provided to Mills Oakley Lawyers and may change slightly – if changes are suggested by the lawyers, these will be provided to the membership as soon as possible for consideration at the AGM.

Section 8 of the constitution - 'Finances':

#### **Proposed new wording**

An additional entry to the list of definitions:

#### **8.0 Finances**

##### **8.0.1**

8.0.1 As a Not for Profit (NFP) organisation the ASC must not distribute any surplus, income or assets directly or indirectly to its members while it is operating nor when it is wound up (unless the distribution is made to another NFP entity with a similar purpose).

##### **8.0.2**

8.0.2 Clause 8.0.1 does not prevent the Association from paying a member—

- (a) reimbursement for expenses properly incurred by the member; or
- (b) for goods or services provided by the member—

(c) an honorarium

if this is done in good faith on terms no more favourable than if the member was not a member.

*For reference: current version*

#### 8.0 FINANCES

8.1 Membership Fees shall be payable within two (2) months of notice of the fees being due after which membership shall be deemed to have lapsed. To rejoin the Association, the person must pay the Joining Fee and Annual Membership Fee.

8.2 The funds of the Association shall be paid into a Bank Account in the name of the Association and shall only be with drawn by cheques signed by such persons as the National Council shall from time to time authorise.

8.2.1 All cheques above such limit as the National Council may from time to time determine shall be countersigned by the Treasurer.

8.3 Nothing in Clause 8.2 shall prevent the National Committee or National Executive from investing any moneys of the Association not immediately required for any of its objects or purposes, in such manner as it may from time to time determine.

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