



Minutes of meeting

Australasian Evolution Society Annual General Meeting

DATE/TIME Friday, 6th December, 2024 – 9am (AWST)

VENUE Alexander Lecture Theatre, UWA

Present

In person

Renee Firman (VP)
Emma Sherratt (President)
Damien Esquerre (VP-elect)
John Whale (Treasurer)
Rowan Lymbery (Secretary)
Yong Zhi Foo (ECR Rep)
Upama Aich (ECR Rep)
Putter Tiatragul (Public Officer)
Danelle Van den Berg
Aadhi Ramkumar
Bruno A. Buzatto
Marcus Michelangeli
Tahlia Fulton
Joe Tomkins
Alistair Senior
Jon Evans
Matt Hall
Natalie Warburton
Kenny Travouillon
Lucy Southwell-Hambly
Sara Ryding
Kathleen McClay
Jennifer Evans

Alexandros G Sotiropoulos
Bob Wong
Ben Phillips
Erin Macartney
Michael Kasuovic
Christen Mirth
Matthew Symonds
Aysha Sezmis
Chris Blake
Atharva Bhide
Soffi Law
Sarah Hurley
Storme de Scally
Carla Sgro
Katrina McGuigan
Mike McDonald
Shengyao Lin
Cameron Dodd
Christopher Barker
Anna Depiazzi
Andrea Piccinini

Online - MS Teams
Kirt Hanks

Item 1. Welcome and Apologies

- Apology from Ondi Crino.

- Emma made a note that it is the 25th anniversary of the society, passed over to Simone Blomberg, founding member

- Simone noted that it started with 4 people: herself, Diana Fisher, Kate, Ian Owens. Got together and decided that it would be great to have a conference where you were interested in every single talk. Also

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wanted to make it inclusive - Australasian Evolution Society. First conference at UQ in 1999. After organising conference, all four founding members moved overseas. One of proudest moments of career to have started an academic society.

- Emma thanked everyone who has kept the society and the conferences going ever since. Asked if anyone has information on 2001 and 2007, where Putter cannot find details on what happened those years. Putter asked if anyone has archives of the programs. All the information we have is now on our website on past conferences section.

Item 2. Previous Minutes

1.1 Approval of the minutes

- Proposed by Emma, seconded by John

1.2 Update on actionable items from previous minutes

- See president's report (below)

- Changing constitution - item delayed

- Letter to ARC: *disgruntled letter* not a strategic approach; discussion to support out senior members to step up when they can.

Item 3. Nominations for upcoming positions

3.1 Vice president elect (nominations: Simone Blomberg (self nom.), Ondi Crino (Lee-Ann Rollins nom.))

3.2 Treasurer (continuing: John Whale)

3.3 Secretary (nominations: Erin Macartney (self nom.))

3.4 ECR representatives (continuing: Yong Zhi Foo)

3.5 Public/Website officer (continuing: Putter Tiatragul)

3.6 Social Media representatives (nominations: Avneet Kaur (self nom.))

3.7 General Member (open)

- No objections raised for those roles where a single nomination received. Proposed by Emma, seconded by Rowan.

- Two nominations for VP elect - Simone Blomberg and Ondi Crino. Simone offered last year to bring conference back to Queensland for 2025. Emma suggested that instead of voting on one position, we elect Simone as a general member to run conference next year, and Ondi comes in as VP-elect. No objections raised - unanimous approval by show of hands.

- Conversation to be had after the 2025 conference for whether it goes back to the President's institution or becomes decoupled from President/VP.

Item 4. Reports

4.1 Presidents report (report on conference)

- Successful Perth Conference run in December 4-6

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- Higher conference costs and distance of Perth meant funds were not allocated to ECR Networking Grants, but more given to Travel Grants instead
- Moved emails to GMAIL, to avoid MailChimp fees (based on limits of email list)
- 31 different institutions Including: Japan, Switzerland, Italy, Brazil
- 80 long and 8 flash talks
- Super successful ECR breakout session
- Senior plenary from Natalie Warburton
- ECR plenaries (Sara Ryding, Maddie James)
- Sponsorship from: Arludo (best student talk, 5 Awesome talks Best flash talk). Free Venue hire at UWA. Others: UWA DVC Office, Murdoch Office of Research and Innovation.
- Low cost – Students/postdoc \$200 (\$240), Faculty/fellows, \$340 (\$380)
- 20 travel grants made (total \$6,300)
- Talk prizes (total \$1,550)
- 2024 WA – 130 attendees (124 in person, 6 online)
- 2023 SA – 155 attendees (140 in person, 15 online)
- 2022 ACT – 235 attendees (212 in person, 23 online)
- 2021 VIC – 214 attendees (102 in person, 112 online)
- 2020 online – 151 attendees (all online)
- 2019 NSW – 240 attendees (none online)

4.2 Treasurer report

- Things to note
 - John: Similar to last AGM, conference pays for itself and we break even. Items with asterisks are items still to be paid in the next week or so, but are currently included in the budget.
 - Report moved by Emma, seconded by Damien.

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Treasurer's Report

Starting Balance (29/JAN/2024)		\$36,464.74
Outgoings		
Bank Account Fees		\$100.00
AES Website Fee		\$16.06
MailChimp Account Fee		\$0.00
2024 Conference		
Welcome Event		\$4,030.00
Venue Hire		\$0.00
Catering		\$10,324.70
Travel Grants		\$6,300.00 *
ECR Plenary Awards		\$1,500.00 *
Prizes		\$2,200.00 *
Conference Dinner		\$10,000.00
Conference Dinner DJ		\$0.00
Student Help/IT Support		\$1,400.00 *
Name Tags/Signage		\$0.00
Miscellaneous		
International Bank Transfer Fee		\$0.00
Corsizio Service Fee		\$0.00
	Total Outgoings	\$35,870.76
Incomings		
2024 Conference		
Registration & Dinner		\$33,301.03
Membership		\$140.91
Murdoch University Sponsorship		\$735.95
University of Western Australia Sponsorship		\$850.00 *
ANZ Refund		\$0.04
	Total Incomings	\$35,027.93
Ending Balance (5/DEC/2024)		
	Calculated Total	\$35,621.91
	Actual Total	\$35,621.91
	Difference	\$0.00

Item 5. Topic for discussion

5.1 Voting for bank access for new executive members

- Bank signatories need to be changed - Emma Sherratt outgoing, Renee Firman incoming.
Unanimous approval for Renee Firman to be added to the bank account

5.2 2025 conference

- Emma: going to be in Brisbane, hosted by Simone. Question of when in the year to host the conference, is December the best time of year going forward?

- Diana noted a lot of other big conferences on in Winter.

- Natalie mentioned that there is often a semester break in September. Michael noted that it doesn't match up across all universities. Katrina: 28th Sept to 3rd October common week off via Universities Australia, although coincides with school holidays. Emma noted that we typically try to support childcare during the conference.

5.3 Frequency of conference going forward

- Damien: a lot of small societies do conferences every two years, do people feel we should transition to this?

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- Matt Symonds - used to be every two years, then Mike changed to every year for continuity, but I quite like this format. Every two years, it has the potential to drift and lose focus in the conference.
- Diana: once a year better for an ECR and student focussed conference.
- Unanimous support to retain once a year.

5.4 Other activities for 2045

- Comment online that continuing the online attendance item is very beneficial and improves the inclusivity of the conference. Emma - we ran online via Teams rather than zoom, it would be good to get feedback from people on how well this worked.

Item 6.

6.1 Open discussion to other business

- No other business raised
- Renee as incoming president: thank you to the society, and we hope that everyone has enjoyed the conference. Thank you to Emma for a fantastic job as president.

Summary of action items:

- Bank signatories to be changed - Emma Sherratt outgoing, Renee Firman incoming.
- Executive to decide on timing of conference and send out a save the date in early 2025.
- Executive to seek an additional ECR representative from the PhD cohort.
- Executive to seek feedback from online attendees of 2024 conference regarding the MS Teams platform.