

Annual General Meeting

Friday 17 September 2021 at 3:00pm AEST

Via Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Present

Angela Brew, Chair	Macquarie University	Caitlin MacDonald	Australian National University
Donna Bennett	Office Logistics	Lilia Mantai	The University of Sydney
Kevin Brooks	Macquarie University	Liz Milward	The University of Newcastle
Ash Dowling	Australian National University	Benjamin Mountford	Australian Catholic University
Oliver Hervir	Australian National University	Courtney Muir	Macquarie University
Nibras Jasim		Dermot Nestor	Australian Catholic University
Dan Johnstone	The University of Sydney	Andrew Quattrocchi	The University of Sydney
Judy Kay	The University of Sydney	Sophia Ridolfo	Australian National University
Max Kirkby	Australian National University	Rachel Spronken-Smith	University of Otago
Neco Kriel	Australian National University	Rubay Tessema	Australian National University
Carina Li		Bailey Wemyss	University of the Sunshine Coast
Tina Lin	Western Sydney University	Denise Wood	University of the Sunshine Coast

Apologies

Geoff Crisp	University of Canberra	Ian Fuller	Massey University
Patrick Crookes	University of Canberra	Olivia Jessop	The University of Queensland
Martin Forsey	University of Western Australia		

1. Welcome and introduction

The annual general meeting of The Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research was called to order at 3:01pm by ACUR Chair Angela Brew who welcomed all present.

2. Minutes of the Third Annual ACUR AGM held on Thursday 15 October 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting held via Zoom meeting on 15 October 2020 were distributed to registrants prior to the meeting.

Motion: That the Minutes of the AGM held on 15 October 2020 be accepted
Moved by Angela Brew and seconded by Lilia Mantai

Carried

3. Business arising from the minutes – Nil

4. Financial Report

An audit of the accounts has been carried out as required in the ACUR Constitution (17.1) and the audit report has been circulated. The deficit for this period was \$1,495.

Motion: That the ACUR 2020-2021 Financial Report be considered and approved

Moved by Denise Wood and seconded by Max Kirkby

Carried

4.2 Membership fees: To approve the membership fees as stated in the financial Report for the remainder of the 2021-21 financial year

- \$3,000 for Institutions
- \$1,000 for institutions with less than 3,000 students
- Affiliate membership: \$500
- \$75 for those waged – specified as full-time employed
- \$25 unwaged, part-time and retired
- \$10 for students (since 2019, included as part of conference fee)

Motion: That these Membership Fees be approved

Moved by Denise Wood and seconded by Rachel Spronken-Smith

Carried

5. Report of the Chair

The Report of the chair had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chair reported that this year has seen a marked increase in activity despite continuing conditions of COVID-19. The administrative load during this year has been considerable, and we have continued to search for individuals to join the Executive to lighten the load. – so far without success.

Early in the year the Executive Committee carried out a strategic planning exercise (included in the Executive Committee report).

We have kept a steady state in terms of institutional memberships and there are small increases in our individual memberships. We have been quite busy trying to get new members amongst HE Institutions and keeping contact with lapsed members.

We now have a sponsorship strategy, and we are always hoping to get sponsors!

This year on our website we have established a large section for members and uploaded our ACUR video that was created by Diana Kazakov and members of the Student Committee.

The Chair expressed thanks to all the members of the ACUR Executive Committee and the Student Committee for all the fantastic work they have done this year to make ACUR the vibrant and dynamic organisation that it undoubtedly is. She indicated that she was particularly indebted to Donna Bennett for her unfailing efforts to keep us all on track, and wanted to particularly acknowledge the leadership of Olivia Jessop, who as head of the Student Committee has led us into new inclusive ways of working this year.

Motion: That the Report of the Chair be accepted

Moved by Angela Brew and seconded by Denise Wood

Carried

6. Report of the Executive Committee

The report of the Executive Committee has been circulated. Key aspects are:

- The report on the Strategic planning exercise undertaken as required in the Constitution.
- This resulted in identifying five strategic projects. The report details progress on these projects.
- For a small group working in a pandemic the Executive had achieved a lot over the last year.
- Special thanks were given to the Student Committee who were amazing to work with and members of the Executive Committee all enjoyed their energy and enthusiasm.

6.1 To consider changes to the Constitution re Student Committee

During the year it was noted that there was no mention of the Student Committee in the ACUR Constitution. The Executive set out to rectify this and in discussion with the Heads of the Student Committee made a number of amendments to the Constitution. These were included in red in the draft Constitution circulated earlier.

- a) Section 14 Student Committee This constitutes the addition of an entirely new section
- b) Section 13. The addition of 13.6 in order to match the statement at 14.4 relating to the Student Committee. This is a practice we have adhered to and is simply stating customary practice.
- c) Points 17.14, 17.15 and 17.16. amended to plural "Representatives". Note Point 14.6 specifies who those representatives are.

***Motion: That that the AGM accept the suggested changes to the ACUR Constitution
Proposed by Max Kirkby, seconded by Denise Wood***

Carried

Thanks were expressed to the Executive and particularly the students for what has been achieved this year.

A question was raised regarding the Sponsorship strategy document. The Chair explained that our approach to sponsorship is as an exchange as we have things to offer as well as things to gain through sponsorship. The 27-page document explains the approach and includes resources to help ACUR Committee members in their approaches to sponsors. However, we do not have any sponsors yet. We are looking for someone to lead this project. The document will be available to anyone at the meeting who would like to see it.

***Motion: It was proposed that the report of the Executive Committee be accepted
Moved by Bailey Wemyss, seconded by Dermot Nestor***

Carried

7. Student Committee Report

The Student Committee report had been distributed prior to the AGM. Highlights included:

- Being involved in collaborating with Suriname students.
- Creating a promotional video for the Suriname conference as well as the ACUR website.
- Ran the photo competition.
- Consistently took an inclusive approach to the work they were doing.
- Members wrote the inclusivity section of the Induction document for the ACUR Executive.
- Looking forward to the ambassador project next year.

Bailey Wemyss expressed interest in joining the student committee.

The Chair thanked all members of the Student Committee with special thanks to Olivia who lead us into new inclusive ways of working. The Chair also thanked Lachlan Deimel who had helped in his role as Descending Head.

***It was proposed that the report of the Student Committee be accepted
Moved by Angela Brew, seconded by Bailey Wemyss***

Carried

8. Nominations

All members of the Executive serve for two years and are appointed by the AGM. Most elected Executive Committee positions are due next year. However, the Head of the Student Committee serves one year in the Ascending Position and one year in the Descending position where they provide guidance and mentoring of the incoming Head. This means that every year there is a new Ascending Head.

This year, two candidates were nominated to become the new Head of the Student Committee. An election of members was duly held electronically from 3rd September, and closing at midnight on 16th September. As a result, Max Kirkby was elected as the new Head of the Student Committee.

***It was proposed that Max Kirkby be accepted as the new Head of the ACUR Student Committee
Moved by Dermot Nestor, seconded by Rachel Spronken-Smith***

Carried

Max was asked to say a few words. He reiterated that it had been a productive year and he looked forward to continuing the groundwork that has been done. He will be focussing on engagement,

research opportunities and infrastructure. Students wishing to work with Max in the Student Committee, should contact him directly.

9. Conference and Events

9.1 Conference 2021

The Chair congratulated the Chair of the current Conference Committee, Rubay Tessema, and his team for all the work they did to arrange such a successful conference this year. Despite the challenges of the online environment, a great program was arranged.

Rubay reported that there were 240+ attendees, with 52% undergraduate students and 48% supporter (parents and supervisors). Also attending were supporters, academics, supervisors, and family members. 150 abstracts were accepted and presented over 3 days. There were 48 sessions scheduled each with 2 judges. There were also 11 different keynote panels, providing sessions focused on research careers from across the world. There were over 150 peer reviewers, 10 student volunteers internally and the assistance from the ACUR Student Committee was phenomenal. Rubay said it was a pleasure working with the ACUR Executive and ANU will continue to work with ACUR.

The Chair noted that Rubay is leaving the ANU following this AGM. She thanked him for all that he had done to steer the 2021 conference and wished him well in his future career. Ash Downing will be replacing Rubay on the ACUR Executive to finalise the 2021 conference.

9.2 Conference 2022

ACUR has for some time been in negotiation with a university about the 2022 conference and they have decided to defer until 2023. So, we have recently begun to negotiate an alternative venue for the 2022 conference. Unfortunately, negotiations are not yet at a stage where it is possible to announce the 2022 conference hosts. But the Executive is committed to having a conference – hopefully face-to-face at the end of September 2022.

9.3 Other Events

ACUR are also hoping to attach a second Colloquium to the conference in the same venue possibly the day before or the day after the conference.

10. Newsletter Report (URNA)

The URNA Report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

This publication is in its twelfth year and Lilia took over from Eric Pawson who managed 7 issues and brought student voices to the fore. To protect the integrity of ACUR, we are in the process of obtaining a Creative Commons license. A newly developed URNA policy is on the website. Lilia thanked Donna and Angela for their assistance

***It was proposed that the report of the Newsletter Editor be accepted
Moved by Rachel Spronken-Smith and seconded by Benjamin Mountford***

Carried

11. Any other business

No other business was raised, the Chair thanked members for their attendance and contribution.

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 3:56 pm.