

# CONFERENCE INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL HOSTS

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## 1 ABOUT ACUR CONFERENCES

The Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Inc (ACUR) works to ensure that a high quality international conference of undergraduate research is held in Australasia annually. It aims to support different institutions in hosting the conference and to gain support for the conference in the wider higher and tertiary education community. The ACUR Executive, led by the ACUR Chair, has the responsibility to ensure consistency and quality of conferences. An International Steering Committee advises the Executive, disseminates information within institutions and encourages students' presentation and attendance. The ACUR Executive and the Steering Committee communicate through electronic means but may meet at conferences. Small task groups may be established from time to time to work on specific issues.

### 1.1 Definition of an ACUR conference

An undergraduate research conference is like any other academic conference, but presentations are delivered by Undergraduate, including Honours, students presenting work they have done either as part of their course or as part of an internship. As a multi-disciplinary conference, undergraduates have the opportunity to network with other undergraduate researchers from their own disciplines, and also to learn about how other disciplines approach research problems. An ACUR undergraduate research conference should have a celebratory atmosphere as it provides a great opportunity to meet students from other universities and share research experiences.

An ACUR Australasian Conference of Undergraduate Research is designed to complement and not compete with undergraduate research provision at institutional and state-wide levels.

### 1.2 Criteria for an ACUR conference of undergraduate research

1. is open to all undergraduate students and recent graduates including Honours students (within 12 months of Graduation at Bachelor's level) to present research conducted during or before undergraduate studies including extra-curricular research;

2. is open to both individual and group submissions;
3. adopts an inclusive approach to undergraduate research which encourages participation from all disciplines, all levels of study and all types of higher and tertiary education institutions;
4. involves an academic peer review process for abstracts which allows students to resubmit where appropriate;
5. is normally a face to face conference, but may include virtual conference elements (e.g. electronic networking, webinars, Zoom/Teams discussions);
6. offers a range of options for students to disseminate research (for example, through posters, oral presentations, workshops, performances etc.);
7. is cost-effective to ensure that the conference fee for student delegates is affordable;
8. has a social program to give students the opportunity to mix and debate outside of the formal presentations;
9. involves undergraduate students in the running of the conference;
10. welcomes staff, including supervisors, institutional representatives and members of the ACUR Steering Committee as delegates, and includes a session or sessions for them to discuss the implementation and management of undergraduate research;
11. provides time and space for the ACUR Inc AGM.

## **2 ACUR CONFERENCE HOSTS**

### **2.1 Host Institutions**

All ACUR Conferences are organised by a host institution with the support of ACUR committees and resources. The host institution is a university or other higher or tertiary education institute in Australia, New Zealand or nearby territories.

### **2.2 Past conference hosts**

2012 – Macquarie University  
2013 – Macquarie University  
2014 – Australian National University  
2015 – University of Western Australia  
2016 – Central Queensland University  
2017 – The University of Adelaide  
2018 – La Trobe University  
2019 – The University of Newcastle  
2021 – Australian National University (online)  
2022 – The University of Sydney  
2023 – Swinburne University of Technology

## 2.3 Applying to host an ACUR Conference

In the first instance, potential hosts are advised to notify the ACUR Chair that they would like to submit an Expression of Interest. The Chair will suggest feasibility depending on other potential hosts that have been identified. A detailed proposal is then required specifying how their institution will meet the ACUR criteria (see page 1). This will include details of administrative support and the facilities available for the conference, an indicative budget, and a timeline. A [template](#) is available for this purpose at: <https://www.acur.org.au/acur-conferences/>

The following year's conference venue is normally announced at the last session of the previous year's conference and there is quite a lot to get through before then so we encourage institutions wishing to submit an expression of interest to do so as soon as they are able.

Conferences are underwritten by the host institution and ACUR does not subsidise it, nor does it make any claim on any profits arising from the conference; Student delegates become student members of ACUR through a \$10 membership fee being included in their conference fee.

## 2.4 Application Process

The procedure is:

1. The Institution submits to the ACUR Chair a draft Expression of Interest.
2. The Chair shares this with the Executive and the Steering Committee who provide feedback.
3. The host Institution revises their expression of interest in the light of the feedback.
4. The ACUR Executive normally agrees the revised expression of interest. But reserves the right in exceptional cases to refer the expression of interest back to the host institution.
5. The expression of interest is signed off by a senior institutional member (usually a DVC) who writes a letter specifying agreement that the host institution will take legal responsibility for all risk management issues associated with the conference, including insurance and security, IP issues/ creative commons etc.; and forwarded to the Chair or Executive Officer.
6. The ACUR Chair agrees, and the conference venue is publicly announced.
7. Our experience is that this process usually takes longer than expected as there is usually some negotiation needed at institutional level – particularly where matters of accommodation and finance are concerned.

## 2.5. Following agreement to host

A member of the ACUR Executive will be assigned to assist your Conference Organising Committee. Further, based on experiences of ten years of ACUR conferences, a number of documents and templates that support the Conference

process are available to help with hosting. The Conference Guidelines document sets out the roles and responsibilities of each party and provides advice and links to resources for each stage of the process.

Angela Brew, ACUR Chair

pp. ACUR Executive Committee