

## Report of the Chair

### Introduction

This year has seen a marked increase in activity despite continuing conditions of COVID-19. The administrative load during this year has been considerable, but we have continued to search for individuals to join the Executive to lighten the load. Early in the year the Executive Committee carried out a strategic planning exercise, and since that time, considerable progress has been made on the strategic priorities identified (see report of the Executive Committee). The involvement of members of the Student Committee in strategic projects has resulted in ongoing liaison of these two groups in furthering the work of ACUR more broadly. Students have been fantastic, and the levels of activity have increased though working in collaboration with them.

### Membership

We have kept a steady state in terms of institutional memberships and there are small increases in our individual memberships despite the conditions of the pandemic. Student memberships were offered to undergraduates who participated in the ACUR Writing Project. In order to increase institutional memberships, we invited higher education institutions with undergraduate students to join ACUR, but so far without success. It is clear that maintaining contact with universities that have been using our services, including lapse institutional members is valuable. Making senior decision-makers aware of the use that their staff and students are making of ACUR is particularly important. Communicating with such people is proving to be interesting. It has alerted us to issues faced by staff and students, and we have been able to point people to resources that they were not aware of.

### Sponsorship

The pandemic has taught us that we cannot be wholly reliant for our income on membership fees. Sponsorship is needed if we are to grow the levels of support that we can provide for our members. Sponsorship has to be viewed as a reciprocal exchange. We must always be mindful of what ACUR can offer, as well as what we need. We have developed a framework and a system so that the efforts to obtain sponsorship by ACUR volunteers, office holders and committees can be coordinated and good-will with sponsors and potential sponsors can be maintained. We are still seeking a team leader to take this work forward.

### URNA

Issue 19 of our Newsletter *Undergraduate research News Australasia* (URNA) was published in May under the leadership of our new Editor Lilia Mantai. This issue was the first to contain interactive photographs and video material. It is interesting to note that since its inception in 2010, ninety-five student authors, and fifty-six other authors from numerous Australian and New Zealand universities have published articles in URNA.

### Website

Updates to the website are ongoing. In collaboration with members of the Student Committee, we have been able to give exposure to student researchers. We have also added a video contributed by members of the Student Committee. "InConversation" is a new discussion Forum providing a space for the sharing of ideas and issues related to undergraduate research. In an effort to increase the value of ACUR to our members, this year we established a new section of the website just for members. It contains Information about the ACUR Community, a list of Institutional members, information about the background and history of ACUR, information about ACUR research projects and links to research resources including recent publications by members, undergraduate research opportunities available and wanted, as well as access to strategic and committee papers.

### Finally

I'd like to extend my personal 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. I am particularly indebted to Donna Bennett for her unfailing efforts to keep us all on track, and I would particularly like to acknowledge the leadership of Olivia Jessop, which as head of the Student Committee has led us into new inclusive ways of working this year.

Angela Brew,  
Chair of ACUR

# **Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Incorporated**

ABN 34 121 898 756

## **Financial Statements**

**For the year ended 30 June 2021**

### **CONTENTS**

Statement by Members of the Committee

Income & Expenditure Statement

Balance Sheet

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

Independent Auditor's Report

**Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Incorporated**  
**Statement by Members of the Executive Committee**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2021**

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The committee have determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The committee have determined that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the accounts.

In the opinion of the committee the accompanying accounts:

1. present fairly the financial position of Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Incorporated as at 30 June 2021 and the results and cash flows of the association for the year ended on that date in accordance with applicable Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

Chair



Treasurer

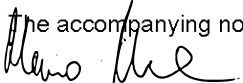


## Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Inc.

Suite 154, 4/16-18 Beenleigh Redland Bay Rd,  
LOGANHOLME QLD 4129

### Income & Expenditure Statement for the Year ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
Income	\$	\$
Membership Fees	36,720	37,420
Event Registration	0	1,078
Event Sponsorship	500	1,000
Interest Income	14	34
Other Income	161	661
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>37,395</b>	<b>40,193</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Bank & Merchant Fees	761	463
Stationery	528	0
Postage	309	-4
Insurance	834	0
Statutory & License Fees	60	143
Travel	0	1,054
Association Management	29,752	26,455
Printing	30	28
Postage	40	130
Dues & Subscriptions	3,893	3,087
Website/IT	1,083	0
Event Catering	0	524
Project Payments	0	500
Competition Expenses	1,600	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>38,890</b>	<b>32,380</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>-1,495</b>	<b>7,813</b>


The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements  
 5/Aug/2021

## Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Inc.

Suite 154, 4/16-18 Beenleigh Redland Bay Rd,  
LOGANHOLME QLD 4129

### Balance sheet as at 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
<b>Assets</b>	\$	\$
Current Assets		
Westpac Business #642093	36,894	37,079
Paypal	28	559
Other Assets	2,732	0
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>39,654</u>	<u>37,639</u>
<b>Less Liabilities</b>		
Trade Creditors	6,457	2,446
Project Provision		500
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>6,457</u>	<u>2,946</u>
	<u>33,198</u>	<u>34,692</u>
<b>Members' Funds</b>		
Funds as at 1 July 2020	34,692	26,879
Surplus/(Deficit) from Income Statement	-1,495	7,813
<b>Total Members' Funds</b>	<u>33,198</u>	<u>34,692</u>

*Memo*  5/Aug/2021

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

# **Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Incorporated**

## **Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements**

**For the year ended 30 June 2021**

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### **Note 1 - Statement of Accounting Policies**

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

#### **(a) Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

Dr Mauricio Marrone  
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043-304-2966

## **INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT**

To the members of the Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Incorporated

### **SCOPE**

I have audited the financial statements, being a special purpose financial report, comprising the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021 and the Income and Expenditure Account of the Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Incorporated, ("Association") for the year ended 30 June 2021. The Association's Committee is responsible for the financial statements and has determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Incorporated. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, and described in Note 1, are appropriate to the needs of the members. I disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial statements to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian accounting standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements and statutory requirements so as to present a view of the Association which is consistent with my understanding of its financial position and the results of its operations.

### **LIMITATION OF SCOPE**

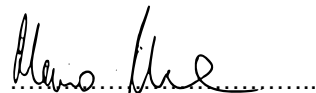
As in the case of similar organisations, it is impracticable to extend my examination of income beyond that information which is recorded in the books of account.  
The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

### **INDEPENDENCE**

In conducting the audit I followed applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

### **AUDIT OPINION**

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, the financial position of the Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Incorporated as at 30 June 2021 and the results of its operation for the year then ended.



Mauricio Marrone

Date: 5 August 2021

## Report of the Executive Committee

### Executive members

- ACUR Chair: Angela Brew (Macquarie University)
- Vice Chair: Denise Wood (University of the Sunshine Coast)
- Treasurer: Lilia Mantai (The University of Sydney)
- New Zealand Representative: Rachel Spronken-Smith (Otago University)
- URNA Editor: Lilia Mantai (The University of Sydney)
- 2019 Conference Convenor: Rubay Tessema (Australian National University)
- Student Representatives: Olivia Jessop (University of Queensland), and Lachlan Deimel (Australian National University)
- Executive Officer: Donna Bennett (Office Logistics)

### Executive meetings

The Executive Committee met four times during the year. Meetings took place by Zoom on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020, 24<sup>th</sup> February, 12<sup>th</sup> June, and 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021. In the meantime, there was regular email communication.

The Executive Committee is required by the ACUR Constitution to conduct a strategic planning exercise every two years. Accordingly, the meeting in February 2021 was devoted to this.

### Strategic plan

Prior to the February meeting each member of the Executive was asked to complete a questionnaire evaluating ACUR's status and achievements. They were also asked to complete a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. As a result of the preparatory activities and the February workshop, a Strategic Business Plan for ACUR was established. This presented the results of the SWOT analyses and set out a Vision, Mission Statement, Values and Objectives for ACUR. It also specified a number of key strategies and strategic action programs. The following strategic projects were agreed:

Strategic Project 1 – Increase Membership

Strategic Project 2 – Gain Sponsorship

Strategic Project 3 – Enhance Profiles and Support Recognition

Strategic Project 4 – Research and evaluation

Strategic Project 5 – Induction into the Executive including the Student Committee

In addition, it was agreed to review these projects at subsequent meetings. This we have done.

### Progress

Progress on Strategic projects 1 and 2 is detailed in the Report of the Chair.

#### ***Strategic Project 3 – Enhance Profiles and Support Recognition.***

The team has agreed how to present profiles of ACUR members on a global map showing thumbnail photos, short bio, interests and activities in UGR, publications, etc., and links to social media. A website section with case studies of good practice is being developed for members. Case studies will include an abstract, background information, learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, assessment and a brief discussion of the approach and how it is undertaken. This will all link back to the profile page. In addition, a document conceptualising podcasts has



been prepared and discussions about how to produce these are in train. Work is also progressing to establish undergraduate research opportunities on the ACUR website.

#### ***Strategic Project 4 – Research and evaluation***

Three research and evaluation projects have recently received ethics approval and are in train

##### **4.1 Undergraduate engagement in research during the COVID-19 pandemic**

This project addresses the following questions

1. How have undergraduate researchers experienced engaging in the ACUR Undergraduate Research Writing competition?
2. What were students' motivations for entering, what did they gain and what, if any, actions did they take following the experience?
3. What were the motivations and experiences of the reviewers?
4. What do the 500-word written statements submitted for the competition tell us about how COVID-19 has impacted research in different disciplines?

A survey has been sent out to participants and reviewers who participated in the Great ACUR undergraduate research writing project in 2020. Responses are being received.

##### **4.2 The impact of the Australasian Conference and related events for Undergraduate Research (ACUR) on Student Learning Outcomes and Future Research Aspirations**

1. What was the motivation for students to attend and/or present at the ACUR conference?
2. What is the experience of students who have participated in ACUR events such as the ACUR conference?
3. What (if any) were the benefits for students attending ACUR events?
4. What could be improved for future ACUR conferences and related events?
5. What is the impact of participation in ACUR conferences and related events on student learning outcomes, research aspirations and career goals?

A survey has been sent to past ACUR conference presenters.

##### **4.3 Strategies being used in Australasian universities to assess student learning in undergraduate research: A scoping project.**

This project is a collaboration between ACUR and the Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE) at Deakin University. It is a final year Honours project being conducted by Chris Swain, a psychology undergraduate. The project is designed to:

1. Enhance understanding of current practice in relation to assessment of learning in undergraduates' research.
2. Provide the foundation for future research into the forms of assessment appropriate to undergraduate research at different levels and in relation to other research-like activities eg., work-integrated learning.

The data collection process is in train.

#### ***Strategic Project 5 – Induction into the Executive including the Student Committee***

- (a) A document has been written designed to induct new committee members into the Executive including the Student Committee. Although this document will need updating as things change, Strategic project 5 has essentially been completed.

## Status of the Student Committee in the ACUR Constitution

### Background

At the Executive meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 it was noted that there was no mention of the Student Committee (SC) in the ACUR constitution as it was drawn up before the Student Committee was established in 2018. The Constitution only mentioned a student representative and made no mention of the Student Committee. Changes in the Constitution are subject to agreement at an AGM.

At its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021, the Executive Committee approved the following draft changes to the Constitution:

1. **Section 14 Student Committee** This constitutes the addition of an entirely new section
2. **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.
3. Points 17.14, 17.15 and 17.16. amended to plural "Representatives" . Note Point 14.6 specifies who those representatives are.

**A separate paper details these changes.**

**The AGM is asked to approved the suggested changes.**

### Executive Committee Membership

We wish to extend our thanks to Professor Eric Pawson, who has resigned as Editor of the ACUR Newsletter *Undergraduate Research News Australasia* (URNA). Eric worked tirelessly to develop URNA into the substantial publication that it is today. He was particularly responsible for encouraging the student voice to be heard, and amazingly, during his Editorship seventy-seven students authored articles in URNA. Dr Lilia Mantai has succeeded him as URNA Editor.



## **Constitution**

*Under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 2009*

### **1. Definitions**

- 1.1. This Constitution is the constitution of the Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research (ACUR).

### **2. Mission**

- 2.1. The mission of the Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research (ACUR) is to promote and advance the spread of undergraduate research in Australasia. Undergraduate research is defined as research or investigation conducted by tertiary level undergraduate students attending universities and colleges.

### **3. Objectives**

- 3.1. ACUR aims to realize its mission by:
  - a. Ensuring that an Australasian Conference of Undergraduate Research is held each year in different universities on an ongoing basis;
  - b. Promoting attendance at such events throughout Australasian higher education;
  - c. Organising other events that promote undergraduate research;
  - d. Promoting and supporting undergraduate research provision within universities and colleges and across the Australasian community;
  - e. Raising the national and international profile of undergraduate research provision and achievements; and
  - f. Liaising with other undergraduate research networks worldwide.

### **4. Membership**

- 4.1. Institutional membership is open to Australasian universities and institutions of higher education eligible for funding under the Australian Higher Education Support Act (2003) and the New Zealand Education Act.
- 4.2. Affiliate membership is open to other organisations interested in undergraduate research and its development
- 4.3. Individual membership is open to individual persons including students.

- 4.4. Membership is congruent upon payment of any annual membership fees which may be determined by ACUR under this constitution.
- 4.5. Student conference presenters are deemed to be members for the year succeeding their conference presentation and for such students the fee will be deemed to have been paid.
- 4.6. Membership entitlements are not transferable.

## **5. Sponsorship**

- 5.1. ACUR invites sponsors to contribute to its work
- 5.2. Benefits accrue to sponsors depending on the level of their sponsorship as determined by the Executive
- 5.3. Levels of sponsorship are set by the Executive and are not negotiable.

## **6. Cessation of membership**

- 6.1. An organisation or person ceases to be a member if:
  - a. The organisation or person resigns, ceases to exist or dies;
  - b. The organisation or person is expelled from ACUR; or
  - c. The organisation or person fails to pay the annual membership fee under clause 4 within 6 months after the fee is due.

## **7. Membership entitlements not transferable**

- 7.1. A right, privilege or obligation which an organisation has by reason of being a member of ACUR:
  - a. Is not capable of being transferred or transmitted to another organisation or person, and
  - b. Terminates on cessation of the organisation's or person's membership.

## **8. Resignation of membership**

- 8.1. A member may resign from membership of ACUR by first giving to the Executive written notice of at least 1 month (or any other period that the Executive may determine) of the member's intention to resign and, on the expiration of the period of notice, the member ceases to be a member.
- 8.2. If a member of ACUR ceases to be a member under Subclause (8.1), and in every other case where a member ceases to hold membership, the Executive Officer must make an appropriate entry in the register of members recording the date on which the member ceased to be a member.

## **9. Register of members**

- 9.1. The Executive must establish and maintain a register of members of ACUR (whether in written or electronic form) specifying the name and postal, residential or email address of the person or institution that is a member of ACUR together with the date on which the person or institution became a member.
- 9.2. The register of members must be kept in New South Wales:
  - a. At the main premises of ACUR, or
  - b. If ACUR has no premises, at its official address.

- 9.3. The register of members must be open for inspection, free of charge, by any member or representative of any member at any reasonable hour.
- 9.4. A member or, in the case of an organisational member, their representative may obtain a copy of any part of the register on payment of a fee of not more than \$1 for each page copied.
- 9.5. If a member or, in the case of an organisational member, their representative requests that any information contained on the register about the member (other than the member's name) not be available for inspection, that information must not be made available for inspection.
- 9.6. A member or, in the case of an organisational member, their representative must not use information about a person or organisation obtained from the register to contact or send material to the person or organisation other than for:
  - a. The purposes of sending a newsletter, a notice in respect of a meeting or other event relating to ACUR or other material relating to ACUR, or
  - b. Any other purpose necessary to comply with a requirement of the Act or the Regulation.
- 9.7. If the register of members is kept in electronic form:
  - a. It must be convertible into hard copy, and
  - b. The requirements in Subclauses (9.2) and (9.3) apply as if a reference to the register of members is a reference to a current hard copy of the register of members.

## **10. Fees and subscriptions**

- 10.1. A member of ACUR must, on admission to membership, pay to ACUR a fee of \$1 or, if some other amount is determined by the Executive, that other amount.
- 10.2. In addition to any amount payable by the member under Subclause (10.1), a member of ACUR must pay to ACUR an annual membership fee of \$2 or, if some other amount is determined by the Executive, that other amount:
  - a. Except as provided by Subclause (10.1), before the first day of January in each calendar year, or
  - b. If the member becomes a member on or after the first day of the financial year of ACUR in any calendar year—on becoming a member and before the first day of the financial year of ACUR in each succeeding calendar year.
- 10.3. Conference host institutions must pay to the Council a fee of \$1 per conference attendee or if some other amount is determined by the Executive, that other amount before the first day of the year following the conference for which they have acted as hosts.

## **11. Members' liabilities**

- 11.1. The liability of a member of ACUR to contribute towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of ACUR or the costs, charges and expenses of the winding up of ACUR is limited to the amount, if any, unpaid by the member in respect of membership of ACUR as required by clause 10.

## 12. Representation

- 12.1. Each institutional member shall be represented by a nominee (hereafter referred to as the “institutional nominee”) chosen by the member institution. This would normally be a person appointed by the Pro-Vice Chancellor with responsibility for student learning. Each member is also invited to nominate an alternate who may be a student.
- 12.2. Additional representatives of institutional members may serve on the Steering Committee at the expense of their institution and at the discretion of the Chair.
- 12.3. Individual members shall be represented by themselves, or may nominate, in writing to the Executive Officer, a person to represent them.

## 13. Executive Committee

- 13.1. There shall be an Executive Committee (hereafter called “the Executive”) comprising the *Chair*, the *Vice Chair*, the *Treasurer*, the serving *Conference Organiser*, the *New Zealand Representative*, two *Student Representatives* and an *Executive Officer*.
- 13.2. The role of the Executive is to act for ACUR in all matters of policy and practice.
- 13.3. The responsibilities of the Executive are to:
  - a. Implement policy with the advice of the Steering Committee
  - b. Take and implement decisions regarding the ongoing reputation, progress and work of ACUR,
  - c. Establish, maintain and publicise criteria and guidelines for institutions wishing to host an undergraduate research conference;
  - d. Call for expressions of interest from institutions to host future conferences and make decisions in the light of the criteria for hosting;
  - e. Provide guidance to the chosen conference organising institutions and revise documentation in the light of their experiences;
  - f. Provide practical help to conference organisers as requested such as documentation, spreadsheets, pro-formas, publicity etc.
  - g. Monitor conference organisation by representation on conference organising committees;
  - h. Maintain and update mailing lists;
  - i. Assist institutions in gaining sponsorship for future conferences; and
  - j. Design and implement a dissemination strategy.
- 13.4. The Executive has the power to co-opt individuals to address specific issues.
- 13.5. The Executive may appoint Working Parties of one or more co-opted individuals to address specific issues.
- 13.6. The Executive may nominate one or more individual members and/or institutional nominees or alternates to represent ACUR on joint Working Parties with, or at meetings with, other bodies.
- 13.7. **Elected and Co-opted Members of the Executive must be paid-up members of ACUR.**
- 13.8. In the interests of good governance, the Executive will complete a biennial self-review and present this at the following Annual General Meeting (AGM).

## 14 Student Committee

- 14.1 The Student Committee shall be a sub-committee of the Executive Committee.
- 14.2 The purpose of the ACUR Student Committee is to:
  - a. Provide a platform for student opinions and suggestions for events and conference activities to be considered by the Executive Committee
  - b. Encourage and support student activities relating to undergraduate research
  - c. Promote awareness of ACUR amongst students across Australasia
  - d. Provide opportunities for proactive student members of the Student Committee to experience committee work, become involved in conference organisation and have opportunities for CV building.
- 14.3 The Student Committee shall comprise a Head, a Deputy Head, and other positions as negotiated with prospective committee members.
- 14.4 Members of the Student Committee are paid-up members of ACUR.
- 14.5 The Head of the Student Committee will lead the Student Committee, coordinate Student Committee activities, and communicate student activities and issues back to the Executive Committee.
- 14.6 The Head of the Student Committee shall represent that Committee as a full member of the Executive Committee for two years; one year in the ascendant position and one year in the descendent position.
- 14.7 The Head of the Student committee shall be an undergraduate when appointed to the ascendent position, but in the descendent position may not be an undergraduate.

## 15 Steering Committee

- 15.1. The Steering Committee shall provide advice to the Executive on matters of policy and practice.
- 15.2. The Steering Committee shall consist of representatives of Australasian member institutions (who will constitute at least 75% of the Steering Committee) and representatives of other universities and organisations for undergraduate research worldwide as invited by the Executive.
- 15.3. Individual members may be invited to serve on the Steering Committee as determined by the Executive.
- 15.4. Affiliate organisations may nominate suitable representatives to serve on the Steering Committee.
- 15.5. The responsibilities of the Steering Committee are to:
  - Provide advice to the Executive regarding the ongoing reputation and progress of ACUR;
  - Encourage the spread of undergraduate research in their institutions;
  - Assist in disseminating information about undergraduate research in general and ACUR in particular in their own institutions;
  - Encourage participation in ACUR conferences and in choosing best posters for *Posters in Parliament* when

appropriate;

- Provide information on current practice, items of news and upcoming events in undergraduate research for the ACUR Newsletter “Undergraduate Research News Australasia” (URNA).

## 16 Election of Officers

16.1. Nominations of candidates for election as office-bearers of ACUR or as ordinary committee members:

- Must be made in writing (as a hardcopy or by email as a pdf), signed by 2 members of ACUR and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the form of the nomination), and
- Must be received by the Executive Officer of ACUR at least 7 days before the date fixed for the holding of the annual general meeting at which the election is to take place.
- A person nominated as a candidate for election as an office-bearer or as an ordinary Executive member of ACUR must be a member of ACUR or a person with the authority to act as representative of an organisation that is a member of ACUR.
- If a single nomination is received for a vacancy, the person nominated is taken to be elected.
- If more than one nomination is received for a vacancy, a ballot is to be held.
- The ballot for the election of office-bearers and ordinary members of the Executive is to be conducted at the annual general meeting in any usual and proper manner that the Executive directs.
- If no nominations are received for a vacancy, further nominations are to be received at the annual general meeting.
- If insufficient further nominations are received, any vacant positions remaining on the Executive are taken to be casual vacancies.
- Casual vacancies may be filled by the Executive in consultation with the person so appointed.

16.2. Each officer is elected to serve for a two-year term.

16.3. If an officer resigns or is deemed by the Executive to be unable to continue to hold office during his/her term, that officer shall be replaced for the remainder of the term.

16.4. A decision by the Executive in relation to inability to serve on the Executive must be minuted and members notified within 10 working days.

## 17 Portfolio Responsibilities

17.1. The *Chair* is responsible for providing effective leadership for the affairs of ACUR:

- For chairing all Executive and Steering Committee meetings,
- For representing ACUR to external stakeholders and the wider community, and for developing and maintaining effective communication channels between the Executive, members and external stakeholders.



- The Chair also schedules ACUR Executive elections, including the appointment of the Returning Officer and the call for nominations; and
  - ensures that the affairs of ACUR are performed in accordance with the Constitution.
- 17.2. The *Vice Chair* deputises for the Chair during the latter's absences in all matters requiring ACUR comment/decisions, after consultation with other members of the Executive.
- 17.3. The *Vice Chair* takes specific portfolio responsibility for promoting ACUR, including through liaison with the Conference Convenor regarding communication strategies.
- 17.4. The *Vice Chair*, together with the Chair, have the major responsibility for the effectiveness of the ACUR communication strategy.
- 17.5. The *Treasurer* is responsible for overseeing the finances of ACUR and reporting on its financial position, as required.
- 17.6. The *Treasurer* prepares and monitors a cash flow budget and provides a financial report at each business meeting, including:
- cash receipts
  - payments required to be made
  - funds held in the bank
  - assets and investments
  - a summary of the overall financial position of the organisation.
- 17.7. The *Treasurer* organises an annual audit of the accounts on advice from the Executive and presents the accounts at the AGM.
- 17.8. The *Conference Convenor* is responsible for ensuring that the Conference meets the quality criteria for an ACUR undergraduate research conference as set out in the ACUR guidelines and that it is consistent with the specification in the relevant agreed hosting proposal.
- 17.9. The *Conference Convenor* is responsible for the efficient and effective running of the conference and for liaising with the ACUR Chair and Executive.
- 17.10. The *Conference Convenor* is also responsible for maintaining a conference website to include a submission system and database and to house the proceedings of all of the conferences.
- 17.11. The *New Zealand (NZ) Representative* is responsible for liaising with individual and institutional members, affiliates and sponsors in New Zealand and encouraging undergraduate research engagement in New Zealand institutions.
- 17.12. The *NZ Representative* is responsible for notifying the Executive of any New Zealand issues likely to be of interest to ACUR.
- 17.13. The *NZ Representative* encourages and supports ACUR conferences, events and Posters in Parliament (Beehive) events in New Zealand when and where appropriate.
- 17.14. **The *Student Representatives* are responsible for liaising with student members and student organisations.**
- 17.15. **The *Student Representatives* are responsible for notifying the Executive of any student issues likely to be of interest to ACUR.**

17.16. *The Student Representatives encourage and support ACUR conferences, events and Posters in Parliament events when and where appropriate.*

17.17. The *Executive Officer* provides administrative support to the Executive as required.

17.18. The *Executive Officer* progresses and directs specific work such as coordination and dissemination of conference information, grant applications and regular communications with the chair, the Executive, members, affiliate organisations, sponsors and other institutions.

17.19. The *Executive Officer* also takes specific responsibility for drafting any proposed changes to the Constitution.

17.20. Other *co-opted Members* are responsible for assisting the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Conference Convenor, the NZ Representative, the Student Representative and the Executive Officer, contributing to the activities of the Executive and otherwise furthering the interests of ACUR in ways agreed from time to time by the Executive.

17.21. One co-opted member is responsible for the maintenance and further development of the ACUR website.

## **18 Removal of Executive members**

18.1. ACUR in general meeting may by resolution remove any member of the Executive from the office before the expiration of the member's term of office and may by resolution appoint another person to hold office until the expiration of the term of office of the member so removed.

18.2. If a member of the Executive to whom a proposed resolution referred to in Subclause (17.1) relates makes an appeal in writing to the Executive Office or Chair (not exceeding a reasonable length) and requests that the appeal be notified to the members of ACUR, the Executive Officer or the Chair may send a copy of the appeal to each member of ACUR or, if the appeal is not so sent, the member is entitled to require that the appeal be read out at the meeting at which the resolution is considered.

## **19 Executive meetings and quorum**

19.1. The Executive shall meet at least twice in each period of 12 months at the place and time that the Executive may determine.

19.2. Additional meetings of the Executive may be convened by the Chair or by any member of the Executive.

19.3. Oral or written notice of a meeting of the Executive must be given to each member of the Executive at least 48 hours (or any other period that may be unanimously agreed on by the members of the Executive) before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting.

19.4. Notice of a meeting given under Subclause (18.3) must specify the general nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting and no business other than that business is to be transacted at the meeting, except business which the Executive members present at the meeting unanimously agree to treat as urgent business.

19.5. Any 3 members of the Executive constitute a quorum for the transaction of the

- business of a meeting of the Executive.
- 19.6. No business is to be transacted by the Executive unless a quorum is present and if, within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, a quorum is not present, the meeting is to stand adjourned to the same place and at the same hour of the same day in the following week.
- 19.7. If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting is to be dissolved.
- 19.8. At a meeting of the Executive:
- The Chair or, in the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair is to preside, or
  - If the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent or unwilling to act, one of the remaining members of the Executive chosen by the members present at the meeting is to preside.
- 19.9. Appointment of ACUR individual members and members' representatives as Executive members to constitute quorum:
- If at any time the number of Executive members is less than the number required to constitute a quorum for an Executive meeting, the existing Executive members may appoint a sufficient number of members or institutional representatives of members of ACUR as Executive members to enable the quorum to be constituted.
  - A member of the Executive so appointed is to hold office, subject to this constitution, until the AGM next following the date of the appointment.
  - This clause does not apply to the filling of a casual vacancy to which clause 15 applies.

## **20 Use of technology at Executive meetings**

- 20.1. An Executive meeting may be held at 2 or more venues using any technology approved by the committee that gives each of the Executive members a reasonable opportunity to participate.
- 20.2. An Executive member who participates in an Executive meeting using that technology is taken to be present at the meeting and, if the member votes at the meeting, is taken to have voted in person.

## **21 Finance**

- 21.1. ACUR charges membership fees to support its activities. The amount of the membership fees will normally be set each year by vote at the ACUR Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 21.2. The income and property of ACUR shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objectives as set out in clause 3, and no portion shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to or amongst the Members, except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of ACUR.

- 21.3. All monies payable to ACUR shall be paid to the credit of ACUR in an appropriate account.
- 21.4. Signatories on ACUR accounts shall consist of at least two members of the ACUR Executive, and other members or employees of ACUR as may be determined by the Executive. Operation of the account shall require any two of the signatories to sign.
- 21.5. ACUR may borrow funds, or obtain credit, only to the limit of the account balance, or to the account balance minus outstanding liabilities and commitments to the end of the current financial year, whichever is the lower amount. Credit shall only be used for purposes approved by a meeting of the ACUR Executive.
- 21.6. All expenditures shall be approved by the Executive in accord with budgets and other approvals given by ACUR from time to time.
- 21.7. An audited statement of accounts shall be prepared annually for the year ending 30 June and presented for approval at the Annual General Meeting of ACUR in the succeeding financial year.

## **22 Meetings**

- 22.1. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held every year normally during the annual conference.
- 22.2. Notice of AGM and Business Meetings shall be provided electronically or via post by the Chair to individual members and institutional nominees and alternates at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the meeting unless otherwise specified in this Constitution.
- 22.3. The Executive shall meet (electronically or face to face) at least twice per year to review and plan the affairs and activities of ACUR. A record of such meetings shall be prepared and distributed to all members in a timely fashion.
- 22.4. The quorum for the AGM and Business Meetings of ACUR shall be Twenty-five (25) per cent of financial members. Student representatives may vote on their institution's behalf.
- 22.5. The Chair may invite any person including affiliates and sponsors to attend any ACUR meeting under such conditions and circumstances as determined by the Chair.

## **23 Presiding member**

- 23.1. The Chair or, in the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair, is to preside as chairperson at each general meeting of ACUR.
- 23.2. If the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent or unwilling to act, the members present must elect one of their number to preside as chairperson at the meeting.

## **24 Making of decisions**

- 24.1. Unless otherwise required by this Constitution, votes shall be determined by a simple majority of Members voting (a) at a meeting, in person (via their institutional nominee or alternate) or by proxy, or (b) in a postal or electronic ballot to all individual members and institutional members' nominees.

## **25 Voting**

- 25.1. Each member organisation shall have two votes. Nominees will vote on behalf of the organisation that they represent.
- 25.2. Each individual member shall have one vote.
- 25.3. Where voting takes place during an ACUR conference, organisational members are entitled to nominate a person, who may be a student, to vote on its behalf
- 25.4. Affiliate organisations have no voting rights.
- 25.5. In the case of an equality of votes on a question at a general meeting, the chairperson of the meeting is entitled to exercise a second or casting vote.
- 25.6. A member is not entitled to vote at any general meeting of ACUR unless all money due and payable by the member to ACUR has been paid.
- 25.7. Proxy voting must not be undertaken at or in respect of a general meeting. (Note. Schedule 1 to the Act provides that an association's constitution is to address whether members of ACUR are entitled to vote by proxy at general meetings).

## **26 Postal or electronic ballots**

- 26.1. ACUR may hold a postal or electronic ballot (as the Executive determines) to determine any issue or proposal (other than an appeal under clause 17).
- 26.2. A postal or electronic ballot is to be conducted in accordance with Schedule 3 to the Regulation.

## **27 Use of technology at general meetings**

- 27.1. A general meeting may be held at 2 or more venues using any technology approved by the committee that gives each of ACUR 's members and members' institutional representatives a reasonable opportunity to participate.

## **28 Amending the Constitution**

- 28.1. This Constitution may be amended by a majority of members with voting rights in person by their representatives or by proxy at a meeting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been given one month prior to the meeting.
- 28.2. An application for registration of a change in ACUR's name, objects or constitution in accordance with Section 10 of the Act is to be made by the Chair or an Executive member.

## **29 Custody of books and documents**

- 29.1. Except as otherwise provided by this constitution, all records, books and other documents relating to ACUR must be kept in New South Wales:
  - At the main premises of ACUR, in the custody of the Chair or a member of ACUR (as the Executive determines), or
  - If ACUR has no premises, at ACUR's official address, in the custody of the Chair.

## **30 Inspection of books and documents**

- 30.1. The following documents must be open to inspection, free of charge, by a member of ACUR at any reasonable hour:

- Records, books and other financial documents of ACUR,
  - This constitution,
  - Minutes of all Executive meetings and general meetings of ACUR.
- 30.2. A member of ACUR may obtain a copy of any of the documents referred to in Subclause (29.1) on payment of a fee of not more than \$1 for each page copied.
- 30.3. Despite Subclauses (29.1) and (29.2), the Executive may refuse to permit a member of ACUR to inspect or obtain a copy of records of ACUR that relate to confidential, personal, employment, commercial or legal matters or where to do so may be prejudicial to the interests of ACUR.

### **31 Service of notices**

- 31.1. For the purpose of this Constitution, a notice may be served on or given to a person:
- By delivering it to the person personally, or
  - By sending it by pre-paid post to the address of the person, or
  - By sending it by facsimile transmission or some other form of electronic transmission to an address specified by the person for giving or serving the notice.
- 31.2. For the purpose of this Constitution, a notice is taken, unless the contrary is proved, to have been given or served:
- In the case of a notice given or served personally, on the date on which it is received by the addressee, and
  - In the case of a notice sent by pre-paid post, on the date when it would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post, and
  - In the case of a notice sent by facsimile transmission or some other form of electronic transmission, on the date it was sent or, if the machine from which the transmission was sent produces a report indicating that the notice was sent on a later date, on that date.

### **32 Financial year**

- 32.1. The financial year of ACUR is:
- The period of time commencing on the date of incorporation of ACUR and ending on the following 30 June, and
  - Each period of 12 months after the expiration of the previous financial year of ACUR, commencing on 1 July and ending on the following 30 June.

### **33 Notes**

- 33.1. Schedule 1 to the Act provides that an association's constitution is to address ACUR's financial year.
- 33.2. Clause 19 of the Regulation contains a substitute clause 47 for certain associations incorporated under *The Associations Incorporation Act 1984*.

## **Student Committee Report for ACUR AGM 2021**

We had a large committee this year in order to have the driving power to achieve our goals. It was great to see collaborations between student and executive committee. Very proud of all the work done and I look forward to seeing how it will be expanded upon in the future.

### **Members: and notable mentions for their effort and engagement**

**Head:** Olivia Jessop

**Deputy Head:** Max Kirkby. Consistent and timely email correspondence. Consistent attendance and engagement at meetings. Was a friendly and supportive presence to all student committee members throughout their projects

**Secretary + Conference Director:** Oliver Hervir. Took on a lot of responsibility and did a lot of work in conference communications.

**Careers Director:** Melody Hoefdraad. Very hard worker, consistent with output and engagement in her projects. Volunteered for a lot of work.

**Publications Director:** Diana Kazakov. Exceptional organisation of role and outreach to other committee members to produce a videos in record time while engaging with the Executive committee.

**Outgoing Head:** Lachlan Deimel

**Digital Media Officer:** Molly Turnbull

**Ambassador Director:** Yastika Banerjee

**Sponsorship Director:** Gurmaan Kaur

**Welfare and Diversity Director:** Foti Paradisis

**Member's only content creation:** Selah Dimech

**General committee members:** Megan Faith, Bonnie Wu, Sai Campbell, Toby Hardcastle

## Projects

### Projects completed:

- Focussed on setting up infrastructure and goals for future committees. Started to conceptualise the way in which ACUR can be supportive of other countries in Australasia other than Aus and NZ (the neighbouring islands): all
- Defined the structure of ACUR SC more by creating specific positions and project guidelines: Olivia
- Conference panel organisation. Was not carried out by hosts due to miscommunication but the idea is still documented and formulated, and panellists perhaps can still be interviewed for future podcasts: Oli + all
- Photo Competition: Molly
- Expansion of social media posting and outreach: Molly
- Members-only content for website: Selah, Donna and Lilia
- International platform to solidify how ACUR can be useful to members: Denise, Lilia, Melody, Max
- Sponsorship prospectus: Gurmaan + Angela
- Newsletter content: Diana
- Multiple videos for social media, and Suriname undergraduate research conference Diana
- Conceptualising how to promote engagement with minority groups. Mainly in the form of undocumented conversation, but definitely gave some guiding concepts: Foti
- Website development: Selah
- Collation of student opportunities and decided on an interval in which to upload them: Melody

### Projects ongoing:

- Engagement with NZ
  - Have been in contact with the Mauri, Pacifica, Disabled and NZ student groups of the NZ National Education committee.
  - Yastika has presented at a couple meetings to spread ACURs aim and engage with these groups. She will be mainly responsible for looking after the communications channel here. Is planning to stay on the SC next year for continuity.
  - Have invited them to sit in on our AGM.



- They represent the broad student body, while we primarily promote engagement in undergraduate research so there isn't direct alignment in aims, but we can still engage with each other.
- They are happy to advertise the conference in their networks, though abstract submission is closed for this year.
- They asked some very valuable questions about nationality-diversity on our committee. We don't currently have NZ or Indigenous Australian representation on our committee. May need to think about advertising a bit better? Have reasonable diversity in terms of discipline, gender, sexuality, and non-Australian ethnicities but we really don't have groups mentioned above. May limit how we think about engaging with undergraduates.

### **Projects for the future:**

- Competitions guideline: a document of ideas about competitions we could run, detailing ideas of themes, times, audience, platforms, and timelines/requirements to organise (ie people, how far in advance need to plan).
- Promote engagement with First People's research.
- More diversity promotion.
- Advertising guidelines.
- Website development.
- Induction manual.
- Posting and ongoing collation of student opportunities.
- Careers skills development:
  - Brainstorming events for an online careers week.
  - Skills workshops.
  - Q&A panels.
  - Networking events ie Honours nights over zoom.
  - Sourcing scholarship opportunities and sharing posts from undergraduate research pages.
  - Setting up an email account to sign up to all student opportunities so that we can share them with our members when they arise.
- Ambassador program:
  - a program where we have committee members responsible for liaising with different unis to create deeper communication channels, and outreach to the universities prior to a conference to foster a better sense of belonging.
  - Ambassador director could be responsible for liaising with representatives of different universities around Australia. This is to ensure that open communication is always promoted. The primary vision is to have them responsible for communications with the universities, and to communicate with students prior to the conference to provide some support and

community (e.g. via a Facebook group?). In particular they will continue to conceptualise:

- An idea of how many ambassadors there could be (one per state? or perhaps this has a bias with NSW having far more than Perth).
- Documentation to train the ambassadors.

### **Suggestions of areas to aim to improve in future:**

- Maintaining incentive to participate in committee throughout the year.
- How to introduce more casual conversation between committee members to facilitate networking and a more friendly environment.

### **Documents to be handed over to the new head:**

#### **For general information:**

- Current Terms of Reference
- Info on ACUR as an organisation
- Emails to new members (automatically sent out by admin to new members)
- ACUR 2021 student committee positions
- ACUR Flyer 2019 (contains aims and purpose)
- ACUR Information
- Sponsorship guidelines (relevant to Exec, worked on from Liv's old document and Gurmaan's help. Not the most up to date. Ask Exec if need more up-to-date version)

#### **Relevant to student projects:**

- A bio for student spotlight of someone in Liv's network
- Executive committee induction manual in case wants to be edited for student committee
- Barebones of an advertising guide
- List of the 2021 projects
- Ambassador guidance sheet
- Image comp flyers 1+2
- Podcast ideas for ACUR
- The QR code for the newsletter

**Monday, 30 August 2021**

Dear ACUR Executive Committee and valued members,

My name is Max Kirkby and I am a third year Science student at the ANU running to be the Head of the ACUR Student Committee in 2021/22. I am a firm believer that the value of ACUR is derived from its members, and that its success should be measured by the opportunities it provides to them. Any work that the Student Committee does should therefore foster networking and research opportunities for our members.

Having been lucky enough to benefit immensely from the ACUR network, I am now running to better extend these experiences to others throughout Australia and the Australasian region. My previous two and a half years on the ACUR Student Committee have laid the groundwork for driving this change. I've assisted as a General Representative (2019/20) and Deputy Head (2020/21) on the committee, actively facilitating the Undergraduate Research Writing Project, Images of Research competition and most recently, the 2021 ACUR@ANU conference. I've also worked closely with the Executive Committee, in particular Professor Denise Wood, on furthering opportunities for our members through the promotion of summer scholarships. A testament to this work is attached in the form of **two letters of support** from both previous leaders of the Student Committee.

Whilst these roles have fundamentally shaped my plans for the future, much remains to be done. As I described, the success of ACUR should be measured by the opportunities it provides to you, a member. However, in my experience, much of our student and institutional body remains unengaged. My agenda will therefore focus on **increasing the direct benefits of ACUR membership to you**, providing scholarship, research assistant and networking opportunities. I also want to ensure that these benefits are distributed equally to our members throughout Australia and Australasia. My aims, if elected, are hence:

- i) To provide research opportunities directly promoted and selected through ACUR.
- ii) To run panel and seminar events with highly regarded academics at regular intervals throughout the year.
- iii) To expand the reach of ACUR into all Australian universities by having student representatives from each state.
- iv) To make ACUR a truly 'Australasian' research council through mutual attendance at meetings of our New Zealand and Asian counterparts.

Using my previous experience with both the Executive and Student Committees, I firmly believe that these plans can be executed and have the capacity to substantially expand the reach and value of ACUR as an organisational body. However, as any good researcher will tell you, it is also important to be transparent. So, if you have any further questions about my goals or how you might wish to help achieve them, please reach out to me at [Max.Kirkby@anu.edu.au](mailto:Max.Kirkby@anu.edu.au) or send me a text at 0417 900 284.

The next year should be focused on our members and I would be delighted to hear from you.

Kind Regards,  
**Max Kirkby**



Deputy Head of the ACUR SC 2020/2021

## Statement of Support #1

Dear members,

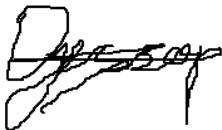
I would like to express my support for Max Kirkby to run as Head of the Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research student committee for 2021/2022.

Max held the position of Deputy Head this year, and his duties this year were to maintain contact with committee members, to support them in their roles, and to liaise with the Head to ensure smooth progress of projects, including any administrative hurdles. He is thus well placed in his understanding of all current projects. In addition to this exposure to the inner workings of ACUR, he has consistently demonstrated his reliability and propensity for leadership. He has gone above and beyond in his communication with myself and the rest of the committee this year; he would check in with the committee members regularly, and offer his time as support if they had any questions. He is extremely punctual, having never missed a meeting or a deadline. He would regularly come to me to discuss projects, and offer his time to have conversations with me before the scheduled committee meetings. In addition to his duties as Deputy, Max volunteered to assist on a number of projects including design of promotion for the newsletter, development of concepts to broaden ACUR's support of academics, and engagement with conference organisation. He participated actively in brainstorming sessions and had insightful comments to make about new projects.

Max was always patient, kind, diplomatic, perceptive, and hard working. He has demonstrated that he possesses the inherent qualities of a leader and would make a great Head of the student committee.

**Olivia Jessop**

Head of the ACUR Student Committee 2020/2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olivia Jessop', written in a cursive style.

## Statement of Support #2

Dear ACUR Executive Committee and Membership,

I am writing to endorse Max Kirkby's nomination for Head of the Australasian Council for Undergraduate Research Student Committee for the upcoming 2021/22 term. Over the past two years, Max has displayed exceptional enthusiasm for ACUR and its values through various roles on the Student Committee. For example, while serving on the Committee I lead in 2019/20, Max was instrumental in several key projects, including the writing and photography competitions. During this most recent term, as Deputy Head, Max has continued to demonstrate his capability, being a critical asset to many core Student Committee initiatives. Collectively, Max's experience in the Student Committee positions him well for the role, armed with tested administrative, interpersonal and organisational skill.

In my view, Max's key strength is his deep passion for undergraduate research— an interest that is reflected by his unparalleled research experience for someone at his level. His appreciation for the impact that *early* research experience affords a student is critical to the Student Committee which, at its core, seeks to advocate for these experiences on behalf of students.

On these bases, I have no doubt that Max will be a tremendous leader and, again, I am pleased to support his nomination.

Kind Regards,

**Lachlan Deimel**



Head of the ACUR Student Committee 2019/2020  
DPhil Candidate, University of Oxford

# Oliver Hervir – Candidate Statement

Hello! I go by Oli for short, and I'm a third-year student at the Australian National University (ANU). I start Honours next year! I very much love the chemistry, biology and physics that underpins human health and disease (particularly cancer and malaria). Whilst I would call this topic my main research interest, I'm fascinated by a number of different fields within. In particular, I love molecular physiology, translational biochemistry, and drug design. I'm also interested in public health, synthetic biology, and medical physics. This might seem like a weird combination, but it reflects the diversity of courses I've been fortunate enough to take during my undergraduate years. Although I won't end up in all these fields, I think an interdisciplinary perspective is necessary to solve the big medical challenges facing humanity – it allows both the discovery and the equitable distribution of treatments and cures.

I'm running for Head of the Student Committee (SC) because I hope to build a greater network through which undergraduate students can share their research experiences, get inspired and learn about amazing opportunities. Before talking about why I'd be a good candidate for the role, I want to explain my motivation by briefly outlining my experience in undergraduate research. I've done many projects at various institutions, but it was my first experience researching in computational chemistry that started my passion for research. The project was in a field I knew nothing about, with skills I had to learn on the job. It was difficult and confusing at times, but ultimately very rewarding: I made a new close friend in my research partner, became more confident in my scientific thinking, and even presented a poster at a conference (an amazing, albeit terrifying, experience that made me feel like part of a community). This shaped my undergraduate experience; it taught me that even though science is always evolving, I had the skills to find the answers to my questions on my own, without needing a lecturer to tell me. That is an immensely empowering feeling, and it has given me a passion to continue research through the ups and lows.

It is this sense of empowerment, and of community, that I aim to spread in my time in the ACUR SC. Having been a General Representative, Secretary and Conference Director, I've seen the beneficial impact our work can have on people firsthand. In my time at university, I've been an executive in the Science Society ANU and been involved with various student-led clubs and organisations. I'm most proud of the various academic and social events that I've helped organised, which have helped people find their feet and build a network. It is a mixture of such events I hope to implement as Head of the ACUR SC next year. Particularly in a time of online learning (and conferences), such events are a fantastic way to bring together research students from across Australasia.

In addition to hosting more academic and social events, and fostering greater networks, I hope to promote research opportunities, programs, and scholarships to the ACUR student members through our website and via a more frequent newsletter. I also aim to improve accessibility to the conference for students from disadvantaged backgrounds – this year it hasn't been as much of an issue due to the online conference, but it is an area that must be considered going forward. The last few years, my favourite ACUR SC meetings have been the planning meetings at the very start. If elected, I look forward to meeting the rest of the ACUR SC team and working with them to deliver awesome new initiatives.

Thanks for making it all the way to the bottom!

Oli

## Report on *Undergraduate Research News Australasia (URNA)*

### Introduction

ACUR's newsletter *Undergraduate Research News Australasia (URNA)* was established in 2010, so it is now in its twelfth year. It is now routinely published twice a year, usually in May and November. All issues are [available on the ACUR website](#). Since the last AGM meeting ACUR published Issues 18 and 19.

Issue 18 featured the winners and the winning entries in the 2020 "Great ACUR Undergraduate Research Writing Project". It also included the report of an online conference organised by CQU university, two articles by undergraduate students as well as the usual reports of the Chair and Head of the Student Committee. Issue 19 included the winning entries in the "Images of Research" competition, some further entries in the Writing Project competition, two further articles by undergraduates, as well as information about the ANU Undergraduate Research Student Society. There was also information about the 2021 ACUR conference.

URNA is available in hard copy and digital form, and is distributed to all members and Steering Committee members around the world (approximately 1200 individual email contacts), as well as to all universities in Australia and New Zealand. Hard copies of Issue 18 were distributed to all Australian and New Zealand Vice-Chancellors.

### Editors

This year saw a change in Editorship of URNA. Towards the end of 2020, Eric Pawson, from Canterbury University, NZ resigned as Editor. Eric had served as editor since 2017, editing seven issues. He was particularly keen to encourage contributions written by undergraduate researchers. During his editorship seventy-seven students authored articles in URNA. This transformed URNA into the substantial publication that it is today. He has been succeeded by Lilia Mantai from The University of Sydney has succeeded him as URNA Editor. She has continued to develop URNA and in the May issue this year she introduced interactive material including video and photos.

### Statistics

Total number of individual authors (incl student authors)	172
Total number of student authors only	103
Total number of overseas authors	21
Number of Australian universities represented/featured	25
Number of New Zealand universities represented/featured	5

Table 1. Results of an analysis of contributions to all issues of URNA carried out in July 2021.

**Policy**

In 2021 the Executive established a policy for URNA which specifies its focus and scope and defines the rights and responsibilities of authors. The policy was developed to protect URNA's integrity and to introduce a Creative Commons license.

**Submissions**

Submissions are welcome. Should you wish to contribute, [please contact the editor, Dr Lilia Mantai](#), with an outline of what you'd like to say. Articles should be between 300 and 500 words in length, following the latest APA referencing style, with an appealing title and a photograph (if active or research-related, all the better).

Lilia Mantai  
Editor, URNA