



Australasian Grain Science Association 2020 Annual General Meeting – Minutes

11:00 – 12:50 AEDT, Thursday 27 August 2020

Zoom teleconference (<https://charlessturt.zoom.us/j/68387300196>)

Present: 30 (see attached attendee list)

Apologies: Vito Butardo (VB), Marianne Gaborieau (MG), Crispin Howitt (CH), Marcus Newberry (MN),

Start: 11:10 AEDT

1. Welcome from AGSA Chair and Chair's report (Chris Blanchard, CB)

- CB welcomed all present, noted apologies, and delivered the AGSA Chair report.
- At the 2019 AGM, Council proposed the formation of an Advisory Committee, and this has progressed further. The Committee Chair Mike Gidley (MG) provided an update on the progress at the lunch session during the Conference, and a further call for expressions of interest in membership of the Committee. MG will provide his report later in this meeting.
- There will be changes to Council, with a few members coming to the end of their term and stepping down. Nominations were received and new members will join the Council at the end of this AGM. The change in office bearers will be discussed later in the meeting.
- **MOTION:** That the AGSA Chair's report be accepted as presented. Seconded: JD. All in favour. Carried.

2. Minutes of previous (2019) AGM, and matters arising (CB)

- Minutes of the 2019 AGSA AGM have been made available on the AGSA website since September 2019.
- Matters arising from the minutes – Nil.
- **MOTION:** That the minutes of the 2019 AGSA AGM be accepted as presented. Moved: JD. Seconded: CB. All in favour. Carried.

3. 2020 Conference Chair's report (CB)

- CB delivered the Conference Chair's report.
- There were 236 registrants, and the majority attended some if not all of the day. We have received a lot of good feedback.

- Siong Tan (ST) presented the conference attendance analytics:
 - The Zoom meeting lasted 570 minutes, with 204 unique viewers.
 - There were more than 10 countries represented, with Australia making up the majority of attendees. There were quite a few from USA and Canada, Philippines, China, India, Japan and Pakistan.
 - Other countries represented were Germany, UK, Singapore, Taiwan and Iraq.
- CB acknowledged the following people:
 - AGSA Council for stepping in and assuming the role of Conference Organising Committee.
 - Treasurer (Troy Adriansz) and Secretary (Jennifer Dang)
 - Sponsorship Coordinator (Bronwyn Elliott)
 - Scientific Program Committee: Cassandra Walker (Chair), Lindsay O'Brien, Sushil Dhital, Marcus Newberry and Jesse Beasley.
 - Communications Committee: Vito Butardo (Chair), Haelee Fenton, Michelle Toutounji.
 - Conference Handbook producers: Dan Waters and Jesse Beasley.
 - IT support: Siong Tan and Stephen Cork.
 - Awards Committee: Lindsay O'Brien, Phil Downie and Mike Gidley.
 - Awards judges: Colin Wrigley and Mike Sissons (posters), Sushil Dhital and Jesse Beasley (Rapid Fire).
 - Rapid Fire award sponsor CI Scientific.
- CB congratulated the following award winners, as reported by Awards Committee Chair Lindsay O'Brien:
 - **Best Rapid Fire:** Oscar Fung
 - **Best Student Poster:** Allister Clarke
 - **Poster with most Industry Impact:** John Kalitsis et al.
 - **Poster with Novelty Innovation:** Linda Pravinata et al.
- The conference was recorded. Once confirmed with speakers, the plan is to make the recordings available for registrants/members, either on the AGSA website or as a YouTube link.
- The Committee plans to do an evaluation of the conference. Most likely will send out a short survey to participants, asking them to list three things they like about the conference and three things that they think can be improved.
- **MOTION:** That the 2020 Conference Chair's report be accepted as presented. Moved: CB. Seconded: JD. All in favour. Carried.

4. Treasurer's report (Troy Adriansz, TA)

- TA delivered the Treasurer's report.
- TA noted that in previous years we saved for a rainy day, and this year it rained. It was because of AGSA's buffer that we were able to offer a conference this year, free of charge to our members.
- Now have new signatory (incoming Chair Cassandra Walker) to make payments.

- NAB bank branch moved from Ashburton to Mount Waverley VIC.
- Still have our three accounts: a term deposit with \$150000, and two working accounts with ~\$158000 and ~\$72000, totalling just over \$380000.
- Upcoming income: sponsorship of Rapid Fire award from CI Scientific (\$250).
- Recent outgoings of note:
 - Deposit paid to Rydges in Jan 2020 for Canberra conference (\$7134). Venue can be held until 2022, with adjusting pricing relevant for 2022.
 - Guthrie medal casting in Dec 2019 (\$702)
 - Website upgrade in June 2020 (\$792)
 - Outstanding invoice from Lincoln University for 2017 conference expenses paid in Jul 2020 (\$5496)
- Upcoming outgoings of note:
 - Website update (\$240)
 - Poster x3 and Rapid Fire awards (\$1000)
 - Guthrie stipends x2 (\$10000), to be decided by new Council on when to pay the stipends (this year or next)
 - 2018 AB Blakeney award refund impacted by Covid-19
 - 2021 Summer Student Workshop subsidy (\$3000)
- We want to target early career researchers for Council. No one from NZ attending this conference, even though registration was free. We should think about how to attract ECR and/or people across the Tasman to be more active on Council and in AGSA.
- TA thanked Tas Westcott, Lindsay O'Brien and Bronwyn Elliott for their mentorship.
- TA noted that AGSA has a great group of sponsors and we need to think about how we can engage them.
- JP asked if any more details were received from NZ for the outstanding invoice. Possibly a post conference tour expense.
- TA noted that they were mainly university costs. We were obligated to pay the invoice, but we need to put plans in place where the conference will not go ahead until Council receives and approves a draft budget from the organising committee.
- JP thanked TA for being a great Treasurer and for working tirelessly to ensure that AGSA remains in a good financial situation.
- CB added his thanks, saying TA was very good at thinking of possible scenarios of issues. CB thanked TA for the due diligence and patience, as well as being a great person to work with.
- **MOTION:** That the Treasurer's report be accepted as presented. Moved: TA. Seconded: CW. All in favour. Carried.

5. **2021 Conference Update (Lindsay O'Brien, LOB)**

- AGSA will hold a joint conference with the Wheat Breeders Association (WBA) in 2021. The conference will encompass the full value chain. AGSA will work with WBA to come up with a theme and banner.
- The conference is planned to run for a week, 22-27 August 2021, at the Crossing Theatre in Narrabri.

- There will be a tour of the fields of the Plant Breeding Institute on Tuesday afternoon.
- There will be an awards day (Wednesday) where both WBA and AGSA will confer awards, followed by the joint conference dinner.
- The venue (Crossing Theatre) has been booked. It has a few room options depending on the size of the gathering. The Auditorium can seat 1000 (400 for sit down meals), other rooms can seat 150, 120 and 75 people.
- Organisers will work with Covid-19 strategy, the theatre can handle 120 to be Covid safe.
- There is a range of accommodation options at various budgets within 5-10 minutes' walk of the venue.
- Funding from GRDC will be sought separately by WBA and AGSA.
- WBA wants to use a conference organiser, but AGSA does not. If WBA proceeds with a conference organiser, we will need to have separate registrations for WBA and AGSA.
- LOB has the basis of a committee and will expand this over the next few weeks. It is now a matter of getting a good scientific committee together.
- WBA has decided that if Covid persists, they will defer the conference.
- AGSA has decided that the conference will proceed, but that the format may change depending on the restrictions at the time.
- CB cautioned that risks are higher with joint conferences, especially if Covid persists and there travel restrictions, and joint budgets.
- LOB will draft budgets with a few scenarios and seek approval from Council.
- **MOTION:** That the 2021 Conference Chair's report be accepted as presented. Moved: LOB. Seconded: Dan Waters. All in favour. Carried.

6. **Advisory Committee Report (Mike Gidley, MG)**

- MG delivered the Advisory Committee report.
- The Committee was proposed at AGM 2019. Its purpose is two-fold. 1) to provide council with advice, and 2) to get a strategic plan in place for the direction of AGSA.
- Expressions of interest were sought from the grains community, and the committee has three members so far:
 - Kate Howell, University of Melbourne
 - Mike Sissons, NSW DPI
 - Frank Bekes, Consultant
- The Committee is seeking Eols from early/mid-career professionals, preferably female, in industry or government roles, and/or from NZ/WA/SA/ACT/Tas, to complete the balance of the committee.
- MG would like to finalise the committee in the next couple of weeks.
- The first stage is to develop a mission statement.
- CB thanked MG for the work he has done so far.
- **MOTION:** That the Advisory Committee Report be accepted as presented. Moved: MG. Seconded: LOB. All in favour. Carried.

7. Awards Committee Report (Lindsay O'Brien, LOB)

- The Committee has the pleasure to announce that for the first time since the award was founded, two Guthrie medals will be conferred because the nominees could not be split by the committee.
- The recipients are Dr Joe Panozzo and Emeritus Professor Les Copeland. Both nominees have made outstanding contributions made in different fields to science, grains research and the Australian Grains Industry.
- The awards were announced during the opening address by the Conference Chair. Congratulations to both recipients.
- The Committee has considered two Life Member awards, and will need the new Council's endorsement for those two nominations.
- The Guthrie medals and Life Memberships will be conferred at the 2021 conference.
- LOB thanked co-committee members Mike Gidley and Phil Downie for their support.
- CB added his congratulations to Joe Panozzo and Les Copeland for their awards, and expressed his apologies for not being able to present the Guthrie medals this year. Such an award should be conferred in person rather than virtually.
- **MOTION:** That the Awards Committee report be accepted as presented. Moved: LOB. Seconded: Phil Downie. All in favour. Carried.

• Communications Committee Report

- The Communications Committee Report was presented by the Committee members: Vito Butardo Jr. (VB), Haelee Fenton (HF), Sushil Dhital (SD), Michelle Toutounji (MT) and Jesse Beasley (JB).

Branding and Newsletters (VB)

- This year's conference banner was designed by the Communications Committee (VB). A media pack was created for consistency across all social media platforms.
- Newsletter engagement was on the decline after the 2019 Conference, until the Newsletter edition announcing complimentary registration to the 2020 conference.
- We have had 128 new subscribers since the online conference announcement, and have also seen higher open and click rates.
- Twelve newsletters were distributed this year, the latest edition being a targeted one to financial members reminding them about the AGM. This edition had the highest opens and clicks, indicating a high level of engagement from our fee-paying members.

Social Media (MT)

- We used Twitter as our first social media platform, and currently we have 255 followers. In terms of reach, we saw a substantial increase from mid-August in the impressions (how many times people saw the tweets).
- Peaks in impressions coincided with tweets about awards (Guthrie call for nominations), complimentary online registration, and availability of the conference program. These peaks reflect the Newsletter engagement.

- We have 122 Facebook followers. We've reached 100 people in the last 100 days. Similar peaks were observed as per Twitter, and we've had lots of engagement in the lead up to, during, and post conference.
- We have not been as active on Instagram or YouTube due to resources, however, will look to increase our activity on these platforms since they are more suited to the demographic of our increasing database of ECR members.
- This is MT's last year on Council, and is stepping down after this AGM. MT would like to formally pass on the Social Media Officer baton to Siong Tan.

Website (HF)

- The 2019 conference and post conference activities, conference handbook and photo gallery were all posted online last year for members. They have since been moved to the "Past Conferences" area. Activities for this year's conference will be sorted and posted to the website soon.
- It has been relatively quiet on the website throughout the year, until the announcement of the online conference.
- The speed is OK but we still need to work out long term archiving solution. We have started to investigate but need to further explore and discuss with Council.
- Main downloads were centred around the conference program and guidelines (poster, presenter, judging).
- We have 10 email addresses linked with ausgrainscience.org.au to individual members on Council (or appointed person), and these need to be updated annually or each time there is a change to Council.
- HF expressed her thanks to her co-committee members and especially Ian Wesley for his continuing, prompt help.
- JB asked how long the 2020 conference website will stay active for, as there are links on the site (eg. abstracts book) that are currently not on the AGSA website.
- HF confirmed that content from the conference website will be moved to AGSA website in the next week or so. In fact IW has already started doing so.
- CB added his thanks to the Communications Committee and Ian Wesley for the great work that they do.
- **MOTION:** That the Communications Committee report be accepted as presented. Moved: VB. Seconded: Bronwyn Elliott. All in favour. Carried.

8. Methods Committee Report (Cassandra Walker, CW)

- CW delivered the Methods Committee report.
- We still have four methods to put on the website. They are still under formulation/method changes. We will be working with WQA to formalise those once we get them collaboratively assessed through lab trials.
- These methods are long fermentation straight dough, rapid dough bake, udon and yellow alkaline noodle methods.

- Once formalised and evaluated, they will go under review by two AGSA members who are experts in the area. Once approved, they will be made available on the website with the other methods.
- CW will be stepping down from Committee Chair as she moves into the role of AGSA Chair. CW will still be involved with the Committee, along with Jennifer Dang, but we are nominating to Council that Hugh Robertson step in as Committee Chair. However we still need to discuss this with Hugh.
- **MOTION:** That the Methods Committee report be accepted as presented. Moved: CW. Seconded: TA. All in favour. Carried.

9. Student/Early Career Researcher Report (Jesse Beasley, JB)

- JB delivered the Student/ECR report.
- This role came about last year at AGM, and its purpose is to engage with student members and grow student membership.
- We have 66 registrations for this year's conference, which is higher than those of 2018 and 2019. This is likely due to the complimentary registration, as well as being online making it accessible to overseas students.
- Current total membership is 112. We will use this to form a student mailing list. We can contact these students directly, and possibly create a newsletter to focus on student-led activities to grow the member base.
- Through 2020, we've seen participation from more non-traditional institutions (Monash and Swinburne) and non-Australian institutions (Philippines, Pakistan, China, Nepal). We still need to increase the numbers from NZ.
- An AGSA Summer Student Workshop is currently being proposed. This is planned for 25-26 February 2021, which is during O-Week before students go back to classes.
- The workshop will be held at the University of Melbourne Parkville Campus.
- The organising committee consists of JB (Uni of Melb), Kate Howell (Uni of Melb), Vito Butardo (Swinburne) and Sushil Dhital (Monash).
- The first day is focused on commodity-style talk sessions in the morning. We are targeting speakers from industry (breeders, farmers, manufacturers). A sourdough workshop in the afternoon led by a local baker. She will show the students through the entire sourdough bread making process. Will use the prepared dough for pizza dinner.
- Second day will include talk sessions by the students in the morning, as well as student-led discussions about issues in grain science. The afternoon will include two tours, 1st tour to a flour mill at Allied Pinnacle (hopefully afternoon tea there as well), and 2nd tour at a local microbrewery at Footscray. Planning to have a function at the brewery afterwards for the students to interact and socialise.
- Catering is with ECCO hospitality, who can cater to Covid-safe operations.
- The big cost items are the sourdough workshop and bus travel for tours.
- Income will be from attendance fees. Would like to keep the ticket price <\$100 to make it accessible/attractive to students.
- Council has kindly offered a \$3000 endorsement of the workshop.

- Sponsorship – we could approach traditional sponsors, currently in discussion with Council. Possible branding of sponsors on T-shirts or hats/banners, or give sponsors a talking spot on the program.
- BE reminded the committee that the workshop must be branded as AGSA as it is an AGSA event. As Uni of Melb is an in-kind sponsor (free venue), AGSA should be prominent on the branding but with Uni of Melb logo as a major sponsor.
- JB and committee will finalise the theme, and the branding will be based on that.
- JP asked what constitutes a student. Consider ECR members as a second tier (priority to students) if we struggle to get the estimated 40 registrants.
- JB confirmed that we are targeting our AGSA network, which is mostly Masters and PhDs, mainly food science students, around the area (Monash, Uni of Melb). We probably won't have issues reaching target registration numbers, but we are happy to open the registration to ECRs as second tier at possibly different pricing.
- CW commented that if this workshop is successful, we should consider having a second workshop in NSW or QLD.
- CB agreed, the model we're using is similar to AIFST, where the workshop moves around the states. We have always piggy-backed off AIFST, and now we're trying it ourselves with the advantage being the workshop is grains-focused. This will be a good test for what we can do elsewhere. CB suggested JB talk to Mike Gidley, who has had a lot of involvement in student workshops with AIFST.
- CB thanked JB for all the work he has done with the workshop and in his role. Hopefully we will be over Covid. Failing that, we will postpone the workshop to Feb 2022.
- **MOTION:** That the Student/ECR report be accepted as presented. Moved: JB. Seconded: LOB. All in favour. Carried.

10. Nomination of office bearers (Jennifer Dang, JD)

- Nominations for AGSA Office Bearers for 2020-2021, directed to the Returning Officer, were closed on 31st July 2020. We received only one nomination for each of the vacancies on Council, as shown below.

Council Position	Nominee
Chair	Cassandra Walker
Vice-Chair	Sushil Dhital
Treasurer	Philip Downie
Secretary	Jennifer Dang
Ordinary Member 1	Haelee Fenton
Ordinary Member 2	Joe Panozzo
Student Member	Jesse Beasley

- CB confirmed that the nominations were accepted by each of the nominees. Given that there was only one nomination for each position, voting was not required, and CB declared that all nominees were elected unopposed.

- CB thanked everyone for stepping up and taking on the roles on Council. CB also thanked outgoing Council members. Troy Adriansz for being a great Treasurer, Michelle Toutounji for driving the social media side of things, and Dan Waters for excelling under pressure to drive the production of this year's abstract book.

11. Other business

- CB thanked everyone for their support during his term as AGSA Chair, saying his job was made easier by having such a good group of people around him. He is glad to be leaving the Council in Cassandra Walker's capable hands as incoming AGSA Chair, and is confident of her ability to take this on.
- CW thanked CB for his leadership, without which we would not have had the conference. She congratulated him wholeheartedly taking on the role of Conference Chair at short notice.

12. Close

- CB thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the AGM and contributing to discussions. Thanked Siong Tan and Stephen Cork for driving the IT behind all the meetings.
- With no other matters, CB closed the AGM at 12:50.

DRAFT