

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY INC

Minutes from 64th Annual General Meeting

The 64th Annual General Meeting of the Australian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Inc. was held from 13:00 hours (AEST) on Wednesday 30th September 2020 zoom (<https://uqz.zoom.us/j/93586906703>).

A quorum of over 20 people were reached. 76 people were logged in on zoom and a further 34 members voted online in elections to council.

1. **Apologies:** No apologies were received

Present: Joel Mackay (President, JMac), Jacqui Matthews (President Elect, JMat) Terry Piva (FAOBMB representative, TP), Briony Forbes (Secretary, BF), Dominic Ng (Secretary Nominee, DN), Nirma Samarawickrema (Education Rep, NS), Tatiana Soares da Costa (Editor, Chair of Communications, TSdC), Marc Kvensakul (Treasurer, MKv), Kate Quinlan (NSW Rep, KQ), Erinna Lee (VIC Rep, EL), Matthew Johnson (ACT Rep, MJ), Melissa Pitman (SA Rep, MP). Monika Murcha (WA Rep, MM), Benjamin Schulz (QLD Rep, BS), Kate-Brettingham Moore (TAS Rep, KB).

2. **Confirmation of the minutes of Annual General Meeting No 63.**

The minutes were confirmed and noted.

3. **Council Elections**

a) Election of VIC State Rep.

Two nominations were received for the position of VIC State Rep; Laura Osellame (LaTrobe University) and Lahiru Gangoda (WEHI). Votes were cast by members present at the AGM using Zoom Poll. The combination of Zoom Poll results and proxy votes determined that Laura Osellame was to be elected to the ASBMB Council in the position of VIC State Rep with the majority of the votes.

b) Results of council elections for ratification.

Single nominations were received for all positions on Council for 2021, with exception of VIC State Rep. Red text highlight new members of ASBMB Council for 2021. Thanks were given for the service of retiring Council Members; Matthew Johnson, Kate Brettingham Moore, Ben Schulz, Kate Quinlan and Erinna Lee.

President	Joel Mackay
President-Elect	Jacqui Matthews
Secretary	Dominic Ng (Briony Forbes retired)
Treasurer	Marc Kvensakul
Editor and Communications	Tatiana Soares da Costa
Education Rep	Nirma Samarawickrema
Secretary for Sust. Members	Sally Jay
FAOBMB Representative	Terry Piva
Representatives for:	

ACT	Christina Spry (Matthew Johnson retired)
NSW	Laura Sharpe (Kate Quinlan retired)
Qld	Michael Landsberg (Ben Schulz retired)
SA	Melissa Pitman
Tas	Iman Azimi (Kate Brettingham-Moore retired)
Vic	Laura Osellame (Erinna Lee retired)
WA	Monika Murcha

4. **President's Report**

The President presented the report (to be published in the upcoming December issue of the Australian Biochemist)

Thanks were given

- To ASBMB Exec and Council members and in particular retiring Secretary Briony Forbes for her service to the society over many years. The council welcomes Dominic Ng who has been training for the position in 2020 and takes over the Secretary position in 2021.
- To Sally and Chris Jay and Liana Friedman
- To all of you for remaining ASBMB member
- To our Sustaining Members

Society awards 2020.

Congratulations were given to society award winners:

Lemberg Medal:	Trevor Lithgow
Shimadzu Research Medal:	Colin Jackson
Eppendorf Edman Award:	Si Ming Man
SDR Scientific Education Award:	Nirma Samarawickrema
ASBMB Boomerang Award:	Matthew Doyle
ASBMB Fellowships Awards:	Amy Baxter, Steffi Cheung, Mengjie Hu, Anukriti Mathur.

Members were encouraged to apply for 2021 awards with nominations open. Female members were specifically encouraged to nominate for an award.

Future ASBMB Meetings

An update was given on the planning of future ComBio and ASBMB meetings including the rescheduling of ComBio2020 to 2022 in Melbourne. Members were encouraged to engage with 2021 meetings: East Coast Protein Meeting and FAOBMB2021 in Christchurch. 2023 will be an ASBMB Meeting in Canberra and IUBMB/ComBio2024 will return to Melbourne.

Special thanks were given to Jackie Wilce, Convenor of ComBio2022, and her team for their efforts in dealing with the impact of COVID-19 disruptions on their conference.

Membership

The ASBMB membership declined over the past year (762 total) with the greatest fall being in ordinary and student numbers.

What is the point of ASBMB.

Joel outlined specific goals for the society and discussed activities associated with these goals. These included:

- Organize a meeting that has broad appeal to members – experimented with new format
- Recognize achievements of Australian Biochemists and Molecular Biologists – no major changes to awards
- Help early-career researchers to advance their careers – in 2021, ASBMB meeting will be ECR focused. What else?
- Be involved in science advocacy for issues relevant to our members – increased engagement with STA
- Support activities at the state level that are of value to our members – better guidance for State Rep roles
- Support interactions between our members in relevant areas – SIG support continued

He also discussed some specific areas of focus for 2020

- Reintroduce the Heads of Department meeting
- Increase our focus on supporting Biochemistry and Molecular Biology education
- Survey members (and lapsed and maybe even non-members) on meetings and on what they want from the Society, with a view both to working better for members and to increasing membership
- Provide better guidance for state representatives
- Consider whether ASBMB should have a presence in advocacy
- Updating the website (in particular noting the efforts to Tatiana in this area)
- Trying to scale up the Education side of ASBMB
- Thinking about how we can better serve ECRs

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report will be published in full in the upcoming issue of the Australian Biochemist. Marc noted the following points:

- **Overall financial position** of the Society has significantly deteriorated compared to that of 2019.
 - Revenue was down \$117,629 in 2018-2019 due to the substantial loss from ASBMB2019 in Fremantle (loss of \$52,014 instead of \$60,664 profit).
The deficit was attributed to lower than expected number of registrants combined with the relatively high cost of delivering the meeting in Fremantle.
 - Expenditure down \$5,700 in the same period
 - **2019-2020 operating loss is \$66,473.**
- **2018-2019 financial year** showed an operating profit of \$45,555.
- **Items to note:**
 - ASBMB only meeting are unlikely to be a major driver of income for the society, and we will need to adjust meeting formats to adapt to this.
 - The postponement of COMBIO2020 in Melbourne due to COVID-19 means we will be without a significant injection of additional revenue for 2 years, and means we will need to access the reserve funds of the society.
- We need to sustain or increase membership and to ensure both the long-term viability and profitability of Combio/ASBMB meetings

- Thanks to Brian Hiley at Priestleys, Ian Price, Sally & Chris Jay and Fellow members of the executive

An additional point was raised emphasizing the importance of maintaining a close relationship with our sponsors/sustaining members during the current interim period with the absence of face to face meetings.

6. **Fees for 2021/2022**

Membership fees for the year 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022
2% CPI Increase

	2020/21	2021/22	(3 yr)
Ordinary Members:	\$140	\$143	\$342
Student Members:	\$45	\$46	\$109
Sustaining Members:	\$422	\$430	\$1034
Retired Members:	\$60	\$61	\$147
Member O/S:	\$66	\$67	\$160

Tatiana moved to accept the membership fee increases and motion was accepted.

7. **Any other business.**

None were raised.

The meeting was adjourned at 13:35.

Minutes confirmed:

..... JOEL MACKAY (President)

..... DOMINIC NG (Secretary)