

157th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 17 April 2024 at 6:00pm

METCALFE AUDITORIUM, STATE LIBRARY OF NSW

The 157th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Society of NSW took place at **6:00 pm on Wednesday 17 April 2024** in the Metcalfe Auditorium, State Library of NSW, followed by the 1320th Ordinary General Meeting and open lecture. There were 47 members and several visitors present.

1. WELCOME

President, Dr Susan Pond AM FRSN welcomed Members to the meeting and acknowledged the Gadigal People of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the country on which the State Library of NSW stands, paying respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Prof Sean Brawley, Dr Jane Cioffi, Dr Kenneth Dawson, Mr John Hardie, Dr Jan Herrmann, Dr Elizabeth Killen, Dr Jessica Milner Davis, Mr Bruce Ramage and the Hon Gabrielle Upton.

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President reported on the activities for the year, mentioning the 30 presentations made in Sydney and the Society's other branches. These canvassed a wide range of contemporary issues. She acknowledged the support given by the Society's Patron, Her Excellency the Hon Margaret Beazley AC KC, particularly in hosting ideas@theHouse and the Royal Society and Learned Academies Forum held at Government House.

The Society improved its digital influence by expanding the number of events videorecorded and uploaded to its YouTube channel. By the end of December 2023, the channel had 140 videos, 757 subscribers and a cumulative total of 90,121 views since it was launched in March 2020.

The President particularly acknowledged Council member, Emeritus Professor Lindsay Botten, for driving this initiative, in addition to his many other achievements as Webmaster, and Amanda Yeo, who joined the Society as Communications Officer, tasked with developing and driving our communications to a wider audience. Thanks to Amanda's effort, traffic to all social media including YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter(X) and Facebook is on a significant upward trajectory.

In November, the Society's new awards structure was introduced with the announcement of the winners of our broadened portfolio. Two new Career Excellence Medals, the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Medal, the Early Career Medal in honour of Ida Browne and a new discipline award in Social and Behavioural sciences were inaugurated.

The Society now offers twelve discipline awards, four to be awarded each year in a three-year cycle. They encompass the full range of the humanities and sciences.

In November, after extensive consultation regarding the preservation and accessibility of the Society's vast collection of books and archives, Members were invited to vote on Council's recommendation to donate the collection to the State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW). The vote was overwhelmingly in favour of the donation, which places this unique and important historical collection, to be called the "Royal Society of New South Wales Collection", under the expert custodianship and conservatorship of the SLNSW and makes it widely accessible.

The President acknowledged the support provided by the NSW government, through Prof Hugh Durrant-White and the Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer in sponsoring activities of the Society through 2027.

The President thanked the bedrock of the Society, its Fellows and Members, in particular those who served on Council and as members of Council committees whose expertise and energy have made 2023 a successful year.

4. RESULTS OF ELECTRONIC BALLOTS

Several matters of business were determined by electronic ballot run from Monday 25 March 12.00 noon AEDT to Monday 15 April 12.00 noon AEST.

4.1. Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting

The Members **RESOLVED** that:

the minutes of the 156th annual General meeting be accepted as a true record.

For: 157 votes; Against: 0 votes; Abstentions: 43

Motion agreed with 100% of the vote.

4.2. Receipt of the Annual Report of Council and the Financial Statements for 2023

The Members **RESOLVED** that:

The Annual Report of Council and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 be adopted.

For: 179 votes; Against: 2 votes; Abstentions: 19

Motion agreed with 98.90% of the vote.

4.3. Confirmation of Auditors

The Members **RESOLVED** that:

Tinworth & Co., Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors, be confirmed as the auditors of the Royal Society of NSW for 2024.

For: 191 votes; Against: 1 vote; Abstentions: 8

Motion agreed with 99.48% of the vote.

4.4. A rule change proposed by the Council – the Editor of the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of NSW*

As part of the governance review undertaken during the master planning process that took place in the second half of 2023, the Council concluded that because the publication of the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of NSW* is such an important activity, the Editor again should be an office-bearer of the Society. Furthermore, because successfully editing a peer-reviewed journal requires very specific skills and experience, the Editor should be appointed rather than elected. Any such appointment should be subject to approval by the membership at a general meeting.

The Council proposed that following resolution be considered by the membership. An Explanatory Memorandum was available in the electronic ballot.

The Members **RESOLVED** that:

Rule 16(c) be amended to insert “16(c)(vi) the Editor of the *Journal and Proceedings*” and the subsequent subclauses be renumbered accordingly.

Rule 18(a) be amended to read “The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, and Webmaster and the ordinary Members or Fellows elected to Council shall be elected for a period of two years. The position of Editor of the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales* shall be appointed by Council, based on the skills and experience required to edit a peer-reviewed journal. The Editor shall hold office until the second Annual General Meeting after the appointment. The appointment shall be subject to approval by the membership at the next Ordinary General Meeting after the appointment”.

Rule 27(b) “The Editor of the Society’s Journal and Proceedings will be appointed by Council” be deleted as it is no longer required and the subsequent subclauses be renumbered accordingly.

For: 191 votes; Against: 3 votes; Abstentions: 6
Motion agreed with 98.45% of the vote.

As outlined in the Explanatory Memorandum, Robert Marks is appointed to the position of Editor of the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*.

4.5. Election of five (5) Ordinary Members of Council

The terms of five ordinary members of Council became vacant as of the date of this meeting. Six nominations were received to fill five vacancies. There were 1,000 votes tallied from 200 voters. In descending order, the results were:

Sally Cripps	191 votes
Liz Killen	184 votes
Robert Marks	177 votes
Vince di Pietro	168 votes
Sean Brawley	153 votes
Medy Hassan	127 votes

Because Robert Marks has been appointed as Editor of the *Journal and Proceedings*, his name is withdrawn from the ballot of Ordinary Members of Council and the remaining five candidates in the list above are all appointed.

5. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The President referred to questions and comments that had been made during the conduct of the electronic ballot. One minor error in the Annual Report was corrected.

A question was asked from the floor on the progress of introducing a new, revised website. The Webmaster responded that this is expected to take place later in 2024.

6. CLOSE

The meeting closed at 6:25 pm.



Dr Donald Hector AM FRSN
Secretary

24 April 2024