

1332nd Ordinary General Meeting of the Royal Society of NSW

Minutes

The 1332nd Ordinary General Meeting of the Royal Society of NSW took place at 6:00 pm on Wednesday 4 June 2025 in the **Michael Crouch Room, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW**, followed by an open lecture. There were approximately 61 Members, Fellows and guests present at the meeting.

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Vice President, Em Prof Lindsay Botten FRSN presided at the meeting. He welcomed members and guests.

Apologies: Professor Christina Slade FRSN and Professor Lyria Bennet Moses FRSN

2. **MINUTES OF THE 1331st ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING**

Minutes of the 1331st Ordinary General Meeting were reviewed and approved. There were no matters arising.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Fellows and Members Assessment Committee meets between Council meetings to consider nominations and make recommendations to Council for the election of Fellows and Members. These recommendations are circulated to Councillors in advance of the Council meeting, allowing sufficient time for review. If no valid objections are received, the nominations are then proposed to the Membership for consideration at the next Ordinary General Meeting (OGM).

At this meeting, Council proposed the following candidate for admission to the Society; however, the nomination was not finalised in time for inclusion in the 1331st OGM:

MEMBERSHIP

- Debbie Perik

4. **PRESENTATION OF FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATES**

The Vice President presented certificates to the following new Members and Fellows who were present at the meeting:

FELLOWSHIP

- Professor Nicholas Fisher
- Brendan Hyde
- Professor Buddhima Indratna
- Steven Patterson
- Professor Yansong Shen
- Gary Zamel

MEMBERSHIP

- Lea Kannar-Lichtenberger
- Dr Mahendra Samarwickrama
- Denis Smith

5. **REPORT FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL**

The Vice President provided an overview of the eight Royal Society events scheduled for June, to be held in Sydney and across the Branches.

6. OPEN LECTURE

Introduced and hosted by **Professor Sally Cripps FRSN**

“AI: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly”

**Professor Michael Blumenstein FRSN FACS (1) and
Professor Nicholas Davis (2)**

- (1) Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business Creation and Major Facilities)
- (2) Director, Strategy and Operations, Human Technology Institute
University of Technology Sydney

Artificial Intelligence is transforming the world, promising revolutionary breakthroughs, while also raising profound ethical and social questions. In this talk, Professors Michael Blumenstein and Nicholas Davis will take a candid tour through the current landscape of AI: *the good*—from life-saving medical applications to creative tools that amplify human potential; *the bad*—including biased algorithms, misinformation, and technological enhanced inequality; and *the ugly*—the darker risks of surveillance, deepfakes, and the unintended consequences of unchecked AI development.

Rather than techno-utopian hype or dystopian doom, this presentation aims for nuance: exploring how we can harness the power of AI responsibly, critically, and creatively. Whether you are an enthusiast, sceptic, or somewhere in between, this talk invites you to engage with the urgent and complex realities shaping our AI-powered future.

About the speakers

Professor Jane McAdam AO is Scientia Professor of Law, Australian Research Council Laureate Fellow and the Founding Director of the Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at UNSW Sydney, where she leads the Evacuations Research Hub. She is a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and the Australian Academy of Law, and an Honorary Associate of Oxford's Refugee Studies Centre. Professor McAdam publishes widely on international refugee law and forced migration, with a particular focus on evacuations and mobility in the context of climate change and disasters. Her legal analysis has been adopted by courts, governments and UN bodies, and her work has been highly influential in the development of international, regional and national policy frameworks. Professor McAdam serves on multiple international committees and was joint Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Refugee Law* (2014–24). In 2021, she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) 'for distinguished service to international refugee law, particularly to climate change and the displacement of people'. She won the Australian Human Rights Commission's Law Award in 2022 and was the inaugural winner.

Michael Blumenstein is currently a Professor and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business Creation and Major Facilities) at the University of Technology Sydney. Previously, Michael served as the Deputy Dean (Research and Innovation) in the Faculty of Engineering and IT. Over two decades, Michael has successfully led the growth of cutting-edge research at Universities, particularly in collaboration with industry and focusing on translational outcomes.

Michael is a nationally and internationally recognised expert in the areas of automated Pattern Recognition and Artificial Intelligence (AI). He is passionate about developing technology that has a positive effect on society, focusing on AI for good. Michael has published his work widely, particularly AI applications with multi-disciplinary teams for solving global problems. His research spans various projects applying AI to the fields of Engineering, Environmental Science, Neurobiology and Coastal Management. Components of his research into the predictive assessment of beach conditions have been commercialised for use by local government agencies, coastal management authorities and in commercial applications. Among the many projects he has led in collaboration with industry, Michael's team developed the award-winning SharkSpotter – a world-first AI-based technology for detecting Sharks in the ocean from Uncrewed Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) to enhance beach safety and for saving lives.

Michael is a Fellow of the Australian Computer Society and a Fellow of the Royal Society of NSW.

Nicholas Davis is an Industry Professor and Co-director of the Human Technology Institute (HTI) at the University of Technology, Sydney. HTI is an action-oriented research institute focused on developing tools, policies and strategic skills that help put humans at the centre of emerging technologies. Since 2022, HTI has provided breakthrough techniques and independent expert advice around the safe, responsible, and effective use of artificial intelligence to governments, companies and civil society organisations, both in Australia and internationally.

Nick's previous roles include being Head of Society and Innovation and Member of the Executive Committee at the World Economic Forum, and Managing Partner of SWIFT Partners, a Geneva-based consultancy helping organisations to harness emerging technologies for sustainable value.

With Klaus Schwab, the Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, he is the co-author of *Shaping the Future of the Fourth Industrial Revolution*. In addition to being a Certified Professional Facilitator and a Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts (FRSA) in the UK, Nick is an Associate Fellow at the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School, Associate Fellow at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, a Visiting Fellow at the Australian National University and a board member of the IMPROVE European Innovation Management Academy.

7. VOTE OF THANKS

A vote of thanks was given by Em Prof Lindsay Botten FRSN.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

9. CLOSE

The Vice President closed the meeting at 7:40 pm.

The minutes were recorded by the Secretary, Em. Prof Trevor Brown FRSN.

Signed as a true record
Em Prof Lindsay Botten FRSN
Vice President