

1337th Ordinary General Meeting of the Royal Society of NSW

Minutes

The 1337th Ordinary General Meeting of the Royal Society of NSW took place at 6:00 pm on Wednesday 3 December 2025 in the Michael Crouch Room, Level 1, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW, Shakespeare Place, Sydney, followed by an open lecture.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The President, Em Prof Christina Slade FRSN presided at the meeting. She welcomed Members and guests.

2. MINUTES OF THE 1336th ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 1336th Ordinary General Meeting were reviewed and approved. There were no matters arising.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP

At its meeting 26 November 2025 the Council, upon recommendation of the Fellows and Members Assessment Committee, resolved to propose the following candidates for admission as Fellows and Members.

FELLOWSHIP

Jennifer Laffan

Laudation – Jennifer Laffan has made a substantial contribution to Australian agriculture.

Professor Margaret Morris

Laudation – Margaret Morris has made an international contribution to pharmacology and its life impacts.

Professor Bronwyn Fox

Laudation – Bronwyn Fox has made a significant contribution to advanced manufacturing and materials science.

Professor Dale Dominey-Howes

Laudation – Dale Dominey-Howes is a geoscientist who has made a significant contribution to disaster risk reduction.

Professor Sophie Primig

Laudation – Sophie Primig has made a substantial contribution to engineering in the field of metallurgy.

Professor Ali Abbas

Laudation – Abi Abbas is an internationally regarded leader on engineering of the circular economy.

Professor Bamini Gopinath

Laudation – Bamini Gopinath has made an international contribution in the field of public health, notably in the area of sensory loss.

Professor Wenjie Zhang

Laudation – Wenjie Zhang has made significant contributions to the field of computer science, notably in the areas of big data analytics and artificial intelligence.

Susanne Steigler-Peters

Laudation – Susanne Steigler-Peters has made a distinguished contribution to public service in NSW.

Dr Kristen Sharp

Laudation – Kristen Sharp is internationally recognised for her leadership in the arts, with particular expertise in contemporary Asian art.

MEMBERSHIP

Dr Isabella Ludbrook

Dr Nguyen Chanh

Jerzy Maciejak

Professor Zoe Terpening

Dr Sebastian Sequoiah-Grayson

Dr Sophia Moscovis

Professor Marian Baird

Erin Gao

Rebecca McCartney

4. CONFIRMATION OF FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP AND PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES

No certificates were presented at this meeting.

5. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

The President reported that, throughout 2025, the Society held 45 events, including online and face-to-face lectures and panel discussions at the State Library of NSW and in the Branches.

The luncheon series *Provocations and Inspirations* was held at the Union Club, and the program also included visits. The Governor hosted *Ideas@theHouse* and the Annual Forum.

The President further reported that the Royal Society of NSW library collection has now been distributed. Part of the collection and the archives are held by the State Library of NSW, and by the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney. The Dixson Library at the University of New England has a room within Special Collections dedicated to the RSNSW collection. Duplicate volumes are currently being offered for sale through Rare Books Sydney.

The President announced the 2025 award winners. Detailed information about each of the awards and their recipients can be found on the Recent Winners page on the Society's website.

RSNSW Career Excellence Awards

James Cook Medal — Professor Michelle Haber AM FAA FAHMS

Edgeworth David Medal — Scientia Professor Xiaojing Hao FTSE FAA

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Scholar Medal — Professor Bradley Moggridge FTSE

Ida Browne Medal — No award in 2025

RSNSW Discipline Awards and Lectureships

Liversidge Award in the Chemical Sciences — Professor Chuan Zhao FRSN FTSE

Warren Award in Engineering, Technology, Architecture, and Design — Professor Simon

Ringer FRSN FTSE

Award in the Creative and Performing Arts — Scientia Professor Dennis Del Favero FAHA

Award in the Life Sciences — Professor Richard Kingsford AO FRSN FRZS

RSNSW Bicentennial Postgraduate Scholarships

— **Ms Ellish McMaster** (University of Sydney)

— **Ms Isabelle Nicholas** (Macquarie University)

— **Mr Amir Tourani** (Western Sydney University)

— **Mr Christopher Whyte** (University of Sydney)

RSNSW Bicentennial Early Career Research and Service Citations

— **Dr Adrian Y. S. Lee** (Westmead Institute of Medical Research, University of Sydney)

— **Dr Jiayan Liao** (University of Technology Sydney)

— **Dr Brandon Munn** (University of Sydney)

6. OPEN LECTURE

“A Future Made in Australia”

Dr Donald Hector AM FRSN

Principal, Grassick SSG Pty Ltd

A Future Made in Australia is a major federal government program that establishes a policy framework called the National Interest Framework that imposes rigour on government decision-making on public investments, particularly those that need to attract large-scale private investment. The program will see investment of \$22.7 billion over the next decade, focused on two major streams:

- Net zero transformation; and
- Economic security and resilience

Net Zero Transformation – this stream will identify and support 21st-century technologies that will enable Australia to participate in the reindustrialisation needed to achieve global greenhouse gas emissions targets. The stream has three major areas of focus: *Renewable hydrogen* – utilising Australia’s abundant renewable energy resources to produce green hydrogen, particularly as an input to the manufacture of green metals such as iron, steel, alumina/aluminium. *Green metals* – the established production technologies for iron, steel, alumina and aluminium require very large amounts of energy. Worldwide, this mostly comes from highly carbon-intensive sources such as coal and natural gas. Renewable hydrogen has a very low emissions footprint when compared with current production technologies that are mostly based on petroleum or natural gas. Hydrogen can also be used to replace metallurgical coal to make green iron, although the technology, which appears quite simple, is very complex and has yet to be commercialised at a competitive cost. *Low-carbon liquid fuels* – Australia’s large land mass and advanced farming practices require large quantities of liquid fuels, all of which are based on petroleum or natural gas. Development of large-scale, low-carbon-intensity liquid fuels will be critical to Australia’s prosperity and contribute to the world achieving its greenhouse gas emissions targets.

Economic Resilience and Security – this stream identifies sectors that are critical to Australia’s economic resilience, vulnerable to global supply chain disruptions or require government support to attract sufficient private investment capital.

In the 2024-25 budget, five industries have been identified and aligned with the National Interest framework. These are:

- Renewable hydrogen
- Critical minerals processing
- Green metals
- Low-carbon liquid fuels
- Clean energy manufacturing, including battery and solar panel supply chains

The ‘Future Made in Australia’ challenges are by no means trivial and must not be underestimated. Donald Hector will explore some of these issues and what needs to happen in Australia for this substantial government investment to be successful.

About the speaker

Donald Hector is a chemical engineer with extensive experience in large-scale industrial processing, engineering design and the evaluation and commercialisation of new technologies. Currently, he is a co-founder and director of Reverse Ore Corporation, a company established to commercialise patented critical minerals beneficiation technology developed at the Australian National University. He was a co-founder and director of Gelion Technologies Pty Ltd, a start-up company that developed and commercialised novel battery technology invented at the University of Sydney. In 2021, the company was listed as Gelion plc on the Alternative Investment Market of the London Stock Exchange.

Donald was managing director of Dow Corning Australia and the executive director responsible for the Australian/New Zealand, ASEAN and Indian subsidiaries of Dow Corning Corporation, a high-technology American multi-national specialty materials company. He was also managing director of Asia Pacific Specialty Chemicals Ltd, an ASX-listed specialty materials and food additives company. He is a former non-executive chairman of Coote Industrial Ltd (ASX-listed), a heavy engineering, mining equipment and defence company. He was a non-executive director of Engenco Ltd (originally ASX-listed, recently in privately owned) and was the independent non-executive chairman of SEMF (now COVA Group), a privately owned engineering consulting firm. He has also been on the boards of several other private companies and not-for-profit organisations. Donald has a PhD in engineering and is a Fellow and former global vice-president of the Institution of Chemical Engineers (London), is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia and of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He is a past President of the Royal Society of NSW and served on its Council for 14 years.

7. VOTE OF THANKS

A vote of thanks was given by Em Prof Christina Slade FRSN.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

9. CLOSE

The President closed the meeting at 7:30 pm.

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

Signed as a true record
Em Prof Christina Slade FRSN
President