

1339th ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday 8 April 2026 at 6:00pm

Michael Crouch Room, Level 1, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW,
(enter from the Shakespeare Place entrance)

The 1339th Ordinary General Meeting of the Royal Society of NSW will take place at **6:00 pm on Wednesday 8 April 2026** in the **Michael Crouch Room, Level 1, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW, Shakespeare Place, Sydney**, followed by an open lecture. Registration and refreshments will be from 5:30 pm.

AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**
President, Em Prof Christina Slade FRSN.
- 2. MINUTES**
Minutes of the 1338th Ordinary General Meeting will be reviewed.
- 3. CONFIRMATION OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP**
At its meeting on 18 February 2026, Council, on the recommendation of the Fellows and Members Assessment Committee, agreed to propose the following candidates for admission as Fellows and Members.

FELLOWSHIP

Professor Cheryl Anne Jones

Laudation – Cheryl Jones has made an outstanding international contribution to childhood infectious disease and health workforce education.

Professor Anthony John Burke

Laudation – Anthony Burke has made significant contributions to the field of urban architecture, and in engaging with the general public about design and architecture.

Professor Jill Bennett

Laudation – Jill Bennett has made a significant contribution to the arts, media and visual communication.

Judge Sharon Alexandra Burchell

Laudation – Sharon Burchell is a judicial officer with substantial expertise in commercial and administrative law, and community service.

Professor Timothy David Stephens

Laudation – Timothy Stephens has made a substantial contribution to international law, notably in the fields of ocean governance and polar law.

Professor Marian Pam Baird

Laudation – Marian Baird has made a significant contribution to women's welfare through her work on employment, gender equality, and domestic and family violence.

Professor Bradley J. Moggridge

Laudation – Bradley Moggridge has made a significant contribution to water science, especially in the exploration of the common ground between Indigenous and global knowledge systems.

Professor Dennis Del Favero

Laudation – Dennis Del Favero has made a substantial contribution to digital innovation in the creative arts, including media and communication.

Professor Carel Martijn de Sterke

Laudation – Martijn de Sterke has made a significant contribution to nonlinear optics and photonics.

MEMBERSHIP

Yvonne I-Chen Hsu

Jane Cotter

***Professor Lina Yao**

Daniel Paul Hart

Paul Jeffery

Noel William Alexander Lambert

Dr Quentin Meyer

Alexander Romney Dowthwaite

Arlene May Tansey

Dr Hannah Schunker

Renee Rimington O’Kane

4. PRESENTATION OF FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATES

The President will present certificates to new Members and Fellows whose nominations were tabled at the previous OGM or who were unable to attend previously and have notified the Secretariat of their attendance.

5. REPORT FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

The President will update membership on the key activities underway for 2026.

6. OPEN LECTURE

“A Drone by any other name”

Dr Catherine Ball

Scientific Futurist, Tech Influencer, Robotics Expert, Adjunct Professor
and

Simon Masters

Deputy Director, Future Flight, InnovateUK

For a decade, Australia was the global drone rule-maker, and the UK was still warming up.

This presentation tells the story of a regulatory power shift. Australia got out fast, with CASA’s 2016 reforms making commercial drone operations easier and more accessible well before many markets caught up. It was bold, practical, and business-friendly. In many ways, Australia wrote the early playbook for modern drone regulation.

But being first is not the same as staying first.

The UK arrived later, then surged ahead by pairing regulation with serious national investment and a coordinated cross-government approach. It moved into a more advanced risk-based framework, aligned drone policy with broader aviation reform, and backed it with a Future of Flight strategy designed to scale real-world operations, including beyond visual line of sight. In short, the UK did not just regulate drones; it funded the future they needed.

This session compares the two countries side by side, showing how Australia led on early regulatory innovation, while the UK built the stronger long game through capital, policy alignment, and industry mobilisation.

If Australia proved drones could be regulated, the UK is proving they can be scaled.

And that difference is now shaping who leads the next decade

About the speakers

Dr Catherine Ball is an award-winning company director, bestselling author, futurist and adjunct professor working across global projects where emerging technologies meet humanitarian, education and environmental needs.

Working to protect the natural environment and empowering all members of society through mutual education and respect are core aspects of her chosen projects. As well as supporting start-ups and leaders from all generations across the globe, Catherine is particularly passionate about social mobility and equity.

Catherine is proud to be an advisor to a broad range of enterprises and philanthropic organisations, including being an XPRIZE visioneer and member of their Global Brains Trust.

Simon Masters has 20 years of experience across industry and public sector roles. With a background in aerospace and technology, he has held senior positions in the civil and military aerospace sectors, including systems engineering and R&D roles with Airbus and BAE SYSTEMS.

He took up the role of Deputy Director for the Future Flight Challenge within InnovateUK in 2020, focusing on developing drone and advanced air mobility capabilities and supporting systems in the UK. He has led efforts to integrate technology solutions with emerging use cases, particularly those addressing needs and opportunities in public services. In 2024, he took on the leadership of the Future Flight Challenge program as it transitions from R&D to commercialisation and growth. Passionate about innovation and collaboration, he has worked to build international partnerships across Europe, Japan and Australia.

7. VOTE OF THANKS

8. CLOSE

Em Prof Trevor Brown FRSN
Secretary