

Minutes of the Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) Annual General Meeting

Held virtually via Zoom on Wednesday 19 October 2022

Time: 9am AWST/CST (WA, Taiwan)

11am AEST (QLD)

11.30am ACDT (SA, NT)

12pm AEDT (ACT, NSW, Vic, Tas)

1pm FJT (Fiji)

2pm NZDT (New Zealand)

1. Welcome

- ACTS Secretary Sally Northover greeted members and gave an Acknowledgement to Country.
- Ray O'Brien, Head of Sustainability from Otago University, then started the meeting with a Karakia

2. Attendance / Apologies

- Attendance of members recorded (attached)
- Apologies:
 - Flinders University, South Australia
 - Massey University, Palmerston North, NZ

3. Minutes of 2021 AGM

- [Minutes from the 2021 AGM](#)
- 2021 Minutes Moved: Corey Peterson
- Seconded: Danielle McCartney
- **Carried**

4. Receiving President's Report by Corey Peterson

Introduction

Another year of local, national, and global challenges facing the higher education sector from global climate change related weather events to the lingering COVID-19 immediate and longer-term impacts alongside geopolitical instability. Within this seeming maelstrom of external influences, our sectoral institutions are responding in a variety of ways, some embracing the challenges and empowering their sustainability agendas for multi-level impact, while others succumb to the funding and prioritisation pressures and reduce support for sustainability-focused positions. Significantly, there seems to be more of the former than the latter and even fewer that are not keeping some level of direct support.

Continued prioritisation arises from the increasing understanding that the concepts of sustainability through to regeneration is exactly what is needed in these trying times. Our students, both current and future, make it abundantly clear in surveys and focus groups that what they are seeking is to attend higher and further education institutions that align with their values, much like we have seen for our past students who seek employment that aligns with their values. These values are very much in alignment with the sustainability and regeneration agenda. This alone gives great hope that the future will (predominantly) be filled with people making decisions for themselves, their communities, businesses, and organisations based on an understanding of the challenges faced and who are ready and able to rise to meet them.

Our regional collective influence in the world of sustainability is quite impressive, both with our ongoing leadership in the International Green Gown Awards and in the Times Higher Education Impact ranking. The fact that more of our members are also undertaking their journeys to the STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System) and inclusion of several of our member institutions in the Sustainable Campus Index is further evidence of our acting locally in globally relevant ways.

To support this continuing transition in focus to, let's be honest, the things we as professionals in the sector and as your sustainability-focused sectoral body ACTS have been on about for the better part of our lives! Still nice when others catch up and even leapfrog us and encourage us to work even harder as ACTS to provide a platform for discussion and information sharing, a vehicle for collaboration both within Australasia and globally, and a 'safe place' for we sustainability practitioners to let our collective hair down in supportive and engaging ways. Supporting all of this are our amazing staff team of two who transitioned from contractors to staff members in 2022 with our General Manager title changing to Chief Executive Officer – seriously we as the Board are gobsmacked at how much these two phenomenal people accomplish in a year. Kudos to Rhi and Valina!

We also, of course, have a passionate and committed Board made up of staff (and former staff) of our member institutions in both Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific, and now Taiwan as well. 'Australasian' makes more sense every year. I cannot thank the members of the Board enough for being there to consider and act on the many issues we address every year. And a very special thank you to Sally Northover as Company Secretary, our meetings run like clockwork, including the agenda and minutes.

2022 OVERVIEW

Board and Strategy

We completed the first full year under our new strategy and as an Australian Company Limited by Guarantee. We now will see the full implementation of the constitutional change requiring three-year terms for Board members before needing to stand for re-election. Notable Board happenings:

- Welcome to our new Directors this year, with Suzanne Davis joining from The University of Queensland in January and Theodor Richard from National Chung Hsing University, Taichung, Taiwan in September.
- Director Usha Iyer-Raniga presented at the Universities Australia Conference 2022 on how Australian universities can meet the UN SDG 13 – Climate Action.
- ACTS Board members participated as judges in the EAUC Green Gown Awards and the International Green Gown Awards.
- ACTS Board members presented at the 2022 Tertiary Education Management Conference in Hobart.

Programs and Events

Our annual conference – The Future of Sustainability – returned after a two-year hiatus, and for the first time was entirely virtual and well attended given the ‘great equaliser’ that virtual events can be.

- There were 310 registrations, which was a bit lower than we had expected.
- More than two hundred people accessed the Zoom events platform across the three days of live events, with the most popular sessions being the screening of the “Regenerating Australia” film by Damon Gameau and the “Regenerative Development and Design” keynote by Bill Reed.
- Registration breakdown was 37% students and 62% staff – a massive increase for student attendance to the ACTS Conference.
- Regional networking events were hosted in collaboration with the virtual conference in Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney, and Tasmania.
- Videos of the presentations are available on our online member portal.
- Generated surplus of \$8,000 (including subtraction of staff hours) to be reinvested in ACTS programs.

We are close to concluding our biggest year ever as the regional delivery partner for the Green Impact program in Australasia, with twelve universities completing the program in 2022. For the first time as part of ACTS delivery, two non-campus organisations (Early Childhood Australia and Deloitte Southeast Asia) also are using Green Impact to support change within their organisations.

We are happy to report that Green Impact continues to be valued and well-supported within the membership – especially as the timing of program’s growth allowed us to maintain our staff after the significant budgetary impact from not hosting a conference for two years as the conference had been the main revenue generator to support having paid staff. Noting that there is a reduced capacity to generate revenue through virtual conferences. Rhi will provide exciting updates coming to Green Impact next year in her report.

The Green Gown Awards Australasia celebrate their 13th year and continue as a vital sector-wide scheme that recognises sustainability innovation and leadership. This year however we did see a significant drop in the total number of applications received, although interestingly, the number of unique institutions submitting was higher than in recent years. We are reviewing the categories on offer through the awards to ensure we are capturing best practice throughout the sector.

Member Benefits

- There were many webinars, roundtables, and panel events to guide, inform and engage our members and interested parties throughout the year as well.
- Ongoing website developments continue, especially within the member portal, key ACTS contacts, member directory outlining key sustainability commitments and achievements, and resource hub with a webinar archive.

Partnerships

Continued collaboration with partners:

- Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).
 - Continued support for the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) cohort approach in the Australasian region with seven universities using STARS (University of Tasmania, The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney all rated and Massey University, UNSW, TAFE Gold Coast and The University of Adelaide) and more exploring the tool.
 - Carmen Primo Perez (UTAS Senior Sustainability Officer and ACTS Treasurer) represents our region on the STARS 3.0 coordinating committee.
- Sustainable Development Solutions Network Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific (SDSN)
 - ACTS co-hosted the 2nd Regional forum for Mainstreaming the SDGs in Higher Education. SDSN AusNZPac, ACTS, and PRME AusNZ brought together university leaders, education for sustainable development experts, and teaching staff from a wide range of disciplines to discuss good practices, challenges, and opportunities for scaling up education for the SDGs across Higher Education in the AusNZPac region, across three days in February. The recordings of these sessions are freely available to watch.
 - As part of the Accelerating SDG Practice Series – ACTS and SDSN co-hosted a member discussion on ‘Making the most of the THE Impact Rankings,’ as well as two open workshops ‘Sharing good practice in ESD in Australia and the Pacific’ and ‘The SDGs: Making an imperfect framework work for higher education.’
 - This collaboration will round out the year with an additional three webinars on the Mainstreaming Education for the SDGs in Higher Education Series, taking place in November.
- Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA)
 - MoU established
 - Supported Green Campus Day events in September along with the NZGBC (who we are also working with to establish a collaborative MoU).
- Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association (TEFMA)
 - Board members worked with TEFMA on updating their environmental indicators reporting.
 - The President, Treasurer and a Board member Suzanne Davis presented on STARS at the Tertiary Education Management Conference held in Hobart in September (note TEFMA and ATEM are going separate ways with TEFMA running their own conference in Sydney next year and ATEM yet to announce their plans).
- Sustainable Universities Network (SUN) – Student group.
 - Encouraging this new group to expand to include NZ student groups and associations.

- Supported the SUN initiative to coordinate a nation-wide sustainability fortnight, and we are looking at expanding this concept further next year (potentially incorporating Green Campus Day).
 - EAUC – The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education
 - Continued collaboration for the delivery of the Green Gown Awards.
 - Student of Sustainability (SOS-UK)
 - Supporting our regional delivery of Green Impact.
 - Climate Action Network in International Education (CANIE)
 - Support the CANIE Accord through coverage in enACT.
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- President's Report moved: Corey Peterson
 - Seconded: Suzanne Davis
 - **Carried**

5. Financial Report presented by Carmen Primo Perez

ACTS is audited independently by Nexia Australia (Nexia Brisbane Audit Pty Ltd) in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981.

- 2022 Audited Financial Statements moved: Sue Hopkins
- Seconded: Andrew Wilks
- **Carried**

6. Appointment of the 2023 Auditor for annual audit and preparation of financial reports

In accordance with the obligations of the relevant government act at the EOFY:

- Incorporated Association: The Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981 *or*
- Company Limited by Guarantee: the Corporations Act 2001 (Corporations Act)
 - Nexia Australia (Nexia Brisbane Audit Pty Ltd) approved as auditors for 2022-2023 financial year:
 - Moved: Carmen Primo Perez
 - Seconded: Arifa Sarfraz
 - **Carried**

7. Receiving Membership Report by Rhiannon Boyd

- 88% of all universities across Australia and New Zealand are ACTS members.
- 100% of NZ universities are ACTS members for the 4th year in a row.
- 3 new members joined in 2022 –
 - Flinders University in South Australia
 - Fiji National University in Fiji
 - National Chung Hsing University in Taiwan

10 Year Snapshot

	Institutional	Affiliate	Corporate
2013	52	3	3
2014	52	4	3
2015	47	3	3
2016	40	2	1
2017	40	2	2
2018	41	1	2
2019	40	1	1
2020	41	2	0
2021	42	1	1
2022	45	1	1

2021 brought no overall loss of member institutions. In the 10 year snapshot, the higher numbers of institutional members shown in previous years was a result of TAFE institution memberships. We are looking to reconnect with TAFE and other vocational institutions in 2023 and get them involved in what we are doing.

Member Benefits:

- **#actsofconnection**
 - #actsofconnection events will become a standard membership inclusion in 2023, not just for those running Green Impact. #actsofconnection is a grassroots online event series that provides awareness of sustainability issues and provides connection with a supportive community of likeminded people.

Coming in 2023:

- Green Gown Awards Australasia
 - Future of Sustainability Conference event – will move back to later in the year. It will be fully virtual and hope to expand into regional networking events in collaboration with the conference
 - Green Impacts will include a brand-new custom-built online toolkit platform
 - Member Roundtables will continue providing opportunities to connect
 - Green Campus Day – to align with GBCA's World Green Building week and perhaps align with Green Campus week/fortnight celebration of sustainability to be held in the later part of next year.
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- Membership Report moved: Danielle McCartney
 - Seconded: Edward Maher
 - **Carried**

8. Retirement and Election of Director Positions

In line with our governing Constitution, each year one third of the sitting board must retire and are eligible for re-election. Under this, 3 board members retired (Corey Peterson, Leanne Denby & Linda Stevenson). Theodoor Richard has been on the board as a casual vacancy (nominated by the Board when there is a vacancy outside the period of the AGM).

There were 4 positions and 4 applicants so there was no need for an election.

Election of Directors

- **Director: Corey Peterson, Chief Sustainability Officer, University of Tasmania**
 - Moved: Sue Hopkins
 - Seconded: Arifa Sarfraz
 - **Carried**

- **Director: Leanne Denby, Chief Executive Officer, ISLA (ACTS Lifetime Member)**
 - Moved: Edward Maher
 - Seconded: Andrew Wilks
 - **Carried**

- **Director: Linda Stevenson, Senior Manager, Sustainability, RMIT University**
 - Moved: Sue Hopkins
 - Seconded: Danielle McCartney
 - **Carried**

- **Director: Theodoor Richard, Research Fellow, National Chung Hsing University**
 - Moved: Corey Peterson
 - Seconded: Juliet Meyer
 - **Carried**

9. Floor opened to members

- No new business or issues were raised by members

10. Meeting close

- Andrew Wilks, Sustainability Director, Victoria University of Wellington ended the meeting with a Karakia

Meeting closed: 12.45pm (AEDT)

ACTS 2022 AGM Attendee List

Name	Organisation	Country
Achini Weerasi	Massey University Auckland	New Zealand
Andrew Wilks	Victoria University of Wellington	New Zealand
Anne Marie DeRose	University of the Sunshine Coast	Australia
Arifa Sarfraz	University of NSW	Australia
Carlin Hales	La Trobe University	Australia
Carmen Primo Perez	University of Tasmania	Australia
Catherine Elliott	University of Tasmania	Australia
Catherine Woods	University of Adelaide	Australia
Christie White	University of Southern Queensland	Australia
Clayton McDowell	University of Wollongong	Australia
Corey Peterson	University of Tasmania	Australia
Danielle McCartney	University of Technology Sydney	Australia
Delwyn Langdon	ACTS Life Member	Australia
Edward Maher	Charles Sturt University	Australia
Emma Connan	Deakin University	Australia
Geraldine Tan	University of Western Australia	Australia
Gillian Graham-Crowe	University of Sydney	Australia
Juliet Meyer	Australian National University	Australia
Leanne Denby	ILSA / ACTS Life Member	Australia
Linda Stevenson	RMIT University	Australia
Niraj Chettiar	Fiji National University	Fiji
Ray O'Brien	Otago University	New Zealand
Rhiannon Boyd	ACTS	Australia
Rosemary Potter	TAFE QLD (Gold Coast)	Australia
Saffron Benner	Griffith University	Australia
Sally Northover	Macquarie University	Australia
Shane French	Monash University	Australia
Sue Hopkins	University of Melbourne	Australia
Suzanne Davis	University of Queensland	Australia
Tehmina Khan	RMIT University	Australia
Theodoor Richard	National Chung Hsing University	Taiwan
Usha Iyer-Raniga	RMIT University	Australia
Valina Clearwater	ACTS	Australia
Will Dalgliesh	Bendigo Kangan Institute	Australia