

October 2019

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# Australasian Neuroscience Society Newsletter

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*Australasian Neuroscience Society 39th Annual Scientific Meeting. 2-5 December 2019, Adelaide Convention Centre, South Australia.*

[www.ans.org.au](http://www.ans.org.au)

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## Notifications

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### **Become an ANS member or student member!**

Please join us by becoming a Member of ANS.

You can join online at any time!

<https://tas.currinda.com/register/organisation/172>.

### **Check out our new and improved website**

[www.ans.org.au](http://www.ans.org.au) and follow updates on the ANS

Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/AusNeuroSoc>)

or via our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/AusNeuroSoc>).

# Acknowledgements

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## Sponsors

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- Melbourne Neuroscience Institute, The University of Melbourne
- Neurological Foundation of New Zealand
- Otago Division of Sciences, University of Otago
- University of Tasmania
- The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health
- Eccles Institute of Neuroscience, Australian National University
- Queensland Brain Institute, The University of Queensland
- The John Curtin School of Medical Research, Australian National University
- Centre for Neuroscience, Flinders University
- Centre of Excellence for Integrative Brain Function, ARC Centre of Excellence
- South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
- Hopwood Centre for Neurobiology, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
- School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Otago

## ANS Committee

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## ANS Communication Committee

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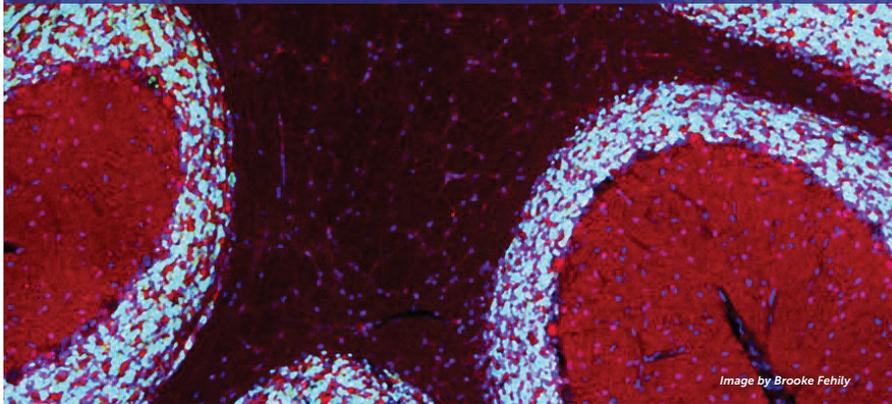
### **Authorised by**

Prof Thomas Fath  
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# Become an ANS member!

## Australasian Neuroscience Society Why be a member?

The Australasian Neuroscience Society (ANS) is the largest network of neuroscientists and the peak neuroscience body in Australia and New Zealand. ANS leads and fosters excellence in neuroscience research and teaching, as well as the application of neuroscience discovery for the benefit of society. Membership of ANS provides a multitude of career-enhancing benefits at all levels of seniority.



## Benefits of ANS membership

- Enhance your career with education and networking opportunities
- Apply for ANS Research Awards available at all career levels
- Reduced registration rates to support your participation in the annual ANS conference
- Organise national conference symposia and nominate Plenary speakers
- Access State-based funding for local neuroscience events
- Global partner benefits including special registration rates at sister society conferences, such as FENS and SfN
- Be part of the Australian Brain Alliance, supporting neuroscience nationally and internationally
- Professional training opportunities locally and special access to courses offered internationally
- Participate in awareness activities in the public and political arenas
- Access resources and training for neuroscience teaching
- Support diversity in neuroscience
- Post and access free job and PhD position ads on our website
- Quarterly newsletter
- Career development opportunities for your research students



To become a member or find out more visit: [www.ans.org.au](http://www.ans.org.au)

## Message from the President

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With October upon us, the ANS 2019 Annual Scientific Meeting is only two months away. We are delighted that our registration numbers are ahead of last year at the same time, and heading towards our target.

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Of course, there is still time for submission of abstracts for poster presentations, and in any case I warmly encourage you to promote the conference, and ANS membership generally, to your colleagues. It is also really pleasing to see that we have well exceeded the number of exhibitors and sponsors for the conference compared to last year, and many thanks to Seb Brown at The Association Specialists for getting this result. Together with all the dedicated work by the Adelaide local organising committee, ANS 2019 promises to be an outstanding celebration of Australian and New Zealand neuroscience.

Our current Conference Executive Chair, Helen Cooper, is stepping down after this year's conference. We are keen to receive nominations for this role, especially from women. Helen has played a vital role in keeping communication going between the Executive and the local organising committee, and for passing on key information and advice from one year to the next, and of course ensuring that we have a successful conference year on year. As we all know, having a successful conference is critical to the health and future of ANS. Please consider making a nomination (by October 15th), either of yourself or a colleague whom you think would enjoy taking on the challenge of this important position.

One item that the Council will bring to ANS members at this year's AGM is a proposal to align the membership year with the financial year which runs from 1 July to 30 June. The upshot of this would be an extension of all current memberships to 30 June 2020. While this would create a loss of 6 months of subscription income for the Society in this financial year, it may better align the membership year and membership renewals with the timing of the conference which is at the end of the year. Apart from the member conference registration, I hope you are aware, and can make known to your colleagues, the many other benefits of ANS membership: eligibility for awards and prizes, eligibility to propose symposia, travel support to Cajal courses, travel support for students to the ANS ASM, and registration at member rates for FENS and JNS (and possibly soon for Korea and Canadian Neuroscience Societies), to name but a few. Help us spread the word!

I'm writing this message while in Daegu at the IBRO meeting (not actually during the meeting times, I hasten to add). I was extremely pleased to be there for the announcement of the results for the International Brain Bee competition. It was a wonderful moment to see Sophia Ye from New Zealand place 4th and Silas Hansch-Maher from Australia place 5th out of the 28 countries

participating. Ramesh Rajan, Debbie Young and Lyndsey Collins-Praino plus the rest of the Brain Bee committee as well as the Centre for Integrative Brain Function and Education Perfect would have been very proud of them. What a huge moment for these young people.

Wishing everyone all the best for the outcomes of their NHMRC, ARC, HRC and Marsden grants. Congratulations to all those who have already been successful this year. And as a supporter of the Australian Brain Alliance, I send on behalf of ANS all our best wishes for a successful outcome from the presentations to Parliament on 14-15th October.



**Prof Cliff  
Abraham**

*PhD, President, ANS*  
[cabraham@psy.otago.ac.nz](mailto:cabraham@psy.otago.ac.nz)

## Brian Manning Johnstone (1929–2019)

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Brian Manning Johnstone was one of the giants of Australian physiology and founder of the Auditory Laboratory in the University of Western Australia's Department of Physiology. Brian obtained his PhD from the University of Melbourne in 1961 and after a postdoc at the University of Chicago, came to UWA in 1962 as a Lecturer.

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He quickly built a multidisciplinary team and set about tackling the big questions in inner ear biology. His approach was multidisciplinary and characterized by remarkable innovation, that made the lab in Perth an internationally recognized centre of inner ear research. In 1974, he received the largest ARC grant then given to a single researcher and subsequently was the Chief Investigator on four successive NHMRC Program Grants.

Some of Brian's many achievements include the analysis of ion pumping in the cochlea and the measurement of the electrical properties of the cochlea using multi-electrode techniques. He was the first to make direct measurements of basilar membrane motion in the living cochlea using the Mössbauer effect, and together with R. Patuzzi and P. Sellick in the early 1980s, used this method to reveal the fundamental nature of sharp tuning in the cochlea and the biophysical changes that explain sensorineural hearing loss. The original discoveries made by Brian and his many collaborators underpin much of our present understanding of inner ear physiology and the causes, consequences and treatment of deafness. Brian was elected a Fellow of The Australian Academy of Sciences in 1988 and retired in 1992.

**Emeritus Prof  
Don Robertson**

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*The Auditory Laboratory  
School of Human Sciences  
The University of  
Western Australia*

# 39th Annual ANS Meeting in Adelaide, 2–5 December 2019

October 2019

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The 39th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australasian Neuroscience Society is only a couple of months away. Those who submitted abstracts for possible oral presentations should know the outcome.

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Local Organising Committee (LOC) members, Andrea Harrington and Martin Lewis, assembled a large team of assessors with at least two discipline specialists ranking each abstract, and I am confident the final oral presentation line up will be excellent in terms of interest, quality, and diversity. Remember too that there is no limit on how many posters anyone can display, so if you have multiple projects worthy of presentation, please submit their abstracts by 22nd November.

This year, ANS will reach out to the wider community with a public lecture delivered by one of our plenary speakers, Prof. Selena Bartlett. She will entertain Adelaide with “The Neuroscience

of Brain Resilience: Health, Fitness, and Addiction”. Tom Rehn, a former Adelaide Crows team member now known as a lively local sports media presenter, will MC the event. We will hold parallel workshops on Neuroscience Teaching and on the NHMRC grant system, but don’t stress if you feel conflicted over which event to attend, as video recordings will be available!

Did you register for the meeting without signing up for the wine tour or ordering a T-shirt? There is no need for regret since you can always log back into the Currinda registration system and update your choices. This also applies to the childcare service that ANS will offer this year. LOC member Tim Sargeant and the ANS Equity and Diversity Committee put a large effort into arranging the childcare service and finding subsidies for it. If it proves popular, it can be offered in future years. Remember also to consider the many satellite meetings and workshops flanking the ANS meeting. Details on all these services and events are available at the [ANS website](#) and/or by logging into Currinda.

Finally, remember that the ANS wants YOU, our loyal ANS member, to promote our meeting to your research colleagues. Just download the Powerpoint slide from the [this link](#) and display it during your next journal club, lecture, or plenary presentation. Get a friend to snap a photo of you with the presentation in the background and then send the image to [michael.lardelli@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:michael.lardelli@adelaide.edu.au). You could be declared the ANS Premium Promoter and win a precious Adelaide artwork!

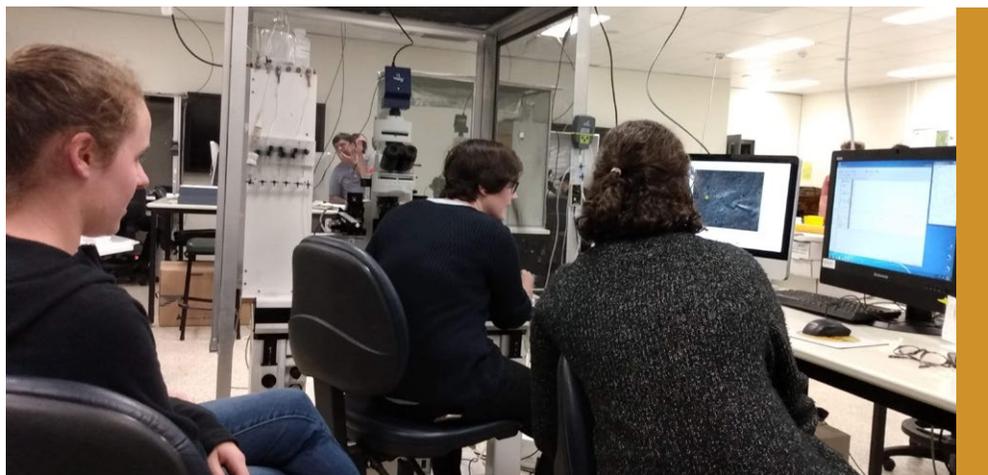
See you in Adelaide in early December!

**Michael  
Lardelli**

*On behalf of the ANS2019  
Local Organising Committee*

# Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience 2019

ACAN is an intensive 3-week course offering training in electrophysiology and imaging to Masters students, PhD students and junior postdoctoral researchers. This year, ACAN was supported by world leading neuroscientists who provided training on topics that included membrane biology, synaptic integration, calcium imaging and optogenetics.



Lauren Bleakley, Helen Gooch and Kimberley Theke at ACAN 2019

we were able to undertake our own research project and present them to the cohort and faculty. The quality of these 1-day projects was remarkable and highlighted just how much we had learned and could apply after just 3 weeks. The projects ranged from investigating functions of the medial habenula to analysing the back-propagation of action potentials and plasticity in the piriform cortex.

At ACAN we could spend all day and night learning new techniques with patch clamping experts who talked us through the experiments and watched over our shoulders. This provided a learning environment that I was privileged to have been a part of. The number of new techniques that we were able to cover and get confident with in such a short period of time exceeded my expectations. Course director Stephen Williams and his assistant Lee Fletcher put in a mountain of work to make this course possible and on behalf of the students, I would like to thank them for their efforts for ACAN 2019.

**Marcus Dyer**

*ACAN Participant and PhD student at the University of Tasmania*

Our days consisted of morning lectures, followed by lab time, where we would learn and practice some of the techniques that were introduced to us in the morning lecture. The 14 students selected from across Australia and New Zealand were paired, and each pair assigned to an e-phys rig that would be theirs for the 3-week course, and an experienced demonstrator who provided a wealth of knowledge to help us learn and practice the new techniques. We moved quickly from whole cell patch clamp to patching dendrites and manipulating 2 electrodes for dendrite-soma patching.

The course was held at the Moreton Bay Research Station in the small town of Dunwich on 'Straddie' overlooking Brisbane. This location was a great setting for the intensive course, offering picturesque views during times spent away from lectures or patching. This year we were lucky to have a 2-photon microscope assembled for us on site. This offered us an incredible experience in advanced microscopy, but also allowed us to combine the patch-clamp and calcium imaging skills we had learned throughout the course. On the final day,

# International Brain Bee 2019



The International Brain Bee for 2019 was held in Daegu, South Korea over the weekend of 21st and 22nd September.



Both New Zealand and Australia did very well with 16 year old Sophia Ye from NZ coming 4th and 17 year old Silas Hansch-Maher from Australia coming 5th in the international competition. Congratulations to our entrants on their excellent achievements!

**Ramesh Rajan**

*Brain Bee Challenge  
Coordinator, Monash  
University*

# News from the Student Body & Early-Mid Career Researcher Committees

October 2019

In preparation of the 39th Annual ANS Scientific Meeting in Adelaide, ANS SBC has been working closely with the ANS EMCR Committee organising the ANS EMCR-Student Networking Event.

The networking event will be held at Regattas Bar & Kitchen on the evening of Tuesday 3rd of December. This venue has stunning views of the River Torrens and is conveniently located right next to the conference venue. Based on the positive feedback from last year, we will once again be providing a 'speed-dating' style networking event where both students and EMCRs will have an opportunity to engage in small group discussions with senior academics on various topics of neuroscience as well as general career advice.

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<b>Date:</b>	3rd December 2019 8:00pm - 10:00pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Regattas Bar & Kitchen
<b>Cost:</b>	Free for ANS student members and \$15 for other registrants
<b>Food:</b>	Canapes provided

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Based on feedback from previous years, topics will cover more specific neuroscience interests as well as career prospects and opportunities. These are some example discussion points for the event:

- Developing communication skills in science and the role of social media
- Engaging with consumers and the general public
- Alternative avenues for career pathways and experiences with moving to industry post PhD
- Conflict resolution for toxic behaviour and lab culture
- Balancing teaching and research academic positions
- Work life balance as an ECR/student with family commitments
- Drug development in Alzheimer's disease
- Mechanisms of synaptic plasticity with a focus on neurodegeneration and neurological conditions
- Cholinergic system and neuroinflammation

Have your say! Please email us with topics and questions that you would like answered by one of our speakers. If you are interested in joining our list of excellent speakers at this event, please don't hesitate to get in contact with our ANS Student Body and EMCR representatives.

## **Brenton Hordacre**

[brenton.hordacre@unisia.edu.au](mailto:brenton.hordacre@unisia.edu.au)

## **Karissa Barthelson**

[karissa.barthelson@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:karissa.barthelson@adelaide.edu.au)

The submission portal for our *Images of Neuroscience* photo competition is now open for all ANS student members.

Follow this link (<http://bit.ly/2019-anspc>) to access the submission portal, and the winners will be announced at the Adelaide conference.

## **Barbora Fulopova**

*University of Tasmania  
ANS Student Body  
Committee Chair*

## **Dr Ann-Maree Valence**

*ANS Council, WA State  
Representative - On behalf  
of the EMCR Committee  
[ann-maree.valence@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:ann-maree.valence@murdoch.edu.au)*

# News from the State Representatives

## An ACT update



thought that the event was a great opportunity to connect with other ACT neuroscientists. The event also improved awareness of the activities of ANS, with a number of students indicating they would be more inclined to participate in future ANS functions.

The 2019 ACT Final of the Australian Brain Bee Challenge was held at the John Curtin School of Medical Research (JCSMR) on 24 July. About 40 students from five Canberra schools participated in the competition, which was hosted by Prof Greg Stuart. As well as being put through their paces in the quizzes, students were treated to tours of the neuroscience labs at JCSMR. After an entertaining and exciting contest, Canberra Grammar School took out first place in the team competition, with Burgmann Anglican School second and Marist College third. The individual winner was Sachin Laloo from Canberra Grammar, who will represent the ACT in the National Finals in Adelaide.

The ANS Student Body Committee ACT Representative, Saritha Balram, organised a social event for the ACT neuroscience community on August 29th. The event was designed to improve social interactions between local neuroscience students and to give them a chance to network with their fellow students, as well as with academics. Saritha's organising committee did an excellent job in organising and driving the event, which was held at the John Curtin School of Medical Research, ANU. There was a good turnout, and those present

**John Bekkers**

*ANS Council, ACT  
Representative*

October 2019

(News from the State  
Representatives... continued)

## A Victorian Update

Plans for the Students of Brain Research (SOBR) Annual Student Symposium are now well progressed. SOBR is a social and academic network designed to connect brain research students across Victoria. The SOBR Student Symposium has become an annual gathering of scientists to present their research in a welcoming and friendly environment, and all Victorian neuroscience students are encouraged to register to attend and submit an abstract.

**Date:** Tuesday 12th November 2019  
**Venue:** The Melbourne Brain Centre,  
Royal Parade, Parkville

This is a free event and all students conducting research in neuroscience are encouraged to submit an abstract, or attend the event to support their peers, network and learn more about the innovative brain research taking place in Victoria. Abstracts from any discipline of neuroscience (including engineering, architecture, biotechnology, statistics) are invited.

**The website is:**  
<https://www.sobrnetwork.org/news-events/symposium/>

**Any queries should be directed to**  
[secretary@sobrnetwork.org](mailto:secretary@sobrnetwork.org)

One major issue facing neuroscientists not only in Victoria, but across Australia, are the changes to the NHMRC grant schemes and peer review processes. The outcomes of the first round of Investigator Grants have been particularly bad for basic or fundamental biomedical scientists. As many ANS Members fall into this category, this is a major issue facing our Society. Over the past few years, the National Association of Research Fellows (NARF, [www.narf.org.au](http://www.narf.org.au)) has been very active in pushing back against many problematic aspects of the changes to the NHMRC grants schemes and peer review processes, as well as the new MRFF processes. NARF is now liaising with various other associations and societies impacted by the changes, and there may be a role for ANS in ensuring the best possible outcomes for health and medical research in this country. The NARF Executive includes multiple ANS Members (Prof. Fred Meunier is President and I am Past President) and we welcome input from other ANS Members. The ANS LOC Chair Prof. Michael Lardelli, along with ANS Executive member Prof. Helen Cooper, have been organising a session at the ANS 2019 meeting in Adelaide on the new NHMRC grant schemes (focusing on Investigator Grants and Ideas Grants).

**Another great reason to attend ANS 2019 in early December!**

**Tony Hannan**

ANS Council, Victorian  
Representative



## A Western Australia Update

As in previous years, ANS supported the Symposium of WA Neuroscience (SWAN) in 2019. The meeting was a great success with over 145 registrants and at least 130 attendees on the day. Our interstate speakers gave excellent presentations and there were four sessions encompassing a wide breadth of neuroscience research, from detailed descriptions of pathways in neurodegeneration, to the needs of patients with dementia. The students and early career researchers gave 3-minute scientific presentations with two minutes allocated for questions. The standard was high and the format ensured a lively and dynamic feel to the event. ANS sponsorship enabled us to provide a meeting with no cost registration, which was fully catered, including a Sundowner. We were also able to award prizes to our students and ECRs in four categories: Honours and research assistants; early stage PhD; late-stage PhD; and early career researchers.

**Ann-Maree  
Vallence**

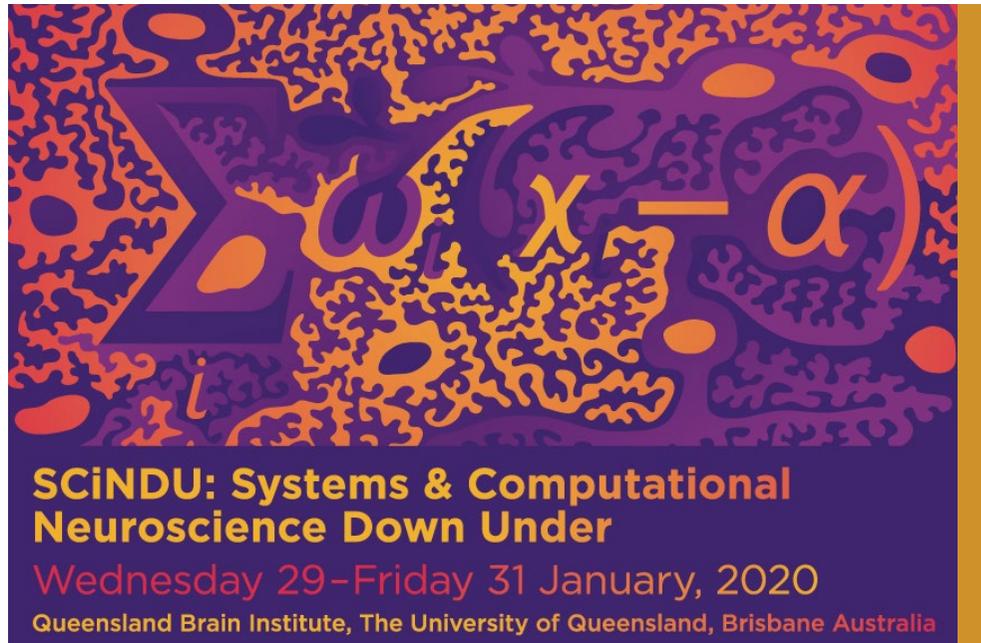
ANS Council, Western  
Australia Representative

# Systems & Computational Neuroscience Down Under (SCiNDU) 2020

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SCiNDU is a leading forum for systems and computational neuroscientists to interact and share their insights into the function of neural circuits and systems.

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It will be held Wednesday 29th – Friday 31st January, 2020 at the Queensland Brain Institute, The University of Queensland, Brisbane Australia.

Abstract submissions for poster presentation are welcome, deadline Nov 15th 2019. Some submitted abstracts will be selected for oral presentation. Email your abstract to [qbievents@uq.edu.au](mailto:qbievents@uq.edu.au) with subject line "SCiNDU Abstract". Include authors, affiliations and abstract body (body max 250 words). Word, PDF and plain text are all acceptable (abstracts will be reformatted for inclusion in the program book).

For more information and a list of confirmed speakers see <https://qbi.uq.edu.au/event/session/8557>

Contact Prof Geoff Goodhill  
[g.goodhill@uq.edu.au](mailto:g.goodhill@uq.edu.au)

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## Early Bird Registration

**Students:** \$175 (\$225 after Nov 15th)  
**Regular:** \$400 (\$450 after Nov 15th)

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# Call for Nominations to ANS Executive & Council

October 2019

Positions on the ANS Executive and Council will become vacant at the 2019 AGM, and nominations (including self-nominations) are now invited from the membership.

The positions that will be available are the following:

- President Elect
- Conference Executive Chair
- Australian Capital Territory Representative
- Western Australia Representative
- Neuroscience Research Representative

Details of these roles can be obtained from the Secretary. Should more than one nomination be received per position, a member vote will be held prior to the AGM.

If you are a current member and wish to nominate for any of the above positions, please email the ANS Secretary, Thomas Fath ([thomas.fath@mq.edu.au](mailto:thomas.fath@mq.edu.au)), with your name and contact details, stating the position for which you are nominating.

**Deadline for nominations:**

COB Monday October 15th, 2019.

## Council Members

<b>President:</b>	Cliff Abraham
<b>Past President:</b>	Linda Richards
<b>Secretary:</b>	Thomas Fath
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Brian Dean
<b>Conference Executive Chair (Editor):</b>	Helen Cooper
<b>Public Officer:</b>	John Bekkers
<b>ACT Representative:</b>	John Bekkers
<b>NSW Representative:</b>	Yazi Ke
<b>NZ Representative:</b>	Kristin Hillman
<b>Qld Representative:</b>	Ethan Scott
<b>SA Representative:</b>	Michael Lardelli
<b>Tas Representative:</b>	Alison Canty
<b>Vic Representative:</b>	Anthony (Tony) Hannan
<b>WA Representative:</b>	Ann-Maree Vallence
<b>Neuroscience Research Representative:</b>	Erin McAllum
<b>Student Representative:</b>	Barbora Fulopova



October 2019

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## Communications

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### **Do you have information that you would like included in our ANS newsletter, posted on our website or Facebook page or tweeted?**

ANS has a communications committee to help members disseminate information and help the Society publicise its activities to Members and the public. This committee is co-Chaired by Dr Brent Neumann (Monash University) and A/Prof Kaylene Young (University of Tasmania), and will oversee the production of the newsletter, ensure that current content is posted on the ANS website (<http://www.ans.org.au/>), ANS Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/AusNeuroSoc>; maintained by Dr Nathalie Dehorter, Australian National

University), LinkedIn page (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8362021/>; maintained by Prof Thomas Fath, Macquarie University) and disseminated through the ANS Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/AusNeuroSoc>; postings by Dr Lila Landowski, University of Tasmania).

If you have content for us, please email Brent Neumann ([brent.neumann@monash.edu.au](mailto:brent.neumann@monash.edu.au)) or Kaylene Young ([kaylene.young@utas.edu.au](mailto:kaylene.young@utas.edu.au)).

### **The copy deadline for the next Newsletter is Tuesday 10th January 2020.**

We encourage everyone to check out the ANS website.

[www.ans.org.au](http://www.ans.org.au)

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## Policy

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### **ANS Policy on Requests for Publicity via Email Circulation**

The policy of ANS is to minimise email traffic to members. Advertisements for meetings and other significant announcements such as job vacancies can be added to the website and included in the newsletter if appropriate. Such requests should be directed to the ANS Secretary.