WSCS – ASPS Council Report – 2017 ComBio

About Website & Communications Sub-Committee (WCSC)

The Website & Communications Sub-Committee (WCSC) was established after 2014 AGM to disseminate information related to ASPS and plant biology among the Society members and the general public. The current members are:

- Gonzalo M. Estavillo (chair, webmaster, posts)
- Janet Wheeler (webmaster, database manager)
- Chris Cazzonelli (Phytogen/blog editor)

Past Member: Tina Offler. The WSC We very grateful for Tina's contributions in the past as an Honorary Phytogen/blog editor is recognized. Tina offered her resignation in September 2017.

ASPS Website and database

The "Member" database is being continually improved (Janet)

The Member database is the most important of the website and it allows ASPS to keep track of their members. Janet is working very hard trying to update member's status and removing duplicate entries from the database. This is a challenging task and it requires urgent attention. It is critical for the efficient functioning of ASPS. Note that none of the committee members can be found in the search box of *http://www.asps.org.au/members/member-directory* as we are listed as an administrator or editor (not a member)

Details of 2016-2017 Executive Committee members and Discipline Representatives pages were updated last year

2016-2017 Executive Committee members and Discipline Rep pages have been updated.

Googledocs have been set up to enhance information flow among Executive Committee Members and Discipline Representatives

We have set up the following Google word documents:

- "20140930 How to post to ASPS social media resources.pdf"
- "ASPS website editing instructions.pdf"
- "ASPS Comm Vis Ideas" where Ex. Com. can share feedback.

***Suggested actions**: member or discipline rep that would like to provide feedback. If you are interested, just let Gonzalo know so he can share the document with you. Is there any specific web/communication related issue you would like to learn more about?*

Peter Goldacre Awards page is being updated with project specific information provided by awardees

We have requested more information to other award winners, or we will try to recover it from older Phytogen articles. This is effort is limited by the amount of information we receive from people. Any suggestions about how to do this is welcome.

***Suggested actions**:* keep updating as information arrives; committee members and discipline representatives encourage past Goldacre awardees to provide relevant info to the WCSC.

Consolidation of awards guidelines may be required

We suggest to consolidate the guidelines for award applications Goldacre and Travelling Fellowship to have the same format as that of the ASPS Teaching Award. We specifically added the requirement for the "Successful Candidate" to provide ASPS with a report we can also archive in our Phytogen/website.

The sections are:

- The Award
- Eligibility
- Application Procedure
- Evaluation of the Application
- Successful Candidates

***Suggested Actions**:* ASPS Authorities to approve the change for award guidelines. If you want to help, you only need to consolidate the information in the corresponding award with the format at "http://www.asps.org.au/awards/teaching-award" and send us the word for us to post on the web.

2017 was a very quiet year for our newsletter blog Phytogen.

There has been only 38 blog entries since October 2016 (see below). However, most of them related to job or conference announcements and GPC bulletin. This left a total of 19 blogs related to scientific information and awards. The lack of content is in part due to; 1) awardees/recipients not submitting stories/reports despite several email reminders, and 2) the ASPS council executive not providing names/email address of new awardees/recipients for the editor to chase up article submissions.

2016: Oct = 4; Nov = nil; Dec = 5
2017: Jan = 1; Feb = 5; Mar = 3; Apr = 1; May = 1; Jun = 7; Jul = 1; Aug = 2; Sep = 8

Note: the number of blogs match the search criteria "Newsletter, and/or Phytogen" tag in our website.

Suggested Actions

1. The ASPS council should maintain a database for every future awardee/recipient supported by ASPS and stipulate in their award that they are required to submit an article to Phytogen, within a short period of time after of receiving the award. Such a database can be maintained live on "google docs". The editors can update attempted communications to encourage article submissions and in the event of no submission, the ASPS council can reserve the right to act accordingly.
2. Dr Cazzonelli is happy to continue editing articles for Phytogen as they are submitted, but a second co-editor of Phytogen should be appointed to enhance and support activities and help identify new articles relevant to the ASPS community.
3. ASP's council to send a letter of encouragement to communications officers appointed to assist "plant related" ARC College of Excellences, CRCs, ARC Translational hubs etc., requesting their articles are also blogged to Phytogen in order to enhance research exposure.
4. Financial support might attract a more aggressive editor to find articles for Phytogen.
5. Discipline reps/ASPS committee members could help identify stories/articles to publish in Phytogen by bridging the connection to the Phytogen editor(s).

6. One solution is to provide Phytogen with a greater exposure/impact by selling it as "scientific media exposure publication" to the national postgraduate co-hort.

A proposed calendar for contributions is shown below.

Month	Usual e.g. GPC, employment	ASPS Committee contribution from	ComBio related
Oct 2017	x	Env. and Ecophysiology rep	Poster and oral student winners **(REQUESTED)**
Nov 2017	x	Suggestion?	Winner reports (student travel) **(REQUESTED)**
Dec 2017	x	Genetics and molecular biology rep	Goldacre report **(REQUESTED)**
Jan 2018	x	President's welcome	Winner reports (student posters)
Feb 2018	x	Plant Science Education rep	PG wood recipient report **(REQUESTED)**
Mar 2018	x	State report	RN Robertson travelling fellowship 2015 report, applications for 2016 due in April **(REQUESTED)**
Apr 2018	x	Plant Microbe interactions rep	
May 2018	x	Whole plant rep	Announce RN Robertson travelling fellowships 2016
Jun 2018	x	Plant Development rep	Early bird registration due
Jul 2018	x	State report	
Aug 2018	x	Secretary AGM docs	
Sep 2018	x	Cell biology rep	ASPS annual dinner invitation

Outreach activities

We have increased our presence in social media

Posts published on our Facebook page are re directed into the ASPS home page via the Twitter account. The amount of Tweets as approx. 200 per year but note that only one or two people are adding this content. This resulted in an increase of almost double number of "Followers" since last year. This, probably, resulted in a similar increase in the number of Facebook "Likes", or views of individual posts, as both account are linked.

Social Media stats

Some metrics from our accounts as of October 2nd 2017:

- Twitter total posts: 638 (436)
- Twitter followers: 718 (411)
- Facebook total page likes: 1,500 (840)
- Facebook followers: 1,502

Number in parenthesis indicates the number for that metric a year ago.

***Suggested Action**: Ex Com members and discipline reps to add content to the ASPS Facebook (preferably) or Twitter accounts. You only need to have a Facebook account, "Like" ASPS FB page, we will give you admin rights and you can then post a message.*

Members are welcome to submit their photos to be uploaded to our top slider

So far we only received one photo. This could be an effective way to showcase the broad range of research that ASPS do and also highlight individual work.

Suggested Action: Encourage your students, post docs, staff to submit photo.

ASPS joins Plantae

Communications were initiated with the Plantae network (Melanie Binder; 20th June, 2017) to encourage Australian Society of Plant Scientists (https://www.asps.org.au) be listed on the PLANTAE networks page. The usefulness of this interactions to ASPS members is still being explored.

Final remarks: How can you help to improve outreach of ASPS activities and plant science?

1. Post information in social media; it's very easy. A FB account is required.
2. Suggest to their colleagues to use our job bank for job announcements.
3. Invite other people to participate in the website development; regular members contact Gonzalo; students contact the student rep.
4. Request research photos to members to be featured on the website.
5. Contribute with an entry for the blog; it could be a discussion about a recent paper, or a job experience, fellowship, service offered, etc. This will be used as content for Phytogen.
6. Discipline Representatives to keep their pages updated.
7. Consider participating in outreach activities such as Fascination of Plants Day