ASPS Treasurer's Report for the Period 1 May 2018 – 30 Apr 2019
Prepared by Rosemary White (ASPS Honorary Treasurer)
Presented at the AGM on Tuesday 25th November 2019

BUDGET

The financial position of the Society, for the financial year 1 May 2018 - 30 April 2019, remains sound. As in other years, some flexibility is needed as expenses for ASPS activities do not always coincide with annual cycles of income returns. In 2018/2019, this culminated in an end of year operating deficit of $4,598.41 in comparison with a deficit of $15,346.14, in 2017/2018. These differences arise largely from differences in conference income from the two previous years. As of 30 April, 2019 our accumulated funds in the Commonwealth Bank totaled $117,735.68 ($10,101.55 Transaction Account plus $107,634.13 Online Saver Account) and the RN Robertson Fund $93,252.11 (which includes $3,118.62 annual interest). Bank interest from our Commonwealth accounts totaled $508.67. Note that $13,250 of the Commonwealth Bank account belongs to the Robertson Fund based on a previous decision made at the 2009 AGM.

ASPS INCOME

ASPS has three main sources of income: 1) a proportion of the profits from conferences we support (e.g. ComBio); 2) ASPS membership subscriptions and web-based advertising and 3) bank interest and donations. We received $20,455.64 in conference proceeds from ComBio 2018 in Sydney, following $10,692.11 from ComBio 2017 in Adelaide. Because the ComBio 2018 profits were received after 1 May 2019, these will appear in the 2019-2020 financial statement.

We received $15,296.92 in membership subscriptions and renewals, and our membership status is as follows:

Category	18/19	17/18	16/17	15/16	14/15	13/14	12/13	11/12	10/11	09/10
Ordinary	127	132	127	237	107	101	153	212	244	238
Student	118	201	224	292	345	229	210	192	164	151
Retired	7	31	31	35	36	28	14	14		
Corresponding	12	13	12	12	6	10	10			
Life	7	6	6	6	7	7	7			
Gratis	4	2	2	0	1	1	2			
Sustaining	0	0	0	0	0	0	2			
Total	275	385	402	582	502	316	318	418	408	389

The current membership fees are ordinary member: 1 year $100.00; 2 years $180.00; 4 years $340.00; student member: 2 years $50.00; sustaining member $300.00.

EXPENDITURE

ComBio 2018

The society is a strong supporter of the annual ComBio conference as a way to showcase the multidisciplinary aspects of Australian Plant Science and as an important gathering place to meet colleagues and to develop research collaborations. ComBio also allows for the society to attract high-impact plant science researchers to Australia as plenary speakers and mentors to our student and early career members. In 2018/2019, ASPS provided $1,450.00 for ComBio 2018 (Sydney) speaker registration expenses.

The Society recognises the importance of student participation for its long-term wellbeing. Student membership is encouraged through special awards including the RN Robertson Fund and through subsidising a considerable part of their travel, accommodation, registration costs and the annual ASPS dinner when attending and presenting at ComBio. In 2018/2019, 17 students received support from ASPS to attend the ComBio2018 meeting in Sydney at a total cost of $7,889.99 ($250-$800 per student) to the society. Furthermore, ASPS rewards active participation by students in the ComBio program by recognising outstanding posters with monetary prizes. Last year we provided four student poster prizes at ComBio 2018 ($250 each; $1,000 in total).

Research and Conference Travel Support

This year the reviewers decided to provide two R.N. Robertson Travel Awards to PhD students Juan dela Cruz Serna, University of Western Australia ($4,000) and Carolyn Vlasveld, Monash University ($1,750). A further $1,950 was used to underwrite the attendance of students to the annual ASPS dinner during ComBio 2018 in Sydney.

The Society helps to facilitate scientific meetings and community events that support Australian plant science and its scientists. In 2018/2019, ASPS provided $5,000 in seed funding to the InnovAg Translational Photosynthesis Conference held in Brisbane (30 June-3 July, 2019) and a further $5,000 to the organisers of the ASPS2019 conference at La Trobe University, Melbourne.

ASPS Operating costs

The ASPS website requires continual data management and web servicing. Our website is now hosted and maintained by Conetix ($420.00) with intermittent (more major) updates provided by Bearded Friend ($160). I would like to express particular thanks to Janet Wheeler for prompt updates to the ASPS website and its member database, and who provides rapid responses to enquiries about both.

ASPS representation at government (Science Meets Parliament) events and through global societies (Global Plant Council, STA) is important for developing networks and highlighting the importance of the plant science. At the 2018 Science Meets Parliament event, ASPS was represented by Prof Barry Pogson, Dr Mike Hayden and Dr Janet Wheeler (final invoice $379.19). ASPS allocated $1049.00 for membership renewal in Science and Technology Australia, and $2,898.67 ($USD1,000 annually) for 2018 and 2019 membership of the Global Plant Council.

In 2010-2011 funds ($36,327.87) were identified to support the revision and online preparation of Plants in Action version 2, managed through the University of Queensland. The funds reside within ASPS, and there is currently $3,656.12 remaining in the ASPS Plants In Action version 2 budget.

The financial transactions have been audited (Clarkson Williams Partners Pty Ltd, Fyshwick, ACT) and the Auditor's report is available for perusal with the financial summary at the AGM. Following the AGM, the Auditor's report and financial summary will be submitted to the Registrar General's Office in the ACT by our Public Officer (Prof. John Evans).

In summary, the society's finances remain resilient. The society largely maintained income relative to expenditure in 2018/2019, which will be reflected in the 2019/2020 year with the ComBio 2018 return ($20,455.64) to accrue in the next financial year.

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