AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF PLANT SCIENTISTS

Minutes of the 2015 ASPS Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 30 September 17:35 – 18:30
Room 218, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Melbourne, Vic

Attending (Quorum – 57 members): Deborah Barton, Helen Bramley, Rachel Burton, Chris Cazzanelli, Sachin Chavan, Brendan Choat, Julie Dechorgnat, Kathryn Dumschott, Gonzalo Estavillo, John Evans, Denise Fernando, Eloise Foo, Trevor Garnett, Tony Gendall, Oula Ghannoum, Matt Gilliham, Ros Gleadow, Priyarshee Borpatra Gohain, John Hamill, Shahnoosh Hayamanesh, Roger Hellens, Chris Helliwell, Thi My Linh Hoang, Alex Johnson, Brent Kaiser, C Keitel, Edwin Lampugnani, Faye Lehmann, Wenjing Li, Andrew Lonsdale, Martha Ludwig, Andrew Merchant, Ana F Minguetti, Saghadevan Mundree, Monika Murcha, Joshua Mylne, Tina Offler, John Patrick, Sebastian Pfautsch, Darren Plett, Amanda Rasmussen, Nicole Robinson, Sergey Shabala, Arjuna Shrestha, Millicent Smith, Nouman Sohail, Balasahob Sonawane, Matthew Tucker, Steve Tyerman, Susanne von Caemmerer, Mark Waters, Zliengyu Wen, Janet Wheeler, Simon Wheeler, Rosemary White, Brett Williams, Belinda Worland

Apologies: Muhammad Ahsan Asif, Min Chen, Rebecca Ford, Chris Grof, Rana Munns, Peter Solomon

ASPS President John Evans opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and thanking all for attending.

1. Confirm Minutes from 2014

Motion to confirm minutes received for the last AGM by email.
Moved, seconded, motion carried.

2. President's Report

The President's Report was tabled at the meeting, and can be found on the ASPS website.

John Evans reminded members that the Society exists for its membership, and provides travel grants and subsidises students to attend ComBio meetings. It also sponsors the Goldacre and ASPS Teaching Awards. Eligible members of the group were reminded to consider applying for these awards, and all were asked to encourage colleagues and supervisors to apply. Two Robertson Travelling Fellowships will be offered for work done in 2016 by Early Career Researchers. Due dates for all award applications will change in 2016 to better fit in with programming of ComBio meetings. Members were asked to watch the ASPS website and their email accounts for the dates.

A call was made for volunteers to attend Science Meets Parliament. Contact John Evans or Martha Ludwig if interested.

John Evans thanked Ed Newbigin for his work on the ComBio2015 Organising and Program Committee and for putting together a stimulating and successful program. Attendees applauded in agreement.

The Programming Committee for ComBio2016 (Brisbane) will have Rebecca Ford and Bernie Carroll as the ASPS representatives, with Rachel Burton and Matthew Gilliham involved in the lead up to ComBio2017 (Adelaide).

The Society lost two of its active and long-term members in 2015: Lloyd Evans and Jan Anderson.

John Evans thanked the members of the ASPS Executive, the Discipline Representatives, members sitting on national committees, and those involved in the organising and programming of ComBio2015. Members acknowledged their thanks with applause.

Special thanks were given to Muhammad Nouman Sohail and Johnathan Dragwidge for organising an enjoyable Society Dinner.

The President's Report was accepted by those present.

3. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report was tabled at the meeting, and is available on the ASPS website.

A proposal to raise membership fees was discussed at the 2014 AGM, and that proposal is included in the 2015 Treasurer's Report. Uses of the increased revenue include supporting ComBio lecturers and registration fees; the Goldacre Award, J.G. Wood Lecture, R.N. Robertson Lecture, FPB Best Paper, and ASPS Teaching Award; the R.N. Robertson Travelling Fellowships; and ComBio local organizing committees.

A modification of this proposal – student membership rates of $50.00 for 2 years – was motioned, seconded, and unanimously carried by the membership.

Brett Kaiser thanked Janet Wheeler for sorting out the ASPS website and her continued involvement in this activity.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted by those present.

4. Website & Communications Sub-Committee (WCSC) Report

The WCSC Report was tabled at the meeting and is available on the ASPS website.

Members are reminded to send photos of their activities: field, laboratory, etc. to Gonzalo Estavillo for inclusion on the homepage of the ASPS website.

The Society recorded an increase in the number of followers on Twitter and Facebook over the last year, and Phytogen has turned into our Society's blog.

5. Functional Plant Biology Report

The Functional Plant Biology Citations Report was tabled at the meeting and is available on the ASPS website.

The Editor-in-Chief of Functional Plant Biology, Sergey Shabala, highlighted the journal would be expanding its historically ecophysiology focus to include more cell biology. Three special editions are planned for 2016, and recognition of papers with more than 150 cites in 10 years would be considered hall of fame publications, with the lead author receiving a free, three-year subscription to the journal, a certificate, and recognition on the journal's website.

6. Plants in Action Report

The Plants in Action Report was tabled at the meeting and is available on the ASPS website.

John Evans spoke to this item, drawing on discussion from the ASPS Council Meeting that suggested a print friendly option be explored. Other feedback is welcome, please contact Rana Munns.

7. Election of New Members of the Executive and Discipline Representatives

Martha Ludwig thanked the outgoing discipline representatives, and the membership acknowledged their thanks with applause.

Members of ASPS Executive Committee elected:

- President elect – Sergey Shabala

Discipline Representatives elected:

- Plant Science Education Representative – Thomas Roberts
- Genetics and Molecular Biology – Chris Cazzonelli
- Plant Development – Matthew Tucker
- Environmental and Ecophysiology: Global Change – Sebastian Pfautsch

Discipline Representative positions with more than one nomination

- Cell Biology – Matthew Gilliham, Alex Johnson, Vivien Rolland
- Whole Plants – Florian Busch, Andrew Merchant

These positions will be decided by electronic voting. Members will be informed of when the site is operational and voting can commence.

8. Relationship of ASPS to Other National and International Societies

Barry Pogson the ASPS Representative on the Global Plant Council, has been elected to chair the board. The ASPS membership endorsed funds of $1000.00 to facilitate his travel to the meeting.

9. Set Venue for AGM 2016

ComBio2016 will be held from 3-7 October 2016, at the Brisbane Convention Centre, Brisbane, QLD. The 2016 AGM will be held at this venue during ComBio 2016. Details will be announced in the ComBio2016 program as well as on the ASPS website.

10. Life and Corresponding Members

John Evans suggested researchers for Life and Corresponding Members of the ASPS. A motion to invite Graham Farquhar, Rana Munns, Tina Offler, and John Patrick as Life Members was put forward, seconded, and passed unanimously. A motion to invite Asaph Cousins, Howard Griffiths, Christine Raines, Rowan Sage, Tammy Sage, Michael Udvardi, and Michelle Watt as Corresponding Members was put forward, seconded, and passed unanimously.

11. Australian Plant Phenomics Facility (APPF)

Opportunities to improve and increase infrastructure access to the APPF were presented.

12. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

The meeting closed at 6:40 pm.