



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Incorporated in the ACT
ABN 37 660 297 848

President's Report for 2025/2026

1. Council 2025-2026

Richard McDermid	President
Claudia Lagos	Vice President
Stas Shabala	Immediate Past President
John O'Byrne	Secretary
Katrina Sealey	Secretary
Yeshe Fenner	Treasurer
Manisha Caleb	Councillor
Nichole Barry	Councillor
Dan Zucker	Councillor
Ivy Wong	Councillor
Nick Seymour	Councillor
Pradosh Barun Das	Student Representative
Minh Huynh	Chair, PASA Editorial Board
Tanya Hill (Co-opted)	Prizes and Awards Co-ordinator
Vanessa Moss	Media and Outreach Co-ordinator

I would like to thank all Council members for their efforts over the past year in support of the Society. Belated thanks to our outgoing Councillors from 2025: Christoph Federrath, Sarah Pearce, and Bernhard Muller, for your years of service to the ASA Council.

Particular thanks are due to the Council members holding ongoing roles in the Society (John O'Byrne, Yeshe Fenner, Tanya Hill). 2025 saw a number of Executive positions change hands, with Katrina Sealey coming into the secretary role, Claudia Lagos moving into the Vice President role, and myself moving into the President role with Stas Shabala moving to Immediate Past President.

It was a pleasure to thank Stas at the ASM in Adelaide for all of his leadership and service as President of the ASA, and I have continued to benefit from his ongoing support as I try to fill the sizable shoes he left behind. I am also very grateful to the incredibly competent support of our secretaries, John and Katrina, who's care and attention to the details of running the Society really keep things running.

Thank you also to the incoming Councillors elected (or re-elected) in 2025: Ivy Wong, Manisha Caleb, Nichole Barry, Dan Zucker, and Nick Seymour. Thanks also to Gary Da Costa for continuing in his role as the ASA's "Public Officer"; and to Deb Gooley who has continued to provide outstanding administrative support for the ASA, and helped implement a number of improvements to our internal and external facing services over the past 12 months.

It has been a real pleasure to work with this team over the past 12 months!

Thank you also to our Chapter and Working Group Chairs:

ANITA: Rajika Kuruwita

ECR: Kovi Rose

EPOC: Fred Watson

GAP: Roland Crocker & Martin White

IDEA: Tayyaba Zafar

TDA: Ben Montet

HAAC: Nick Lomb

SPA: Daniel Price

SWG: Themiya Nanayakkara & Clancy
James

CWG: Vanessa Moss

EWG: John Lattanzio & Terry Cuttle

Finally, I would like to make special mention of another outgoing Council member who has devoted a significant amount of time and energy to the benefit of our Society and the community overall, with much of it happening 'behind the scenes'. While finalising this report, I received notification that, after careful consideration, **Dr Tanya Hill** will be stepping down as the ASA Prize Coordinator after an incredible period of near-continuous service to the Council in this role spanning 18 years.

The ASA Prizes are one of the most impactful and consequential activities of the Society, raising visibility and elevating the careers of Australian astronomy researchers. This impact is a result of the rigour and quality of the evaluation process, which starts with securing outstanding applications, and recruiting our most respected and experienced community members to provide expert assessment. Building fairness into the application and evaluation process, avoiding conflicts of interest in our modest-sized community, and delivering outcomes, certificates, medals, trophies and Council reports, all on a strict schedule, requires an enormous amount of dedication, organisation, professionalism and commitment. Tanya has done a truly outstanding job in running the ASA Prizes over the past years, and has helped deliver career-changing impact to awardees by building a highly rigorous and professional Society Award scheme that is respected nationally and internationally.

On behalf of the ASA, I sincerely thank Tanya for her outstanding service as ASA Prize Coordinator, and for creating a robust, inclusive and prestigious Award system that we can all be proud of.

2. The year in review

The past 12 months have provided many highlights, including:

- Formal launch of the Decadal Plan at the 2025 ASM, with subsequent interactions of ASA, NCA and AAL around implementation of the key focus areas. This marked the conclusion of a massive consultation and engagement effort that began in 2023, resulting in an exciting, clearly articulated, and broadly encompassing plan for astronomy in the next decade.
- Launch of the **History of Australian Astronomy Chapter (HAAC)**. HAAC was established in July 2025 to share knowledge on the history of Australian astronomy with astronomers, historians, curators, students and people connected to the history of astronomy from most states and territories of Australia.
- Establishment of a new Joint Group (with the Geological Society of Australia) on **Stellar and Planetary Astronomy - SPA**. The overarching aim of this Joint Group is to unify these two research areas into a coherent whole, and coordinate national efforts in understanding stars and planets and their co-evolution.
- 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting and Harley Wood School in Adelaide were a great success – see full report below.
- PASA continues to perform strongly, but there has been a drop in journal impact factor. The number of submissions in 2026 is on par to 2025, so we have seen a sustained increase of ~2x the number of submissions since 2024, when MNRAS changed their page charge model, and we moved to OA in 2025. The journal impact factor (JIF) has dropped to 4.0, from 4.6 in 2024, which unfortunately places us just outside of Q1. This is disappointing but can be explained by several factors,

including the increase in JIF eligible articles. PASA requires ongoing community support to maintain its quality and impact factor.

Much of the Society's work is done by community members through the ASA Chapters and Working Groups. The summary of each Chapter's work is below. Some highlights include:

- The ECR Chapter has continued its successful ECR symposium series this year, and established a new 'History and Mystery' series exploring aspects of astronomy (e.g., social, political, geographical, and historical perspectives) that are usually not covered in conventional scientific talks. The Chapter has also revived and updated the 'Astronomer in the Industry' list on the ECR Chapter webpage - a useful resource for ECRs considering alternate career paths to academia.
- The EPOC Chapter welcomed its new chair, Fred Watson, and is undertaking a refresh of web pages, outreach resources, and engaging with preparations for the 2028 eclipse.
- The ANITA Chapter held their 19th Summer School and workshop in February at Mount Stromlo Observatory, with support from the OzStar and ADACS teams. The event featured around 30 talks, with interactive hands-on sessions as well, receiving a lot of positive feedback.
- The IDEA Chapter's major effort this year was the delivery of the 2025 Pleiades Awards, which involved an extensive and carefully coordinated evaluation process. This year's assessment included involvement of an external reviewer, Dr Jiao Jiao Li, whose contributions significantly strengthened the rigour and inclusivity of the review process.
- The TDA Chapter has been busy with ongoing development of its website, aimed at creating opportunities for members (especially ECRs) to present their research, and post highlights of TDA news of interest to the community.
- The GAP Chapter organised a special session at the 2025 Australian Institute of Physics summer meeting on "Combining astronomy and particle physics in the hunt for dark matter," via Chapter AIP co-Chair, Martin White.
- The 2025 AGM saw the creation of a brand new chapter - the History of Australian Astronomy Chapter (HAAC) - formed to explore, preserve, and share the history of astronomy in Australia, including Indigenous sky knowledge, technological developments, and key people and events in the evolution of Australian astronomy.

As always, I encourage all members to consider getting involved in the work of ASA Chapters.

2026 saw the release of outcomes from the various strategic reviews of Australia's research funding and infrastructure system conducted last year. I draw your attention to two critical outcomes from this:

Ambitious Australia (SERD Review): The landmark Strategic Examination of R&D (SERD) final report recommends system-wide reforms to future-proof the innovation sector, lift sovereign capability, and ease cost-of-living pressures. It outlines plans to reform the R&D Tax Incentive and establish a National Resilience and Science Council.

National Research Infrastructure (NRI) Roadmap: The Department of Education is running consultations on the 2026 NRI Roadmap. This strategy targets the next 5 to 10 years, ensuring researchers share access to advanced scientific facilities and equipment.

ASA, NCA and AAL all contributed submissions to these processes, as did many of our community members. Thanks to all who contributed, and continue to contribute, to the national dialogue on these important matters.

3. Code of Conduct and Equity and Conduct Committee

It is the policy of the Astronomical Society of Australia (ASA) that all participants in its activities enjoy an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment, and that its members conduct themselves appropriately during all professional activities. Council has previously

convened an Ethics and Conduct Committee (ECC). The ECC is charged with oversight of the ASA Code of Conduct and Statement of Ethics as well as handling of potential breaches.

One submission to the ECC was received in the past 12 months, which the ECC determined constituted a breach of the ASA Code of Conduct, resulting in an email to the community from the President, on 9th September 2025. This event involved misuse of an anonymous live poll during the ASM, with the recommendation to avoid the use of anonymous polls in live settings.

4. Awards and Honours

Members of the ASA were recognized with awards over the past 12 months:

- The ASA Council elected Professor Cathryn Trott, (ICRAR, Curtin University; ATNF Chief Scientist, CSIRO), to Honorary Fellowship of the Society. Cathryn has given exemplary service to the ASA and the Australian astronomy community as a whole. She served as an ASA Councillor 2012-2016, followed by ASA president roles (Vice-President; President; Immediate Past President 2017-2022). Cathryn is an NCA member, served on the Decadal Plan (2026-2035) Editorial Board, and serves as an AAL Board member (2024-) and current Chair (2025-).
- Céline Boehm (ex-GAP co-chair) was elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science
- The University of Queensland's Dr Cullan Howlett has been awarded the 2026 Pawsey Medal from the Australian Academy of Science for his outstanding contributions to physics research.

Congratulations to all recipients.

5. ASA Meetings

The Annual Scientific Meeting: The 59th Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) was held on 7-11 July 2025 at the City East campus of the University of Adelaide (now, Adelaide University "AU"), organised by Gavin Rowell, Sabrina Einecke, Violet Harvey.

Total registration (in-person / online): 194 / 34 = 228 total, with 124 students (54%). Total dinner: 155. The gender breakdown (Male / Female / Non-binary / Prefer not to say) for all registrations was: 130 / 91 / 3 / 4 (40% female).

Prizes for student presentations at the ASM were awarded as follows.

Best student poster (research category):

- 1st: Nanda Salama
- 2nd: Amy Attwater
- 3rd: Mallika Sinha

Best student poster (presentation category):

- 1st: Sophie Young
- 2nd: Jasmine Anderson-Baldwin
- 3rd: Aaron Bradley

Best student talk (research category):

- 1st: Max Charles
- 2nd: Ajay Dev
- 3rd: Thomas Hilder

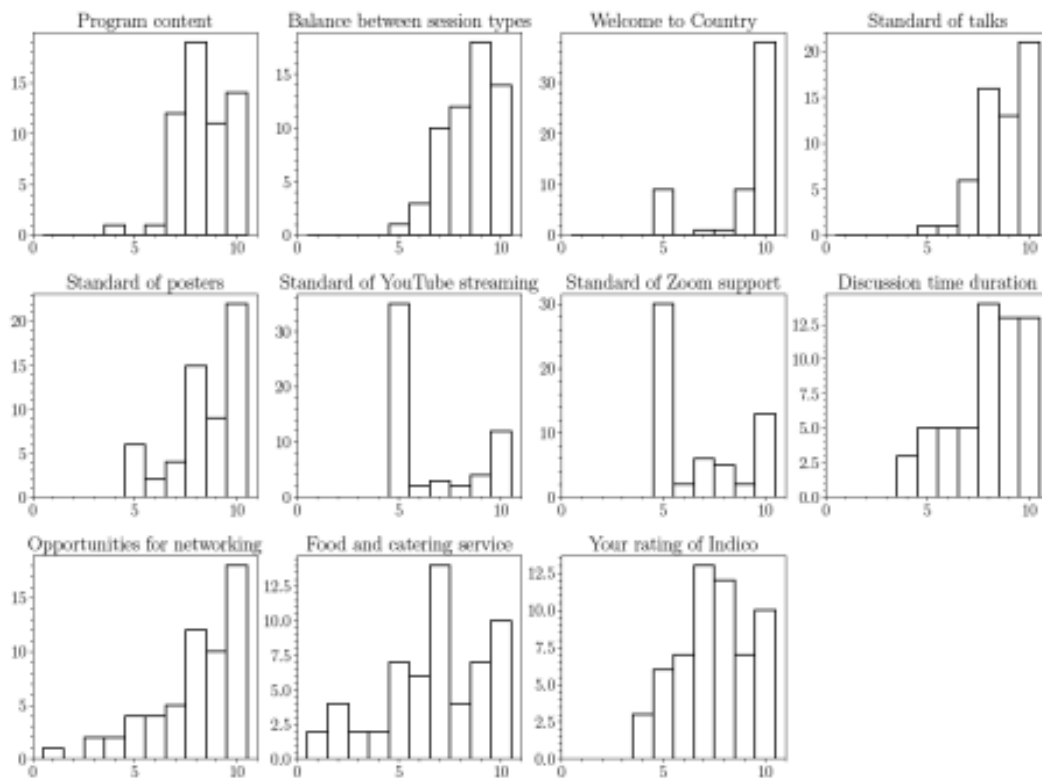
Best student talk (presentation category):

- 1st: Bailey Martin
- 2nd: Louisa Canepa
- 3rd: Melissa Campbell

The ASM organisers scheduled a rich and engaging program of parallel science talks, plenaries, town halls, and social activities, including the ASM Dinner event, held at the National Wine Centre. Among the many highlights of the meeting was the official launch of the Australian Academy of Science's Astronomy Decadal Plan 2026-2035, complete with cake! This was a wonderful way to celebrate the completion of a major effort from the ASA community, National Committee for Astronomy (NCA), and Decadal Plan editorial board over the course of 2 years, led brilliantly by the NCA Chair, Virginia Kilborn.

The Harley Wood public talk, presented by Miroslav Filipovic, was held Tues 8 July in the Scott Theatre. About 30 people attended the event (with another 20 online via YouTube and Zoom – see AV report at the end of this one). Miroslav's talk "*Per Aspera ad Astra: The Future of Astronomy is Here! Discovering ORCs and many other new wonders of the Universe*" was an entertaining and eclectic look at some of the results of major surveys with a focus on radio astronomy.

A post-event survey was created on the Indico website to gather feedback from ASM participants immediately after the meeting concluded. 58 participants responded. Overall feedback was positive, particularly regarding the ASM program, AV support, and the Indico conference system. The histograms below summarise the feedback to the survey questions, with requested scores: 10=excellent, 5=neutral/NA, 1=poor.



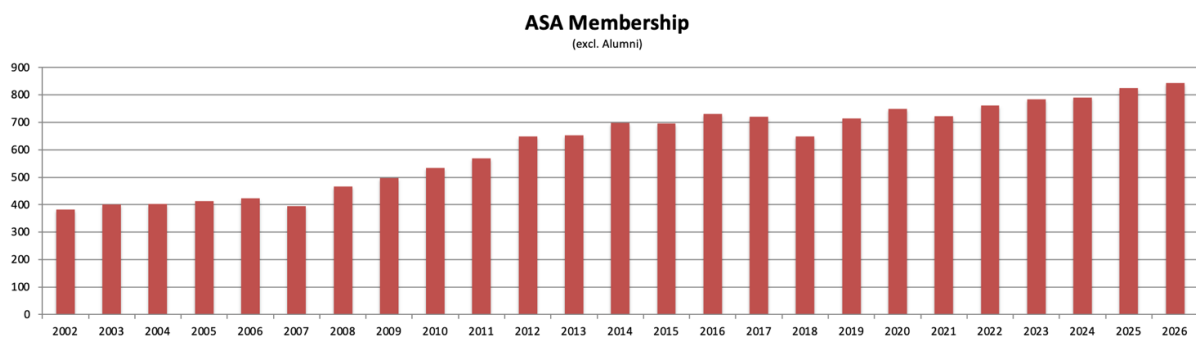
The Harley Wood School of Astronomy (HWSA) took place in Port Elliot, about 70 km south from Adelaide from Thursday July 3rd to Sunday July 6th, and was co-chaired by Imogen Barnsely and Jemma Pilosof from University of Adelaide. The event's theme was multi-messenger astronomy with an emphasis on the future of astronomy in Australia. In total 66 people attended the event made up of 53 postgraduate students, 8 speakers and 5 committee members. Guest speakers included Dr Kirsten Banks, Prof Jeff Cooke, Dr Sabrina Einecke, A/Prof Gary Hill, Prof Paul Lasky, Dr Kathryn Ross, Dr Catherine Braiding, and Lauren Carter.

The Harley Wood School of Astronomy 2025 hosted two panel discussions to allow students to ask pertinent questions in real time and directly engage with the panellists. The first was a helpful and honest panel on careers and varied career paths both inside and outside of academia. The second was an insightful scientific panel, focusing on the theme of multi-messenger astronomy and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Following HWSA 25, a feedback survey was released to capture attendee insights and comments. Participants rated each item from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), with space for general feedback. Of 53 attendees, 34 responded (64%). Overall enjoyment was high, averaging 4.2. The Salt venue was also rated 4.2, while accommodation averaged 3.5, with Breeze Holiday Parks scoring lower than the YHA due to smaller-than-expected rooms; some noted YHA bathrooms became crowded at peak times. Port Elliot was widely praised as an excellent location. Social activities scored strongly (4.4), with quiz night repeatedly highlighted. Talks were rated well overall (4.0), including Dr Kirsten Banks' Indigenous astronomy talk (4.2) and multi-wavelength sessions (4.2). The mental health workshop averaged 3.1, likely affected by running overtime and finishing incomplete. Panels were standout successes: multi-messenger (4.5) and careers (4.2). Catering feedback was mostly positive, though Friday dinner lacked sufficient vegetarian/vegan options.

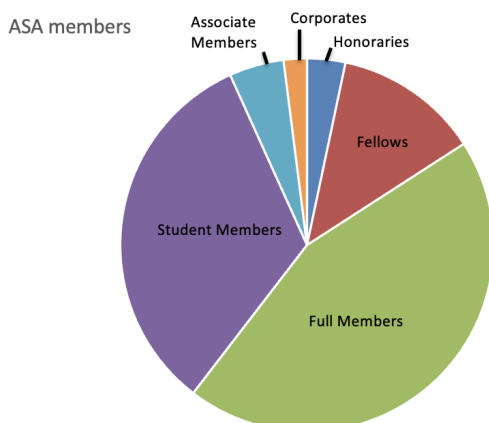
6. ASA membership

The ASA membership continues to increase slowly each year. Membership numbers are now 844 (compared to 824 in mid-2025) - these are all classified as current members but 123 have payments overdue, of whom 52 are 18 months overdue (and will be removed shortly if they remain unfinancial). These numbers are disappointing given several attempts to contact late payers, but are actually slightly lower than last year.



One reason for being overdue is students who complete their degrees but never tell us what comes next. For some that will be outside astronomy. Council (and the ECR Chapter) would be interested to know about the subsequent careers of anyone who leaves astronomy, students or others, and Alumni status (which is free) was created to stay in touch with them. We currently have 51 Alumni, but they are *not* included in the membership count.

On the other hand, the numbers *do* include 17 Corporate members after an effort to get all relevant organisations to sign up for free Corporate membership. I encourage all astronomy-active groups to consider Corporate membership of the ASA.



The gender breakdown of individual members is 279 (Women/Female), 527 (Men/Male), 7 (Non-binary or different term), 14 (Prefer not to say).

The graph below shows the historical gender data. The percentage of women members has continued to climb to almost 34%.



We note with sadness the passing of four ASA members since the last AGM.

Peter Robertson. Peter was an editor and science communicator within the CSIRO Publishing group in Melbourne where he was editor of the national research journal for physics. He has written widely on Australian science, including his book “Radio Astronomer: John Bolton and a New Window on the Universe”, which is a biography of John Bolton, published by CSIRO Publishing.

Don Morton. Don was Director of the AAO from 1976 to 1986. He also served as the Director General of NRC’s Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics (now NRC Herzberg Astronomy and Astrophysics Research Centre; HAA) between 1986 and 2000. Don was active even in retirement, studying theoretical atomic physics, solar physics and astronomical contributions to climate change.

Bruce McAdam. Bruce was a great participant at the University of Sydney School of Physics and maintained his interest in Physics to the last. Longstanding members of SIfA and the ASA will remember Bruce at many functions and ASA meetings over the years, even long after he retired. It was his long service to the Australian astronomical community and the ASA as a Foundation member that prompted the ASA to waive fees for all members with 50+ years of membership.

Alan Vaughan. Alan completed his honours degree at University of Sydney in 1968 then continued to a PhD searching for pulsars with the Molonglo radio telescope resulting in several papers in Nature. Alan graduated in 1975 and joined Macquarie University. He continued research on radio properties of active stars and then planetary nebulae, but most of Alan’s energies were focused on establishing and strengthening the astronomy teaching and outreach programs at Macquarie, leaving a legacy of one of Australia’s first majors in astronomy, and an annual Astronomy Open Night engaging thousands of members of the public in science.

8. Financial

Over the reporting period, the ASA’s financial position strengthened, with business and operating accounts increasing by approximately \$40,000 and Foundation accounts rising by around \$13,000. This healthy position enabled the ASA to fund a range of initiatives, including publicity for ASA prizes, travel support for students, support for Chapters and the PASA editorial board, and other priority activities. Financial reports for the year have been finalised, accepted by the auditor, and formally signed by the ASA.

The Foundation for the Advancement of Astronomy (FAA) has equity of ~\$249K as of 30 Jun 2026, with a surplus of \$13k for the 2025/26 year. The FAA is a charitable foundation with broadly defined purposes, allowing support for prizes, scholarships, research, and facilities. The FAA funds all ASA prizes. Donors may choose to support a specific prize or activity, or contribute to the FAA's general purposes. The FAA's ability to sustain and diversify these activities depends on the level of funding available — and on the support of ASA members and the wider public. That support is essential to help the FAA continue developing a significant role in Australian astronomy. A simple way to contribute is at the time of renewing your ASA membership, or via the [FAA Donation page](#). If you would like to discuss a donation, please contact the [ASA Treasurer](#).

9. Publications of the ASA (PASA)

PASA continues to perform strongly, but there has been a drop in journal impact factor. The number of submissions in 2026 is on par to 2025, so we have seen a sustained increase of ~2x the number of submissions since 2024, when MNRAS changed their page charge model, and we moved to OA in 2025.

The journal impact factor (JIF) has dropped to 4.0, from 4.6 in 2024, which unfortunately places us just outside of Q1. This is disappointing but can be explained by several factors, including the increase in JIF eligible articles. PASA requires community support to maintain its quality and impact factor.

There have been no changes to the Editorial Board since the last report. The next turnover, and opening, is expected at the end of the year. The current members of the PASA Editorial Board are:

- Minh Huynh (Editor in Chief, CSIRO, term end 31 Dec 2027)
- Andrew Hopkins (Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Macq Uni, term end 31 Dec 2027, at which point it is expected they will move to EiC)
- Evanthia Hatziminaoglou (Assoc Editor, ESO, Germany, term end 31 Dec 2026)
- Luca Casagrande (new Assoc Editor, ANU, term end 31 Dec 2027)
- Nithyanandan Thyagarajan (new Assoc Editor, CSIRO, term end 31 Dec 2027)
- Sarah Tuttle (Assoc Editor, Uni of Washington, USA, term end 31 Aug 2028)
- Sui Ann Mao (Assoc Editor, MPiFR, USA, term end 31 Oct 2028)

A call for a new Associate Editor will go out in the next few months.

We remind members that all PASA reviewers are eligible for a 30% discount on Cambridge University Press books.

10. ASA Prizes and awards

The following prizes have been awarded during the 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM).

Bok Prize for outstanding research in astronomy by an Honours or Masters student

Awarded to Grace Blomfield for her thesis: "Characterising the Extreme: New Observational Insights into Ultra Luminous Quasars". Grace completed her Honours thesis at ANU, supervised by Christian Wolf and Christopher Onken.

Highly commended awarded to Taaseen Islam for his thesis "Investigating the underabundance of Gamma-ray Emission from Cosmic Rays in the Large Magellanic Cloud". Taaseen also completed his Honours thesis at ANU, supervised by Mark Krumholz and Roland Crocker.

Charlene Heisler Prize for the most outstanding PhD thesis in astronomy

Awarded to Dr Maria Luisa Buzzo (Swinburne, now at Yale) for her thesis "The Origins of Ultra-Diffuse Galaxies" supervised by Duncan Forbes and Jean Brodie.

Highly commended awarded to Dr Bailey Sykes (Monash) for his thesis “Simulations of Core-Collapse Supernovae: Studies of Black Hole Formation and Magnetohydrodynamical Effects” supervised by Bernhard Muller.

Louise Webster Prize for outstanding research by a scientist early in their post-doctoral career

Awarded as a joint award to two individual winners:

- Dr Ziteng (Andy) Wang (Curtin) for the paper: Detection of X-ray emission from a bright long-period radio transient, *Nature* 642, 583-586 (2025)
- Dr Takafumi Tsukui (ANU) for the paper: The emergence of galactic thin and thick discs across cosmic history, *MNRAS* 540, 3493–3522 (2025)

Anne Green Prize for outstanding research by a mid-career researcher

Awarded to Dr Anais Moller (Swinburne) for her expertise in cosmology and time-domain astronomy.

Emerging Leaders in Astronomy Software Development Prize (sponsored by the Australian Research Data Commons)

Awarded to Dr Louis Desdoigts (Sydney, now at Leiden University) for ∂ Lux - a physical optics simulation package that is fast, differentiable, and deploys to GPU and HPC environments. It is the base package behind AMIGO: a data-driven model of the Aperture Masking Interferometer (AMI), the only Australian hardware on JWST.

Congratulations to all our prize winners! And many thanks to all our judges for devoting a considerable amount of their time to reading and reviewing the nominations. The ASA has again engaged *Science in Public* to help promote the ASM and the Prizes.

The ASA Prizes and Awards Co-ordinator, Tanya Hill, collates (self-identified) gender and geographical statistics for ASA prizes to ensure that there is a representative balance. For the 2026 prizes, the gender statistics are shown in the table below.

	Bok Prize	Heisler Prize	Webster Prize	Green Prize	Software
Total nominations	7	14	5	4	4
% women nominations	29%	43%	20%	50%	0%
% women short-list	33%	50%	25%	33%	0%
Gender of winner	W	W	M & M	W	M

Based on the profile of the ASA membership, the Society expects that candidates identifying as women should comprise at least 30% (goal of 40%) of the nominations for each prize, and encourages institutions to help achieve this. The percentage of nominations from women is variable because of the relatively small total number of applicants, but the statistics over recent years are as follows:

Prize	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Bok	29%	38%	60%	18%	67%	46%	37.5%	61%	0%	29%	50%	83%
Heisler	43%	56%	11%	38%	42%	18%	45%	38%	44%	43%	25%	40%
Webster	20%	50%	25%	50%	50%	80%	50%	50%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Green	50%	83%	33%	29%	33%	29%	40%	40%	50%	--	--	--
Software	0%	0%	50%	25%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Percentage of Women Applicants

Many thanks to Tanya Hill for her oversight of the process, and to all the judges of the awards.

11. Inclusion, Diversity and Equity in Astronomy (IDEA) Chapter

The IDEA Chapter has 286 members, and is chaired by Tayyaba Zafar. The Chapter members identify as 57% women/female, 41% men/male, and 2% non-binary/use a different term/prefer not to say. The IDEA Chapter membership spans a broad range of institutions across Australia and internationally. The majority of members are affiliated with leading Australian universities and research institutes, including Macquarie University (29), the Australian National University (32), Swinburne University of Technology (26), Monash University (22), and the University of Sydney (20). Several members are also based at government organisations such as CSIRO and the Australian Space Agency. In addition, the Chapter includes members from international institutions such as Caltech/IPAC-NExScI, the European Southern Observatory, and the University of Auckland, reflecting the Chapter's global engagement.

During 2025–2026, the IDEA Chapter met regularly, with well-attended monthly Steering Committee meetings sustaining continuity and enabling planning for renewed activity. The Chapter prepared for its annual Town Hall at the ASA Annual Scientific Meeting and the Rainbow dinner. Following the 2025 Pleiades Awards, it began reviewing and implementing community feedback, prioritising clearer guidance for institutions, a more streamlined application process, and better-defined expectations for future rounds. Planning also commenced for a program of training and engagement, including scoping active bystander intervention, inclusive leadership, and broader IDEA topics, with hybrid and national delivery options and initial outreach to providers underway. The Chapter contributed to Astronomy Decadal Plan (2026–2035) discussions, particularly EDI KPIs, while developing flexible consultation models amid participation challenges. Work continued on Indigenous engagement approaches and on initiating governance discussions to update the ASA Statement of Purpose. Funding pathways are also being explored to support expanded activity in 2026 and beyond.

12. Education and Public Outreach Chapter (EPOC)

The EPOC chapter has 245 members, including 86 student members. The geographical distribution of Chapter membership closely follows ASA membership; there are 32 international Chapter members. Chapter members identify as 59% male, 37% female, 7% non-binary/use a different term/prefer not to say.

Much of EPOC's capacity this year has been directed to work led by the Eclipse Working Group (EWG), with three EPOC Steering Committee members also serving on the EWG. While outreach and education for the 2028 total solar eclipse sit within EPOC's remit, broader engagement from the full EPOC membership is not expected to ramp up until closer to the event. Momentum was also affected earlier in the year by uncertainty about whether, and how, EPOC would contribute to outreach ahead of the Science Minister's decision on ESO membership (announced 2 April).

Actions discussed at the EPOC Steering Committee meeting on 9 December 2025 remain largely outstanding. The most urgent priorities are conducting Steering Committee elections and progressing updates to the EPOC and Australian Astronomy websites. Stakeholder discussions to inform the website updates will take place at the upcoming ASA ASM, with implementation to follow. Steering Committee elections will be held before year's end.

EPOC/EWG was represented at AstroEdu (Melbourne, 23–25 September 2025), Sea Lake Astrofest (26–29 September 2025), and the National Australian Convention of Amateur Astronomers (3–5 April 2026). An EPOC Town Hall was held at the 2025 ASA ASM, with another planned this year in conjunction with the EWG.

13. Australian National Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics (ANITA)

Rajika Kuruwita is the newly elected Chair of ANITA (thanks to Fiona Panther for all her hard work and leadership as previous Chair), which has 273 members (66% man/male, 31% woman/female, 3% non-binary/use other term/prefer not to say). Students comprise 40% of members.

The annual ANITA workshop and school was held at the University of Western Australia in February 2026. 35 members attended the school and workshop and we received positive feedback about the quality of the lectures and interactive activities on cosmological simulations run by Chris Power, Aaron Ludlow, Aaron Robotham, Danail Obreschkow and Claudia Lagos. The workshop was funded by the UWA Department of Physics, ICRAR and the conference dinner sponsored by ASTRO3D. The J P Macquart student talk prize was jointly awarded to Arunima Arunima (ANU) and Paul Disberg (Monash).

The 2027 ANITA workshop and school will take place in February 2027 at Swinburne University.

14. Early Career Research Chapter (ECR)

The ECR Chapter is chaired by Kovi Rose, elected in 2026 and taking the place of Amit Seta. We thank Amit for his hard work and leadership over the course of his term as Chair. The total number of Chapter members as of June 2026 is 365 (including members with pending renewals). Compared with 334 members in 2025, 330 members in 2024, 341 members in 2023, and 324 members in 2022, this represents ~9.3% increase in membership in 2026 from 2025. The gender statistics for the chapter are 56% men/male, 42% women/female, and 2% non-binary/use another term/prefer not to say.

The ASA ECR Chapter continues to deliver several initiatives that support early-career astronomers nationwide. The ECR Symposium Series remains a successful program, enabling ECRs to visit astronomical institutions across Australia and present colloquium-length talks; an expression of interest for new speakers is planned for Q3 2026. The Chapter is also actively maintaining the "Astronomers in Industry" list on the ASA ECR webpage and, over the past year, has facilitated around half a dozen enquiries by connecting astronomers

considering a move to industry with former astronomers now working in industry roles. In addition, the Chapter runs the ongoing online “History and Mystery” talk series roughly quarterly, featuring speakers—often senior researchers—discussing unique aspects of astronomy that are not typically covered in conventional science presentations; three Q4 2026 speakers are already confirmed.

Professional development remains a focus through the ASA ECR “How To” Series, including a June 2025 program on programming and data-driven astronomy delivered with ADACS, and a planned October–November 2026 series on jobs and career pathways with six confirmed speakers. To strengthen communication and outreach, the Chapter is also setting up a LinkedIn page to share activities and opportunities.

15. Group for Astroparticle Physics Chapter (GAP)

The GAP Chapter, shared between the ASA and the Australian Institute of Physics (AIP), is co-chaired by Roland Crocker. The co-Chair from the AIP is Martin White. The Chapter has 105 ASA members. Note that AIP members are not included in this number. There is representation from every major astronomy institution in Australia. Among astronomers, membership is approximately 15% senior (fellows and retired), 35% members, 45% students, and 5% associate members (which includes internationals). Gender breakdown is 63% men/male, 35% women/female and 2% non-binary/use a different term/prefer not to say.

GAP has been focused on preparing special sessions for the next AIP congress, including nominating speakers and choosing a theme. Other activity includes the GAP Steering Committee meeting in April, the upcoming ASA-ASM Town Hall in July, and a GAP focus session at Australian Institute of Physics Congress (Uni Syd. 7-11 December).

16. Time Domain Astronomy (TDA) Chapter

The TDA Chapter, chaired by Ben Montet, has 145 members, representing a 24% increase on last year. 39% of members self-reported as woman/female, 58% as man/male and 3% non-binary/use another term/PNTS. The Chapter has a broad national footprint, with members across all six Australian states and the ACT. The largest concentrations are in the main astronomy hubs—Sydney/NSW, Melbourne/Victoria, Canberra/ACT, Perth/WA, and Queensland—with smaller but consistent representation from Tasmania and South Australia. This largely mirrors the distribution of Australian astronomy, with strong participation from major institutions including Macquarie, the University of Sydney, UNSW, Swinburne, Monash, ANU, Curtin, UniSQ, UQ, the University of Tasmania, the University of Adelaide, and UWA/ICRAR. Membership also spans diverse research interests and career stages, with some regional clustering that reflects local strengths: WA members are prominent in radio astronomy and SKA-adjacent science, Melbourne has strong compact-object and time-domain communities, and NSW/Canberra include significant optical, stellar, exoplanet, and instrumentation representation. The Chapter is predominantly Australia-based (136 of 145 members), with smaller international representation across several countries.

Over the past year, the Chapter hosted a Town Hall at the ASA and gathered community feedback. This highlighted a clear split in needs: junior members want more opportunities to network and showcase their work, while senior members value updates on key developments in the field. The Chapter is progressing its website, benefitting from Ashley Rüter’s careful work developing a template, and is launching a semi-regular newsletter to keep members informed about activity across the TDA community. Planning has also begun for engagement around the 2028 eclipse, working with the EPOC Chapter and the Eclipse Working Group. In addition, the Chapter has promoted its activities at Sydney SPRIGS (Stellar and Planetary Research in Greater Sydney) meetings and begun discussions with the SPA Chapter about coordinating contributions to the “Stars in” meetings and the Australian Exoplanet Workshop, reflecting substantial overlap in membership.

17. Eclipse Working Group (EWG)

The Eclipse Working Group (EWG) has continued progressing its objectives to ensure Australia can experience the 22 July 2028 total solar eclipse safely and enjoyably, while using the event as a national platform for public engagement with astronomy, science, and STEM. Operating under the AWE2028 banner (“Australia-wide eclipse”), work is being advanced through seven specialist panels.

The Safety Panel, chaired by Terry Cuttle and John Lattanzio, has reached a major milestone: representatives from all organisations on the panel have agreed on the wording and presentation of safe eclipse viewing instructions for wide public distribution. This work has been supported by a wordsmith and graphic designer, funded from the initial \$2,500 Council approval. The next step is formal endorsement by participating organisations, alongside continued development of guidance for optical and medical professionals.

The Communications Panel, chaired by Toner Stevenson, is building partnerships with community organisations and establishing a Sydney Metropolitan sub-group. In March, letters signed by the ASA President were sent to all 78 Local Government Authorities within the path of totality, with responses ranging from strong enthusiasm to no reply. Two ASA eclipse factsheets are nearing completion: a short public-facing version and a more detailed version for engaged audiences. Destination NSW has been briefed, advice is being developed for sporting bodies given the eclipse will occur on a Saturday afternoon, and posters have been displayed at NACAA and at this ASM, with further posters planned for the next AIP conference and broader distribution.

The Education Panel, chaired by Rob Hollow, is recruiting science teacher representatives in each state, promoting the eclipse at education conferences, and developing teacher-focused materials. The Media Panel, chaired by Vanessa Moss, is preparing a media strategy, including a press release timed with the 12 August 2026 European eclipse, seeking proposals for an eclipse logo (including an Indigenous-themed option), and reviewing a US-developed eclipse app for potential Australian use.

The Astronomers Panel, chaired by Mike Wheatland, is coordinating potential scientific meetings around the eclipse, including an approved Cool Stars meeting the following week and exploring options such as Solar Physics and Exoplanet conferences, alongside citizen science models. The Indigenous Panel, chaired by Pete Swanton, is in early planning to support remote communities and advise on Indigenous elements of the AWE2028 logo. A Resources Panel, chaired by Terry Cuttle, supports all panels with materials and drafting; Marnie Ogg has joined to advise on tourism.

The EWG is seeking Council guidance on sponsorship for ASA-badged merchandise (including ISO-compliant eclipse glasses/filters) and on not-for-profit workshops that may incorporate sponsorship.

18. Sustainability Working Group (SWG)

The SWG is co-chaired by Themiya Nanayakkara and Clancy James. The SWG has been put on pause this year, without actionable tasks identified by Council.

19. Communications Working Group

The ASA Communications Working Group (CWG), chaired by Vanessa Moss, primarily oversees the ASA Slack and YouTube channels, working with ASM organisers to make these tools available where relevant. Prior to the next ASM, there will be efforts to increase awareness of the availability of these platforms for both ASM and community purposes, and the CWG welcomes questions and suggestions from the community on this front. In addition, the CWG continues to monitor the usage of the ASA Slack, with a pending future review of access for non-ASA members outside of exceptional events such as the ASM.

20. New Joint Group on Stellar and Planetary Astronomy.

As of June 2026, the SPA chapter (Chair: Daniel Price) comprises 92 members. The chapter is 92% Australian-based, with seven international members across New Zealand, Chile, Hungary, Iraq, Korea, and Malaysia. Within Australia, membership is strongest in NSW (42%) and Victoria (28%), reflecting the concentration of stellar astrophysics research at Macquarie, Monash, ANU, and Sydney-area institutions. Students constitute 47% of membership, with full members (32%) and fellows (11%) comprising the remainder. Overall gender representation is 58% men/male, 38% women/female, and 4% non-binary/use another term/prefer not to say.

Main activity over the previous financial year has been to establish the Chapter, hold inaugural elections and plan/organise the 2026 Stars in Hobart / Australian Exoplanet Workshop. Stars in Hobart/12th Australian Exoplanets Workshop is planned for November, hosted by UTas. We are awaiting final confirmation of the venue booking, but most likely this will run in the week of 16th-20th November 2026. Venue planning for ~100 attendees. Proposed venue: Dechaineux Lecture Theatre, Centre for the Arts (near Salamanca, Hobart).

21. Designated Observatories

The ASA has been requested by Standards Australia to maintain a list of designated optical observatories that are judged to be valuable resources for (i) research, (ii) education and (iii) community use. Acceptance as a designated observatory does not imply any form of legal status, but it should enhance a case for protection against obtrusive lighting. There have been only a couple of additions and deletions to the designated observatories list in the past year.

22. Correspondence

The ASA email list remains the primary communication avenue for ASA news deemed to be of potential interest to a large fraction of the membership. Members can post directly to the list at asa@mailman.sydney.edu.au, which undergoes screening and approval by the ASA Secretariat. This distribution list is also used for communications from the ASA Council to members regarding items of broad interest. The email channel is augmented by an ASA Slack workspace. Overseen by the ASA Communications WG, led by Vanessa Moss, the Slack has dedicated channels covering most major aspects relevant to ASA members; it has also been used during multiple recent ASMs.

The Heads of Astronomy mailing list provides a useful avenue for discussing issues common across astronomy departments. This group meets roughly 3 times per year, with ad hoc meetings scheduled as needed. This has been particularly useful in the past months to engage the national astronomy department leaders in discussions related to large telescope access.

23. Science & Technology Australia

The ASA is a member of Science & Technology Australia (STA), which is Australia's peak body across Science and Technology. ASA members attended major STA events in the past year, including the annual *Science Meets Parliament* and have participated in STA programs such as the post-budget briefing.

The ASA was well represented at the 2026 Science Meets Parliament by:

- Richard McDermid (Macquarie)
- Belinda Nicholson (UniSQ)
- Jonah Gannon (ICRAR)
- Rebecca Nealon (Monash)
- Stefania Barsanti (USyd)

Several other astronomers were also in attendance representing other organisations, allowing our community to be well represented. My thanks to AAL CEO Dr Alex Cooke for his insightful input to the briefing document which the ASA Council provides to all our delegates. It was great to see astronomy representatives across all organisations deliver a coherent, positive message. Feedback from delegates suggests that this was a useful experience, providing our members with a valuable understanding of the policy process and, developing skills in talking to decision makers. Of course, it was also an opportunity to highlight the excellent and exciting work happening in astronomy, and the contributions Australian astronomy makes to both our own nation and internationally.

Warm congratulations to Virginia Kilborn, who was elected to the STA Board of Directors in November last year, just before stepping down as NCA Chair – see next.

24. National Committee for Astronomy

The ASA President is an ex-officio member of the NCA, which is the body responsible for the links between the Academy of Science and the astronomy community, as well as a formal representative of Australian astronomy on the international stage including to the International Astronomical Union (IAU).

Following the launch of the Decadal Plan for Australian Astronomy (2026-2035) at the 2025 Annual Science Meeting, the main NCA activity this year has been establishing implementation of the Decadal Plan, and in recent months, coordinating the community following the government decision not to progress Australia's Strategic Partnership with ESO to full membership. It has been a pleasure to work closely with the new NCA Chair, Sarah Brough, in facilitating these activities, and to see the exceptional dedication and collegiality of our community peak bodies, NCA, AAL and ASA, as we navigate these complex issues.

25. European Southern Observatory

In early April this year, the Australian Government decided that Australia would not join as full members of ESO after the conclusion of the Strategic Partnership. The 10-year partnership will finish next year, with the upcoming call for proposals (September 2026, P118) being the final opportunity for Australian researchers to access time under the Partnership (other than through any 'fast track channel' calls that may occur within this observing period). Note that proposals accepted in P118 could be executed or scheduled as late as Apr 2028. Australian researchers can still apply for non-Large Programs after P118, modulo being classed as a 'non-member state' proposal (which only happens if more than 2/3 of the applicants are from institutes not affiliated with an ESO Member State or Host State - it is not determined by where the PI is based).

In anticipation of this decision being made, the National Committee for Astronomy (NCA) and Astronomy Australia Ltd (AAL) convened a Large Telescopes Access Working Group (LTAWG) to prepare a range of options for achieving the number one priority of the 2026-35 Astronomy Decadal Plan (DP) – namely to “ensure sustainable, ongoing access to 8-metre-class telescopes, a next-generation 30-metre-class telescope, and the millimetre-wavelength Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA) Observatory”.

The LTAWG met from February through to April 2026, and a summary of their findings was presented at an online Town Hall event on Friday 8 May which provided valuable feedback from the community including:

1. A view that instrumentation must be the foundation, leading to a greater focus on partnership(s) rather than simply buying nights;
2. Access to the International Gemini Observatory should be actively considered alongside Keck, Subaru, and Magellan;
3. Existing ESO relationships must be preserved; and

4. The strategy must balance immediacy and ambition, by maintaining access from 2027 while building strategic capability in the longer term.

The report from this group was circulated to the community by AAL via the ASA email exploder on the 15th of June 2026.

The NCA and AAL are now preparing a strategy based on this LTAWG options report and taking into account other discussions with the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) that have further clarified the Australian Government's priorities. NCA and AAL will engage closely with the Heads of Astronomy Departments group and then brief the astronomy community on progress at the two Town Hall events on "Large telescope access and the future of the AAT" during the ASA meeting next month in Canberra. There will also be a specific opportunity for early career researchers to ask questions and make suggestions during the ECR townhall.

NCA and AAL are working to engage with DISR, the Science Minister and his Office to ensure that they have an understanding of the astronomy community's needs and an appreciation of the costs and impacts of various options for supporting optical astronomy in Australia. AAL expects this to be an ongoing discussion throughout this calendar year and will keep the community updated when there is news to share.

26. Astronomy Australia Limited

AAL is a not-for-profit organisation comprising Australian universities and astronomy research institutions. AAL activities include facilitating access to key research infrastructure (including telescopes and HPC), and assisting with the implementation of the Decadal Plan for Australian astronomy. As a result of the AAL AGM in November, Prof Michele Trenti, Prof Andrew Hopkins and Dr Mita Brierley were appointed to the Board. The Board re-appointed Prof Cath Trott as Chair and Prof Paul Lasky was appointed as Deputy Chair.

The 2025 NCRIS 'Step Change' funding round closed to applications on 2 October 2025. With significant input from portfolio stakeholders, AAL submitted five applications and was partner on two more, spanning bids relating to National Digital Research Infrastructure (NDRI) and Translational Research Infrastructure. Three of the submitted bids on behalf of the astronomy community were partially successful:

- Step Change funding for a new project, ADACS - **National Open Digital Engineering Support (NODES)**
- Capability Gap funding to support the **ASKAP radio telescope**
- Capability Gap funding to support the **Murchison Widefield Array**

The NODES project builds on the decade-long track record of Astronomy Data and Computing Services (ADACS). It will bring the professional, astronomy-derived research software development expertise and targeted training approaches of the astronomy community to other research capabilities. The Capability Gap support for ASKAP and MWA underscores the critical importance of these SKA precursor facilities, ensuring they are well prepared ahead of the SKA Observatory's start of operations. All of this funding is welcome and critically needed. Unfortunately, funding provided for each of these projects is less than requested, and several critical bids from AAL were unsuccessful - an outcome common across the research infrastructure ecosystem.

AAL worked with others in the NCRIS network on arrangements for the 20th Anniversary Celebration of NCRIS, held in Canberra on 29-30 June. The event featured a Parliamentary Reception, followed by a Symposium that will took stock of the successes of the NCRIS program and set the scene for the next two decades of support for national research infrastructure. Satellite events for NCRIS-supported staff were held in each capital city on 30 June, with live streaming of the event available at some sites.

Operations for the Anglo-Australian Telescope (AAT) are fully funded until 30 June 2027. As part of preparing advice for the Government about potential future options for the AAT, the

AAT Council has established an Advisory Group that is assessing long-term options for the facility, including potential non-astronomy uses. The Working Group has been engaging extensively with the community, including inviting White Papers on potential future uses of the telescope. These submissions will be provided to the Government for consideration. Proposals received to date span a range of opportunities, including new international science partnerships, follow-up programs for emerging facilities such as the Rubin Observatory and 4MOST, as well as commercial applications in space situational awareness and deep space communications.

The Working Group continues to welcome additional White Papers and encourages new ideas for the future use of the telescope, including concepts for new instrumentation and potential funding models. These efforts will be discussed in more detail at the Town Hall sessions during the ASA Annual Scientific Meeting. Researchers, engineers, and members of the space community are also invited to attend the workshop, “Shaping the Future of the AAT in the 2030 – 2040 Era”, to be held at Macquarie University on 23 – 24 July 2026.

Considering the decision by the Australian Government not to pursue ESO membership, the only pathway to secure full national access to a 30m class optical telescope is through leveraging Australia’s existing investments in the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT).

Through investments by the ANU and AAL, Australia made early contributions to the GMT project and collectively we are 11.8% shareholders in the Organisation. Australia’s collective share will be reduced once the National Science Foundation (NSF) invests in the project—pending a successful Final Design Review in 2027, and once further investments from existing and new Founders are made. AAL anticipates seeking funding from the Government to maintain Australia’s share and access to observing time, which could also include securing funding to support Australia’s current efforts in the GMTIFS and MANIFEST instruments, which will be part of the initial suite of instruments installed on the GMT.

Prof. Brian Schmidt, Vice Chair of the GMT Board, will be providing an update on the status of the GMT project at the ASA ASM, to be followed by presentations on GMTIFS and MANIFEST, and a Q&A session.

27. Priorities and Planned Activities for 2026/2027

Over the past 12 months, the ASA made good progress on 2025-2026 priorities and activities. The large and rich data set collected through the ASA membership survey has taken some time to collate, but an initial report is now available (see later). PASA has been able to successfully absorb the additional submission load resulting from changes in open access models. Some great work has gone into enabling direct web submission for prizes (coming soon). And heads of astronomy groups have been directly encouraged to aim for diverse prize nominations, with Council soliciting the IDEA Chapter’s advice on monitoring and promoting diversity in ASA prizes.

With the launch of the Astronomy Decadal Plan 2026-2035, and terrific engagement in the ASA member survey, this year’s priorities aim to support the needs of the community articulated in these consultations, as well as addressing high-priority existing activities. As such, the Council has identified the following priorities for 2026-27:

- Share ASA member survey results, and generate a response plan by end of 2026.
- Promote PASA as a high-quality outlet for key Australian science, with the aim of regaining and maintaining Q1 status.
- Coordinate with NCA and AAL in implementing the Decadal Plan, in particular the ‘Thriving Australian Community’ priorities:
 - National cooperation to amplify astronomy’s benefit to society
 - Build connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander astronomy
 - Promote dark and radio-quiet skies and sustainable astronomy
- Activate and engage the ASA community in preparation for and promotion of the 2028 eclipse.

28. Student travel grants

The number of applications for travel grants has increased substantially in the last few years, to the point where if these number are maintained, the previous practise of supporting all applications is financially unsustainable. Following extensive discussions last year, the ASA Council decided to adjust the scheme slightly in light of this. First, we reverted to the pre-COVID rule of supporting a maximum of one trip per student. The second change was to make the grants competitive if necessary, meaning that awards would not be based purely on eligibility, but also on additional factors. Students in the second half of their PhD (i.e. with a series of results to present), and those who had limited or no funded opportunities to present at international conferences, are prioritised. These changes have been implemented in one round so far, with some difficult decisions made by the selection committee, and disappointed applicants. We will continue to refine the approach, and provide clearer guidelines and criteria for applicants going forward.

29. Harley Wood School of Astronomy and ASM/AGM 2027

The 2027 ASM and HWSA will be organised by the Queensland Universities Astronomy & Space Research (QUASAR) Collaboration (UQ, UniSQ and QUT), led by Sarah Sweet, Holger Baumgardt, Michael Cowley, Rebecca McElroy, Mitchell Hooymans, Nicole Jenkins, and Vanessa Porchet. The meeting is currently scheduled for July 5-9th in Brisbane, with the HWSA held on the preceding weekend. 2027 will mark 8 years since the ASM was last hosted in Brisbane. Since then, astronomy in South-East Queensland has grown significantly, and the organisers look forward to welcoming the ASA community back to the city.

The proposed program theme "*The Next Decade in Australian Astronomy*" is intended to align directly with the priorities of the 2026-2035 Astronomy Decadal Plan. In addition to this program theme, dedicated schedule time and venues will be reserved for Town Halls hosted by every ASA Chapter to foster maximum attendance and collaboration.

This ASM and HWSA will be a collaborative effort between UQ, UniSQ, and QUT, with UQ hosting the primary ASM at St Lucia, UniSQ hosting an event at Mount Kent Observatory, and QUT hosting the welcome event at Gardens Point.

ASA Council was appreciative and enthusiastic about the opportunity of holding the ASA ASM in Brisbane, and confident that the combined resources and commitment of the QUASAR Collaboration will deliver an outstanding meeting.

30. Membership survey

The 2025 ASA Membership Survey drew 264 responses and offers a broad picture of member experience, priorities, and expectations. The data from this survey has now been digested by the Council, with particularly significant effort from past and current Immediate Past presidents, John Lattanzio and Stas Shabala, respectively. A full analysis of the results will be circulated to the ASA membership with this report, but below is a summary.

Overall, the survey results indicate a Society whose core activities are strongly valued: respondents were positive about the Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM), PASA, communication, governance, the overall membership experience, and the ASA's role in connecting and representing the community. The consistent message was not to change direction, but to make existing strengths more visible, accessible, and supportive, particularly for students, ECRs, and members in less secure employment.

Engagement is strongest through the ASM, with 92.5% of respondents having attended at least once. Chapters, working groups, and diversity-related activities also attract substantial participation, though many members are not formally affiliated. The main barriers to deeper involvement are time/workload, followed by uncertainty about role suitability and limited clarity about what roles involve.

Satisfaction is generally high across the ASM, PASA, communication, governance, and the Harley Wood School of Astronomy among those with direct experience. Limited visibility or experience were reported for grants/financial support, lobbying and responsiveness, influence over ASA priorities, and perceived alignment with member needs. Differences were more strongly linked to career stage and employment security than to gender.

Members broadly agreed the ASA is focusing on the right areas, but the strongest call for increased investment was direct support: financial, travel, and hardship grants, and ECR development. For the ASM, respondents preferred an in-person-first model with a credible online option, retaining the current duration and broad program while improving hybrid participation, reducing cost barriers, and providing earlier information. PASA is strongly endorsed: 97.1% want ASA to continue publishing it, with general support for Open Access but mixed understanding of the transition. Email should remain the primary communication channel, supported by the website and optional tools like Slack.

In closing, the year has not been without challenges, with ongoing economic, funding, and geopolitical uncertainty impacting everyone's lives, either directly or indirectly, in some shape or form. Such times highlight the importance for our Society to adhere to its principles of collegiality and professionalism, with the aim of promoting the advancement of astronomy and closely related fields, supporting the training and development of young researchers, fostering the public's understanding of astronomy, and representing the interests of our members.



Professor Richard McDermid
President