



ACSA

Chair's Report

11 November 2019

In my fourth report as Chair of the Australian Citizen Science Association (ACSA), I am pleased to formally launch our new Strategic Plan (2019-2021), and report on our 2018-2019 achievements under our previous plan. I am particularly proud of the expansion of our Regional Chapters and how involved and active they have become. I am also very pleased that Sydney University is our new host institution and believe the partnership will be mutually beneficial for both organisations. I'd like to formally thank and acknowledge the Australian Museum for hosting and supporting us between 2015 and June 2019.

I have summarised some of ACSA's achievements for **2018-2019** below.

- Launched our new Strategic Plan (2019-2021) and completed an evaluation of our achievements under our previous Strategic plan (2015-2018).
- Analysed our membership and community survey results and shared these via our website and newsletter, as well as with our sister organisations in the United States (CSA), Europe (ECSA) and Asia (CitSci.Asia) (via email). Used main findings from the survey to help inform the development of the Strategic plan.
- Launched the [2019 Seed Grants](#) as a way of giving back and investing in our members.
- ACSA Chapters have held a number of seminars so far this year, most in conjunction with each Chapters' launch with fantastic attendance and huge community interest.
- ACSA and the United Nations Association of Australia signed a Letter of Intent to build the relationship and facilitate discussions with the aim of identifying specific opportunities for collaboration in areas of mutual interest and benefit e.g. around Sustainable Development Goals and international initiatives.
- Launched a new membership category for organisations and businesses. As of 1 November 2019, we have 14 organisational members.
- Distributed monthly general newsletters and quarterly membership newsletters. ACSA's newsletters enjoy a solid readership among its community and member audiences. We have an above industry average (not-profit) "open rate" and "click rate".
- In an innovative partnership, ACSA entered into a financial agreement with the City of Sydney in February to coordinate and deliver a series of citizen science project presentations across its inner city library network, as part of the city's 2019 citizen science program.
- ACSA has once again enjoyed strong media coverage, with both the Association and its representatives being featured in news articles, on radio and in magazines. February's

edition of the Gardening Australia magazine (which had a readership of 601,000) features ACSA within a four-page spread on citizen science.

- Worked with the Office of the Chief Scientist to add a selection of citizen science projects into the STARportal. There are currently 55 projects listed in the portal, which link in to the ACSA project finder, and as the software platform is further developed we will be able to have greater visibility of usage statistics, and increase the number of projects automatically included in the portal.
- Attended the United Nations Science Policy Business Forum on the Environment meetings between November 4-7th 2019 to raise the profile of citizen science in Australia and globally.
- Delivered social media training for our members with 12 people attending.
- Delivered on all commitments and acquitted all expenditure in our agreement with Inspiring Australia and reported on the outcomes and expenditure to the funding body.

ACSA priorities for 2019/20 onwards

- Continue investigating the state of citizen science in Australia and advocate for sharing of information across the community and more broadly
- Lead the organisation of the 3rd National ACSA conference in 2020 on the Gold Coast.
- Identify new sources of funding for the Association.
- Grow our membership base by developing and delivering training and development opportunities for our members.

Special thanks to Michelle Neil who wears two hats for ACSA these days for her tireless efforts keeping our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages active. We currently have more than 4,500 followers on both Twitter and Facebook in addition to a [LinkedIn](#) page which is a great testament to her work. This year we also started on Instagram and continue to support the Google discussion group as a way for our community to share updates. Our growing digital communications help us continue to foster strong relationships with our members and partner associations, and build networks for citizen science across Australia and the world. Michelle also set up our dedicated [YouTube channel](#) to showcase more than 50 videos of citizen science presentations given at the national conference this channel has more than 120 subscribers.

It has been my privilege to work with the Management Committee and our National Coordinator over the last year. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Mij Bricknell who stepped down the Management Committee earlier this year due to work commitments. With four functioning regional chapters established and operational, ACSA now has a strong network of individuals working at the regional level to help implement and achieve the strategic goals of ACSA. Chapters are managing their own membership databases and conducting their own affairs with input from ACSA's national coordinator.

I am confident that ACSA has laid the foundations over the past year and will continue to grow and support citizen science within Australia and globally.

Erin Roger

Chair, Australian Citizen Science Association