

Australian Citizen Science Association



Annual Report
2023-2024



Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Citizen Science Association acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past and present, and recognise their unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters, and seas, as well as their rich contribution to society and citizen science.

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Compiled by Andrea Mason

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Chair's Report

Year after year, citizen science continues to gain traction within both the scientific community and among policymakers. The Australian Citizen Science Association (ACSA) is increasingly being invited to contribute to research projects and engage in national science conversations. For example, ACSA is a partner on the Marine Pest Sectoral Committee and the Australian Open Science Network. Such roles provide critical opportunities to advocate for citizen science and influence governing strategies and plans.

This year ACSA has seen a substantial expansion in projects and partnerships. We are leading a capacity-building initiative for citizen science leaders in South Australia. This project aims to improve leadership and project management skills, which will ultimately improve sustainability of citizen science projects.

On the Great Barrier Reef, ACSA is reviewing citizen science projects to develop guidance and principles for both scientists and citizens. These will help ensure the success of citizen science projects and include guidelines on data protocols and standards for taxa and ecosystems connected to the GBR region, either directly or indirectly.



In another South Australian-funded project, ACSA is collaborating with the University of Adelaide, Atlas of Living Australia and SciStarter US to launch the pilot SciStarter Australia, a citizen science platform. The initial focus is on South Australian projects and the intention is to expand the platform nationally.

In Western Australia, ACSA is working with the University of Melbourne to expand ConnectUp, a platform that connects people with disabilities as well as carers to groups and activities suited to their capacities, needs, and interests. The platform is co-designed and populated by participants (citizen scientists), drawing on their real-life experiences and aspirations. ConnectUp was piloted in WA and the current project will expand the platform beyond WA borders.

ACSA hosted a successful citizen science conference on the Sunshine Coast in 2023, and preparations are already well underway for the next conference in Melbourne in Spring 2025. Our local chapters have been highly active, running events, advocating for citizen science, and spearheading projects. ACSA's New South Wales chapter was established in June 2024, and the ACT chapter will be reinvigorated by the end of 2024.

On the international front, ACSA has been proactive as a member of the Citizen Science Global Partnerships board, helping to conceptualize international projects that elevate the role of citizen science and improve coordination across projects aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly through the United Nations Environment Programme.

We have also strengthened our connection with the New Zealand citizen science community through Lisa Evans, a general member of ACSA's management committee. Lisa resides in New Zealand and is playing a key role in promoting citizen science in her adopted country.



Acknowledgements

I extend my gratitude to the ACSA management committee including Chapter Chairs for volunteering their time and energy to support the national body and promote citizen science in their networks. Many thanks to those who take on formal volunteer roles in communication and engagement, serving on national and international committees and assisting with administration. Thanks also to our patron, Dr Hugh Possingham, who readily provides sage advice on all things related to citizen science.

Finally, a heartfelt thanks to ACSA members for your ongoing commitment. Your support makes our work possible.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Annie Lane'.

Annie Lane

ACSA Chair

About Us

The Australian Citizen Science Association (ACSA) is the peak body for citizen science in Australia. ACSA was first conceived in 2014 when a large number of dedicated volunteers came together to discuss how to increase awareness and support of Australian citizen science both nationally and globally. The Association describes citizen science as a form of science involving public participation and collaboration in scientific inquiries with the aim to increase scientific knowledge.

Our Mission

To advance citizen science through the sharing of knowledge, collaboration, capacity building and advocacy.

Our Vision

A community that supports, informs, and develops citizen science.

Our Goals

Participation: Encourage and promote broad and meaningful participation in citizen science.

Partnerships: Facilitate inclusive and collaborative partnerships.

Practice: Support the development of tools and resources that further best practices.

Impact: Ensure the value and impact of citizen science and its outputs are

Organisation: Establish ACSA as an effective, trusted and well-recognised organisation and hub for citizen science in Australia.

Our People

ACSA was supported by two part-time staff members, a Management Committee, a patron, and broader volunteers. The Management Committee is member-elected and is comprised of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and General Members that include Chapter Chairs. Committee members are elected by members at ACSA's Annual General Meeting for a two-year term. Broader national volunteers are appointed by the Management Committee to support the ACSA strategic goals.

Management Committee



Annie Lane
Chair
Full financial year



Steve Turton
Vice Chair
Prev Chap Chair - QLD



Mary-Lou Gittins
Secretary



Darryl Ebenezer
Treasurer

Regional Chapter Chairs



Alex Chapman
Western Australia



Patrick Bonney
Victoria



Sylvia Clarke
South Australia



Lynette Plenderleith
New South Wales



Eva Ford
Queensland

General Members

Lisa Evans, New Zealand Liaison
Michelle Neil, Social Media Moderator
Hannah Zurcher, ACT
Larissa Braz Sousa, NSW

Kathryn Willis
Jock Mackenzie, retired Feb 24
Robbi Luscombe-Newman, NSW
Bridie Schultz, QLD

ACSA Volunteers

Matthew Grace,
CitSci Global Partnership Liaison
Alice Motion,
Australian Academy of Science Liaison

Jennifer Loader,
Australian Academy of Science Liaison
Erin Roger, Open Science Liaison

Employees



Jessie Oliver
Executive Officer
Resigned June 2024



Jessie Oliver served as ACSA's part time Executive Officer July 2022 to June 2024. The role came with its challenges, including managing uncertainties and navigating new processes. Despite these hurdles, Jessie's positive attitude and diligence consistently shone through.

Her energy and passion for citizen science are undeniable, as is her extensive knowledge in the field. We all learned a great deal from Jessie and highly value her insights. We sincerely thank her for her commitment and diligence in the administration and governance of ACSA's affairs during her time with us.



Lisa Evans
Executive Support
Officer
Resigned Dec 2023

Lisa Evans served as ACSA Executive Support Officer from July 2022 to December 2023. Lisa did a wonderful job managing finances and the membership system as well as posting material on the website. We really appreciated Lisa's diligence, efficiency and smarts around systems and her research capability. Thank you Lisa for all that you did and continue to do for ACSA.

Lisa is now a member of ACSA's management committee. She continues to run the membership system as well as assist with many other administration and strategic tasks.

Patron



Hugh Possingham

Hugh is a huge advocate for citizen science. He asserts that when people are involved in discovery through citizen science they are empowered to advocate for positive action.

Treasurer's Report



Financial Position

At the end of the 2024 financial year, 30 June 2024, ACSA held \$256,646 in net assets (i.e. assets minus liabilities). Assets primarily consist of \$263,037 in cash and \$1,700 in receivables owing.

Financial Performance

Obtaining core funding to meet the aspirations of ACSA members and committee, deliver on our strategic plan and continue to advocate for and represent members continues to be our goal. As you know there is much talk about the importance of citizen science and the valuable investment in time, knowledge and passion tens of thousands of volunteers make to the gathering of knowledge. This recognition has not yet been translated into resources for ACSA. The committee, staff and volunteers continue to explore opportunities for generating income. At the end of the 2024 financial year, we reported an operating surplus of \$123,551.

This more positive financial result was contributed to by the conference breaking even and the success of obtaining two significant grants. Our highest expenditure items relate to delivering those two projects and the conference.

The income from membership fees and donations totalled \$17,169 by the end of the 2024 financial year.

Due to the decline in income available to provide for paid staff to assist in the life of the organisation the difficult decision was made to say goodbye to Jessie and Lisa. They continue to contribute to the life of ACSA as volunteers.

The Future

For the 2024-2025 financial year, your committee will continue to focus on obtaining resources to support the ongoing sustainability of the organisation, and to add value to our members and the Australian citizen science community more broadly. On behalf of the ACSA Management Committee, I extend our gratitude to our members, funding bodies, partners, and staff for their essential financial and logistical support.

The Treasurers position continues to be an enjoyable one but may not be one of my better life choices. I'm always happy to speak with anyone who would like to take on the role.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Darryl Ebenezer'.

**Darryl
Ebenezer**
ACSA Treasurer

Our Achievements

2023 National Conference

ACSA's biennial national conference was held at the University of the Sunshine Coast from 20-23 November 2023. About 160 delegates from Australia and overseas participated in the four-day event that included workshops, field trips, plenary keynote talks and breakout sessions and symposia. The conference theme was "Inspire, Impact and Influence".

Highlights included informative keynote speeches: Dr Fiona Fraser (Threatened Species Commissioner), Professor Kerrie Wilson (Queensland Chief Scientist), Andy Ridley (CEO of Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef), Associate Professor Kathy Townsend (University of the Sunshine Coast), Margaret Gold (Citizen Science Lab, Leiden University, The Netherlands), and Costa Georgiadis (Landscape Architect, Environmental Educator, TV Presenter).

A diverse range of parallel and symposia sessions were held showcasing the diversity of citizen science initiatives being undertaken across the country. These included conservation and biodiversity, citizen science practice, collaboration and co-creation, citizen science in schools and STEM education, communication and public engagement, citizen science in gardens and backyard, ecosystems, waterways, and climate change. A locally focussed symposium on "BioBlitzes" included speakers from Nambour-based ECollaboration Pty Ltd, Sunshine Coast Environment Council, Mooloolah River Landcare, Sunshine Coast Council, Noosa and District Landcare, and Barung Landcare.

All presentations in the main auditorium were recorded, and are on the [ACSA YouTube channel](#).



#CitSciOz23: Opening remarks and welcome from Dean Stuart Parsons,



#CitSciOz23 Keynote: Associate Professor Kathy Townsend, University of



Celebrating 10 Years

It was May 2014 when the first national citizen science workshop was held at the Brisbane Museum. We are excited to celebrate our 10th birthday.

As part of the 10-year anniversary celebration two ACSA chairs reflect on their experiences and the growth of ACSA. Erin Roger (left) with Annie Lane.



Erin Roger

ACSA turning 10 this year is something we should all be really proud of. The association is what it is today because of the tireless time and dedication of mostly volunteers (as well as some excellent paid staff) in addition to all the members (individuals and organisations) who have supported it. I remember being at the inception meeting in Brisbane on May 6th, 2014, and it was filled with committed people wanting to make ACSA a reality. From those early days, ACSA has grown into a well-regarded and established source of best practice information, collaboration, coordination, and advocacy for citizen science.

Being the chair of ACSA was a huge privilege. I had some outstanding opportunities during my tenure such as getting to travel to Nairobi to attend UNEP in 2017 as part of the global citizen science delegation. What I enjoyed most though was working with a team of diverse, intelligent and passionate individuals to lay the foundations of ACSA (our strategy, policies and governance) and take it from the inception and establishment phases into envisioning what a sustainable model for ACSA would look like in practice.

Working with Dr Geoff Garrett (ACSA's Patron 2018-2021) was a great opportunity as Geoff worked tirelessly to expand ACSA's network and make valuable connections. During my time as chair, we accomplished so much including ACSA's website, membership structure, working groups, and ACSA chapters. I was also lucky to be part of CitSciOz conferences in 2018, 2020 and 2021. We also launched our ACSA consulting arm to generate new sources of revenue and take advantage of a growing number of organisations wanting to build best practice citizen science into their approaches.

It is so nice to sit back and watch ACSA thrive under the capable hands of chair Annie Lane who is taking ACSA to the next level. I can't wait to see what happens over the next decade! Thank you to everyone who has helped make ACSA what it is today.

"ACSA turning 10 this year is something we should all be really proud of".

Annie Lane

Turning ten years old marks a significant milestone worthy of celebration. Congratulations to all who have been involved in the journey. ACSA has evolved into a confident and respected organisation, a feat made possible by its strong foundations (strategic plan, policies and governance), as mentioned by Erin.

ACSA's major challenge now is to elevate citizen science to the same level of recognition as any other scientific discipline, seamlessly integrating it into existing knowledge frameworks and research agendas. Advocating for citizen science at international, national, regional and local levels remains ACSA's primary mission, and progress has been evident across all fronts. Much credit goes to the dedicated efforts of Libby Hepburn, whose tireless work has helped to position ACSA as a prominent figure on the global citizen science stage, securing a seat on the Citizen Science Global Partnerships (CSGP) board. The interim CSGP board played a pivotal role in ensuring the integration of citizen science into UNESCO's Open Science Recommendation (Nov. 2021). Additionally, ACSA holds membership in the Australian Open Science Network. ACSA continues to expand its reach, programs, and influence. Recent developments include the launch of the ACSA NSW Chapter the imminent reinvigoration of ACSA-ACT.

"Turning ten years old marks a significant milestone worthy of celebration".

Efforts are underway to broaden activities into new domains such as health, fostering active partnerships with various entities, including universities, natural resource management organizations, as well as state and federal governments, and non-governmental organizations.

Participation in citizen science is experiencing exponential growth, largely due to remarkable technological advancements that have made participation accessible to a wider audience. Personally, I have learnt a lot about citizen science in the last few years. I derive immense satisfaction from participating in local citizen science projects and contributing to national and global projects. It's encouraging to observe that the concept of citizen science requires less explanation now, with numerous success stories serving as testament to its efficacy.

From my perspective, the future brims with promise for ACSA and citizen science. In facing global and national challenges, both science and active participation from individuals are essential in forging new knowledge and developing fair and equitable management solutions.

I extend heartfelt thanks to ACSA's volunteer committee, our current Patron Dr Hugh Possingham, and ACSA members and staff for their unwavering support throughout the years. Bring on the teenage years!

Thank you to those who have shared their stories about the impact that citizen science and ACSA have had on their lives over the past 10 years. We have already heard about the mental health benefits of citizen science, the open sharing of information between scientists and the community, building skills and knowledge, changing people's career paths, and ACSA's role in advocating for citizen science and growing communities of "knowledge holders and environmental advocates".

These are just some snippets.

"ACSA helped in anchoring my work in an established form of scientific engagement with reputation for legitimacy. Citizen science is completely absorbing and formed the basis of my PhD studies. Since 2014 I helped establish a Citizen science group called the Leard Forest Research Node and undertaken a range of studies in the form of extreme citizen science, where problem definition and research design is undertaken independent of institutions like universities." Anna Christie

"I am grateful to Citizen Science, but particularly ACSA for changing my life through the conference and Bioblitz and providing me with not only a new path of discovery and a new passion, but also a tool for self-managing my emotions and state of mind in my day-to-day life. I am sure there are many others who find citizen science as a therapeutic outlet, and I believe it should be utilised more in this way for helping people deal with mental health issues." Nadine Gaffney

"As an ACSA Treasurer I have seen considerable changes - easier access to ACSA website membership and information sharing for open communications from citizens Scientists to Scientists Australia and worldwide." Rosemary Race



"I didn't even know that citizen science was a thing when I started documenting the underwater life on Norfolk Island's coral reef. Now I am a keen advocate for not only our reef but the value of citizen science more broadly... My involvement in citizen science has now taken me into the realms of studying for a PhD in Marine Science. I haven't done any science since I left school in the 1970s but this is a passion project for me where I feel I can make a contribution to our understanding of small high-latitude reefs as a result." Susan Prior

"Citizen Science has provided me with scientific knowledge and monitoring skills, and has helped me forge a career path in conservation and community engagement!" Natalie Lobartolo

"Citizen Science brought me to Bundaberg as the project officer for the Woongarra Marine Park Monitoring and Education Project in 1997, with Coral Reef, Water Quality, Tide Pool, Rocky Reef and Coastal User Surveys. Although I had worked with volunteers before, this was my first start-up project learning as much from the volunteers as they learned through the project activities. The Wide Bay Burnett has a great track record in Citizen Science with Turtle Monitoring starting with Dr Col Limpus at Mon Repos in the 1970s and both the Wreck Rock (Nev and Bev McLachlan) and Lady Musgrave Studies (Jim and Annie Buck) starting shortly after - 50+ years and still going! Seagrass Watch started in Hervey Bay with community member Jerry Comans and Len McKenzie (then DPI) in 1997. So in my role as Coastal and Marine Coordinator at the local regional NRM group (2003-16) it was great to support these projects as well as Queensland Wader Study Group's regional shorebird survey (led by Dr David Milton and Sandra Harding) in 2005. the pilots of MangroveWatch with Dr Norm Duke and Jock McKenzie and Inshore Dolphins with Dr Daniele Cagnazzi. Citizen science has been a significant part of my life for nearly 30 years. " Sue Sargent

"I kept a count on Christmas beetles in various areas and States whilst travelling for six months. It was depressing to notice their absence. What has decimated these little creatures I'm not sure. Their decline I think may be the use of pesticides. I feel privileged to be a part of this group in my small way. " Jeannette

"Sitting in the audience at the 2018 ACSA conference, I listened to the people with the ACSA t-shirts on as they did announcements and provided information, and I thought "I want to be one of them, that looks fun!". Then after joining the ACSA Management Committee in 2020, our National Coordinator, Amy, gave me a list of positions they were looking for volunteers to take on. One of them was convening the committee for the 2021 virtual conference. I nervously put myself forward for that, and then a couple of years later I also helped with the 2023 in-person conference. There have certainly been fun times, in amongst the rollercoaster of other emotions, including stress and exhaustion! But I've learned so much from people who are old hands at putting events together, and gained invaluable experience. I think we can all be very proud of what we've achieved together!" Lisa Evans

"It takes up much of my waking life. I have been doing a monthly frog survey on the north bank of the Middle Yarra in Ivanhoe since Sept 1998, so now have near 26 years of data on the 8 species I've heard. I've co-led a long-term bat box monitoring project that began at Organ Pipes NP in the west of Melbourne in Dec 1994. We accumulated about 25,000 bat-capture records of 7 species, dominated by one adaptable species. A project in Ivanhoe on the north bank of the Yarra, since Feb 2005, still continuing (about 6,000 bat-capture records for this one). Also ongoing contributions to Fungimap (18 species of the 140+ target species) since 1996; an ongoing survey of skinks in Ivanhoe/Yarra flood plain, and a very small one of freshwater turtles in the same area. All wonderful learning opportunities, as well as being able to contribute to geographic species mapping, and data on population health and fluctuations over wet and dry periods." Robert Bender

Partnerships and Projects

Projects that ACSA either leads or is a significant partner.

Feature: Aust Academy of Science EMCR grants

Jul 2022-Mar 2025. Early and Mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs) represent the future of Australian research, and can both benefit from and contribute to the growing citizen science sector. Growing genuine collaborations and partnerships across citizen science and EMCR work can empower research to enhance the positive impacts of citizen science for science and society. With this in mind, ACSA was successful in securing support from the Australian Academy of Science's Theo Murphy Initiative for a round of grants specifically for EMCR-led research with and for citizen science. Three projects were funded to enable EMCR-led research that enhances the positive impacts of citizen science for science and society. Below is a brief summary of the projects.

Mapping and quantifying home and community food production through citizen science (Project lead Ro McFarlane)

This project was codesigned with backyard food producers in 2022, then engaged 120 participants to contribute data collection to quantify and map backyard food production in Canberra. Over 50 types of fruit and vegetables were reported. Respondents were producing above the weekly intake of 5 serves vegetables/day/pp. The project continues to explore opportunities with other initiatives to support simple, robust data collection around backyard food production and recognition of the importance of local food systems.



Eat, Sleep, Exercise, Repeat: Engaging Young Shiftworkers as Citizen Scientists to Co-Design Health Resources (Project leads Dr. Charlotte Gupta, Dr Grace Vincent, and Alex Shriane at Central Queensland University)

This project engaged with 29 young shiftworkers to gather lived experience information to inform a suite of evidence-based resources to improve health behaviours. This project was an opportunity for them to understand citizen science and the value in participating in research that directly impacts them. The resources and a peer-reviewed publication will promote the role of shiftworkers as citizen scientists among the research community. The project team hopes that this example can increase the presence of citizen science in new research areas.

Project research assistant, Dr Florence Awino with Dr Ro McFarlane as part of the project launch, photo by the Canberra Times.

Monitoring tree health to build more resilient Australian urban forests

By Dr. Manuel Esperon-Rodriguez

This project scoped the potential for an Australian Urban Tree app, leveraging citizen science to contribute real-time data on urban tree health observations. The team met with 15 local councils and citizen groups across five cities in QLD, NSW and WA and collected valuable information on methods of data collection to monitor tree health and failures, caveats, and additional uses of the app. One of the key findings of this project was confirmation that local councils appreciate the value of citizen science as a monitoring tool to provide early detection and help find new solutions for monitoring and caring for urban forests. The team is using this information to inform development of the app.

In addition to supporting EMCR project grants, the EMCR project partnership with Theo Murphy Initiative is supporting a discussion paper focused on - How can citizen science initiatives in Australia be strengthened to maximize their benefits for society, while addressing the challenges faced by both citizen scientists and research institutions? The project is coordinated by Jack Nunn from Science for All and uses a mixed-methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. It includes a review of publicly accessible information and survey data of citizen scientists and researchers involved in citizen science projects to better understand experiences, perceptions, and needs.

SA Department for Environment and Water: capacity building for citizen science leaders

May 2024 - June 2026. Funded by SA Department for Environment and Water. This is a Capacity-building program to address and bridge the existing skill gaps among leaders of Citizen Science projects in South Australia, incorporating on-ground and online learning components

University of Melbourne: ConnectUp health project

June 2024 - July 2027. University of Melbourne (lead). Medical Research Future Fund (funder). This Online platform aims to increase social connection, physical health, and mental wellbeing for people with disability and their carers.

University of Adelaide, ALA, SciStarter US: SciStarter Australia

March 2024 - end 2024. University of Adelaide (lead), Atlas of Living Australia, SciStarter US, SA Dept for Environment and Water (funder).

We are pleased to have announced the launch of SciStarter Australia, where anyone can find citizen science projects, and add their own. Lead by the University of Adelaide, the projects listed will continue to grow. The portal was launched at the end of Citizen Science month. See this news [article](#) for more information or go to the [SciStarter Australia portal](#).

Guidelines and Data Protocols for GBR Citizen Science Projects

One of the primary challenges associated with citizen science projects that aim to contribute to research, is ensuring information is collected in a way that makes it transparent, robust and trustworthy.

The goal of this proposal is to improve the quality of information collected by citizen science projects in the GBR region.

The four objectives are to:

1. Provide guidance to scientists and citizens on the principles that should guide development and implementation of sound citizen science projects to improve success.
2. Develop guidelines on data protocols and standards for taxon and ecosystems directly or indirectly connected to the GBR region.
3. Negotiate and establish a list of scientists who can provide input and advice to citizen science projects in the GBR region.
4. Publish guidelines and a list of scientists on the ACSA website for easy access.

Announcing #CitSciOz25 in Melbourne!

We are excited to share that the next ACSA conference will be making its way to Melbourne! Building on the success of previous ACSA conferences, we are committed to making ACSA Conference 2025 an even more engaging and rewarding experience for all attendees.

Chapter Triumphs



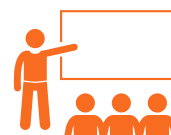
Chapter Brief by Sylvia Clarke



5 pub catch-ups
at the pub



6 **chapter**
newsletter issues
230 subscribers



1 webinar

Presentations:

1. Future Science at the Fringe,
2. Panel presentation to teachers at CONASTA (Australian Science Teachers Association Conference),
3. Panel member at Urban Parks Conference,
4. Judged and presented Oliphant school science awards (Citizen Science category - Primary and Secondary).
5. A number of members presented and/or attended CitSciOz23



Sylvia Clarke performing citizen science comedy style as part of Future Science Talks at the Adelaide Fringe Festival.

The SA Chapter has been working alongside the Department for Environment and Water over the last couple of years as they rolled out their \$2 million Citizen Science fund. This year saw the awarding of grants for larger, multi-year projects.

These included the SciStarter Australia project that is building an updated portal to active citizen science projects for Australia, and an ACSA/ ACSA-SA led project partnering with Project Checkpoint and Ferox Australis to create a range of free resources and training to encourage best practice citizen science.

A number of other projects run by a range of groups and organisations, some of whom are trialling citizen science for the first time, were funded. ACSA-SA is continuing to provide guidance on many of these projects either through representation on advisory boards or by encouraging grant recipients to engage with ACSA-SA via meetings and catch-ups.



CONASTA Panel members (L-R) – Erinn Fagan-Jeffries, Tahlia Perry, Sylvia Clarke, Cobi Calyx and Natalie Castree



SA Citizen Science Award recipients with Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water & Industry, Innovation and Science, & Deputy Premier Susan Close (second from right).
Photographer is Cath Leo.

SA Citizen Science Awards were held in August 2023 at an event to launch National Science Week. These annual awards are organised in partnership with Inspiring SA, the South Australian Museum and the Department for Environment and Water to recognise outstanding South Australian citizen science projects.

The 2023 winner was Insect Investigators (Adelaide University/ SA Museum plus a huge list of institution and school partners) and the runner-up was Find Our Fungi (Fungimap with Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board, Prospect Hill Bushland Group and the University of Adelaide). Each received a cash prize.



Chapter Brief by Alex Chapman

In December Alex Chapman presented a short talk to the Rewild Perth community at Perth Zoo where he discussed the role of ACSA and the ways it can support the citizen science community.



On the 9th March Marnie Giroud manned a stall at Bottle Top Hill's monthly recycling and education event at Piney Lakes Environment Centre in Melville chatting with people about getting involved in citizen science.



We had a number of changes to the WA branch committee this year, with Claire Greenwell from the Conservation Council of WA replaced by Kelly Sheldrick from the same organisation, and Tegan Douglas from Birdlife WA also stepped down after being with us from the start. We continue to have an active and professional branch committee looking forward to the coming year.



*Alex Chapman presented a short talk to the Rewild Perth.
Bottle Top Hill volunteers with their recycling tasks.
Marnie presents Tegan with her Certificate of Appreciation.*





Chapter Brief by Steve Turton

In the first half of the financial year, the QLD Chapter delivered two webinars and held two Community of Practice meetings. The two webinars, followed as "10 slides in 10 minutes" format:

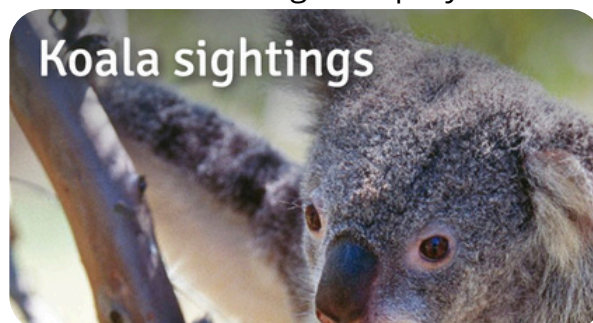
1. On 12 July 2023, Dr Andy Howe, Forest Research Institute at the University of the Sunshine Coast gave an engaging webinar titled, "[Insect Investigators: engaging schools in insect taxonomy.](#)"
2. On 9 August 2023, Maggie Murmans from the Queensland Department of Environment and Science presented an update on the [Koala QWildlife App](#).



Online Community of Practice (CoP) meetings were held in August and October 2023. CoP meetings included short updates from ACSA QLD Chapter meetings on their citizen science activities, as well as an update from the chapter chair about national management committee activities and updates about ACSA biennial national conference on the Sunshine Coast.

Several QLD chapter members played a major role in the organisation and successful delivery of the ACSA national conference, hosted by the University of the Sunshine Coast November 2023. Steve Turton and Michelle Neil were conference co-chairs and Darryl Ebenezer was a member of the local organising committee.

At the QLD Chapter meeting on 21 February 2024, Eva Ford was appointed as the new chapter chair, with Darryl Ebenezer remaining as deputy.





Chapter Brief by Lynette Plenderleith



1 new State
chapter



2 chapter
meetings



1 public
inquiry

New South Wales is celebrating its inaugural Chapter formation. After responding to an EOI in March, the diverse team of citizen science enthusiasts with experience ranging from participation to project design and research joined forces to create a new committee.

Chair: Dr Lynette Plenderleith

Vice Chair: Dr Larissa Braz Sousa

Secretary: Briana Barclay

General members: Dr Alice Howe;
Louisa Kiely; Thomas Mesaglio

Since then, the Chapter committee crew has been diligently working on strategic planning to ensure that ACSA and the NSW citizen science community can get the best from them. They list ensuring meaningful participation in rigorous projects and connecting people, projects and coordinators among the top of their list of ambitions.

The ACSA-NSW keen beans have also been keen to work with and learn from other chapters. Chapter Chair Lynette regularly arranges and attends "Chapter Chair Chinwags" aiming to learn the ropes from other states.

The citizen science sector is already alive and well in NSW and ACSA-NSW hopes to bring support and value-add. Watch this space for future developments.



Chapter Brief by Pat Bonney



Arj Khan presenting at Climate Catch Lab Citizen Science Webinar

The citizen science landscape in Victoria continues to grow and the ACSA-VIC maintains its commitment to building stronger engagement in citizen science initiatives across the state.

This year has been marked by significant collaborations, particularly with Melbourne Climate Futures and CATCHLab at the University of Melbourne. These partnerships facilitated the exchange of valuable knowledge through presentations addressing crucial aspects of citizen science development. Pat Bonney provided attendees with an overview of citizen science in Australia; Arj Khan gave important insights into engaging CALD communities in citizen science monitoring; and Lynne Lucas discussed the varied strategic approaches in incorporating citizen science into university priorities. The engagement of Australian Fellows from Pacific Island nations added an international dimension to these discussions, opening new possibilities for addressing climate change and marine biodiversity challenges across these regions.

Building on our commitment to supporting emerging projects, ACSA-VIC has participated on the steering committee for Agriculture Victoria's Biodiversity Quest, which represents an important step forward in public participation and awareness of invasive species and biosecurity management in Victoria.

Looking ahead, the Victorian chapter is excited to lead the organisation and delivery of the 2025 ACSA Conference, to be hosted in Melbourne. Regular planning committee meetings have laid the groundwork for what promises to be a fantastic few days of workshops, keynotes, and case studies showcasing citizen science initiatives from across Australia and beyond. At this stage, the conference, scheduled for November 2025. We look forward to sharing more details about the upcoming conference and other initiatives in the coming months.

International Activities

New Zealand



NZ Brief by
Lisa Evans

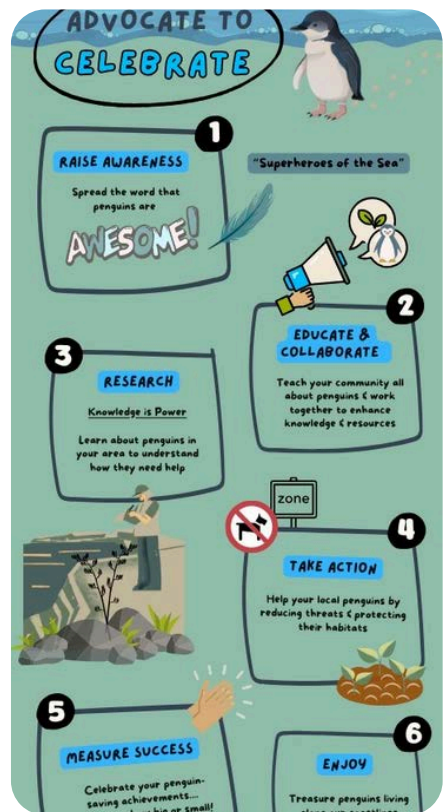


The Citizen Science of Aotearoa New Zealand (CSAANZ) was formed in 2019, and has been working to support and grow the citizen science community in Aotearoa.

In 2022 they released a white paper: Citizen Science in Aotearoa NZ - Initiatives, benefits and priorities. Citizen science is at a turning point in New Zealand, with some major government funding now at an end. #CitSciNZ is looking at how to build on the successes of projects like Marine Metre Squared, the New Zealand Garden Bird Survey, iNaturalistNZ, New Zealand Penguin Initiative, and Project Reef, South Taranaki, among many others. You can find out more about citizen science in New Zealand, including a directory of projects, from the Citizen Science Hub.



The Marine Metre2 - Sediment and Seashores project was conducted in Otago, connecting schools and community groups to investigate Otago Harbour rocky shore communities affected by dredging. The project looked at how these communities respond to sediment deposition and increased turbidity in the water column. Marine scientists also collected data in parallel using similar methods as the students, and found no statistically significant difference between the data collected by each group.



Esther Kilgour and family taking part in the 2021 NZ Garden Bird

The Marine Metre2 - Photo from the Marine Metre2 website.

International Developments in Citizen Science



**Brief by
Bridie Schultz and
Matthew Grace**

Libby Hepburn retired from her role as ACSA's representative with the Citizen Science Global Partnership (CSGP) board in October. We cannot thank Libby enough for her years of tireless work in promoting citizen science and ACSA on the global stage. Libby's role was filled by Matthew Grace who works with research and engineering teams at CSIRO on cutting edge data technologies.

The past financial year has been significant for citizen science on the global stage, with ACSA continuing to play a vital role in advancing international collaborations.

The 6th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), the world's top body for decision making on the environment, was held at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi in February.

The meeting focused on tackling the triple planetary crises of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste.

ACSA was represented by Committee member Dr Bridie Schultz. Bridie did a stellar job advocating for citizen science inclusion in a variety of UN Environment Programme (UNEP) endeavours as part of a global citizen science delegation.

Bridie and Matt were subsequently invited to New York in August for a meeting of the UN Geospatial Network, held ahead of the Fourteenth Session of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM).



Photo credit: Maina Muniafu. This is a photo of members of the UNEA6 citizen science delegation. Left to right, Luigi Ceccaroni (European Citizen Science Association), Austin Mast (Citizen Science Global Partnership), Audrey Luvuno (CitSci Africa), Peter Elias (University of Lagos), Bridie Schultz (ACSA), Jacquie McGlade (Strathmore University), Martin Brocklehurst (CSGP)

Acknowledgements & Thanks

Partners



Organisational Members





Australian Citizen Science Association

Volunteers and Supporters

Thank you to our volunteers, members, and broader supporters! Whether volunteering time and efforts, purchasing a membership, or providing other forms of support, we are very appreciative. We recognise that our work would not be possible without your generosity.

Contact Us



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Appendix A. Financial Statements

AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INC COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Your committee members submit the financial report of Australian Citizen Science Association Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2024.

Committee Members

The names of committee members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Annie Lane
Steve Turton
Darryl Ebenezer
Mary-Lou Gittins
Sylvia Clarke
Pat Bonney
Alex Chapman
Bridie Schultz

Eva Ford
Lynette Plenderleith
Hannah Zurcher
Jock Mackenzie
Kathy Willis
Robbi Luscombe-Newman
Larissa Braz Souse

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were to advance citizen science through the sharing of knowledge, collaboration, capacity building and advocacy.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

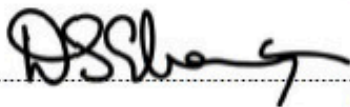
Operating Result

The surplus for the year amounted to \$123,551.44 (2023 deficit \$50,059.89).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the members of the committee.



.....
Annie Lane (Chairperson)



.....
Darryl Ebenezer (Treasurer)

Dated this...19th.....day of.....November.....2024

AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INC
Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
INCOME			
Conference income		85,010.41	-
Consulting services		120,935.85	72,005.00
Donations		476.58	609.00
Government grant		150,000.00	-
Interest income		1,858.96	169.68
Membership fees		17,169.02	20,067.00
Merchandise sales		710.88	242.70
Stripe fees collected		23.29	24.90
Ticket sales		301.82	-
TOTAL INCOME		376,486.81	93,118.28
EXPENDITURE			
Audit and bookkeeping		4,264.77	1,867.50
Chapter expenses		-	361.89
Conference expenses		70,989.18	11,855.69
Community and social gifting		11,000.00	20,000.00
Computer equipment expense		-	2,054.94
Consultant's fees		96,551.93	35,500.51
Entertainment		360.00	-
General expenses		402.96	280.66
Honorarium payments		1,000.00	1,000.00
Insurance		436.06	91.34
Printing, postage and stationery		-	22.27
Promotional merchandise		2,694.16	-
Provision for annual leave movement	-	1,880.85	1,880.85
Subscriptions		2,702.55	2,829.18
Superannuation		4,156.19	3,610.96
Travel		1,022.37	653.14
Wages and salaries		58,137.91	60,280.92
Website expenses		1,098.14	888.32
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		252,935.37	143,178.17
CURRENT YEAR SURPLUS		123,551.44	- 50,059.89

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.
Page 2 of 6

AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INC

Assets and Liabilities Statement as at 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at bank and equivalent		263,036.54	135,862.31
Accounts receivable		1,700.00	510.00
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		264,736.54	136,372.31
TOTAL ASSETS		264,736.54	136,372.31
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts payable and other payables	2	8,090.30	1,396.66
Provision for employee entitlements		-	1,880.85
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		8,090.30	3,277.51
TOTAL LIABILITIES		8,090.30	3,277.51
NET ASSETS		256,646.24	133,094.80
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Opening balance		133,094.80	183,154.69
Retained surplus (deficit) current year		123,551.44	- 50,059.89
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		256,646.24	133,094.80

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Page 3 of 6

AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INC
Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Financial Reporting Framework

The financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 and Associations Incorporation Regulation 1991. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity as the users of the financial statements are able to obtain additional information to meet their needs.

Statement of Compliance

The financial report has been prepared with Associations Incorporation Act 1991 and Associations Incorporation Regulation 1991 and the basis of recognition and measurement specified by all Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and is based on historical costs. They do not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

a. Income Tax

The Association understands that it is tax exempt under 50-5 of Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

b. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held with banks and cash equivalents.

c. Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed. For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

Operating grants, donations and bequests

When the association receives operating grant revenue, donations or bequests, it assesses whether the contract is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with AASB 15.

When both these conditions are satisfied, the association:

- identifies each performance obligation relating to the grant - recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement;
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations.

Where the contract is not enforceable or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, the association:

- recognises the asset received in accordance with the recognition requirements of other applicable accounting standards;
- recognises related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions, revenue or contract liability arising from a contract with a customer); and
- recognises income immediately in profit or loss as the difference between the initial carrying amount of the asset and the related amount.

If a contract liability is recognised as a related amount above, the association recognises income in profit or loss when or as it satisfies its obligations under the contract.

Capital grants

When the association receives a capital grant, it recognises a liability for the excess of the initial carrying amount of the financial asset received over any related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions) recognised under other Australian Accounting Standards.

The association recognises income in profit or loss when or as the association satisfies its obligations under the terms of the grant.

Interest income

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method.
All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INC

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

d. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the assets and liabilities statement.

Note 2: Accounts Payable and Other Payables

GST payable / (receivable)
PAYG withholding payable
Superannuation payable

2024		2023
\$		\$
6,102.30	-	835.63
1,988.00		1,508.00
	-	724.29
<u>8,090.30</u>		<u>1,396.66</u>

AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INC STATEMENT BY THE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

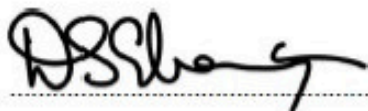
In accordance with a resolution of the committee of Australian Citizen Science Association Inc, the members of the committee declare that:

- 1 the financial statements as set out on pages 2 to 5, satisfy the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 and Associations Incorporation Regulation 1991.
 - a. Comply with Australian Accounting Standards applicable to the Entity; and
 - b. Give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Registered Entity as at 30 June 2024 and of its performance for the year ended on that date.
- 2 There are reasonable grounds to believe that the Registered Entity will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This statement is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:



.....
Annie Lane (Chairperson)



.....
Darryl Ebenezer (Treasurer)

Dated this.....19th.....day of.....November.....2024