



**THE
ROYAL SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

ENRICHING LIVES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SINCE 1821

**1299TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2021 AT 6.30PM**

By ZOOM Webinar

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88379562532>

AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME** – Immediate Past President, Emeritus Professor Ian Sloan AO FRSN
- 1.1 Acknowledgement of Country**
- 1.2 Diversity and Inclusion statement**
- 1.3 Minutes of the 1298th Ordinary General Meeting held on 6 October 2021**

2. CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP

As no valid objection was lodged within two weeks following the 1298th Ordinary General Meeting, the election of the following new Members took effect from the date of that meeting held on 6 October 2021.

2.1 Members

Ms Nianne Alnafta
Dr Fakhri Athari
Ms Claire Eloise Flitcroft
Dr Budhaditya Majumdar
Mr William Bradley Webster

3 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Fellows

At its meeting on 12 October, the Fellows and Members Assessment Committee made the following recommendations for Fellowship. These recommendations were

circulated to Councillors following the meeting and no objections were received. If no objections are received by 6.30pm on 15 December, the election of the following new Fellows will take effect from 1 December 2021.

Professor Michele Therese Ford
Professor Simon Ho
Professor Jennifer Louise Martin
Professor Robert A. Minasian
Associate Professor Alice Elizabeth Motion
Professor Louis Michael Rendina
Professor Charles Christopher Sorrell
Honorary Professor Graham Edward Town
Scientia Professor Toby Walsh

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 7 December.

3.2 Members

Mr Benjamin Fry
Mr Michael Atkinson
Ms Alice O'Keefe
Dr Michelle Humphries
Mr Nicholas Raphael

4 REPORT FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

Professor Sloan will provide a verbal report on matters emanating from the November Council meeting including the announcement of the recipients of the Society's Awards for 2021.

4.1 Announcement of Awards for 2021

- **The James Cook Medal** - for outstanding contributions to science and human welfare in and for the Southern Hemisphere. This medal is the Society's most prestigious award.
- **The Clarke Medal** – for distinguished research in the natural sciences conducted in Australia and its territories. This year's award is in the field of zoology.
- **The Edgeworth David Medal** – for distinguished contributions by a young scientist under the age of thirty-five years, for work done mainly in Australia or its territories; or contributing to the advancement of Australian science.
- **The History and Philosophy of Science Medal** - in recognition of outstanding achievement in the History and Philosophy of Science with preference being given to the study of ideas, institutions, and individuals of significance to the practice of the natural sciences in Australia.
- **The Royal Society of New South Wales Medal** – awarded from time to time to a member of the Society who has made meritorious contributions to the Society's administration, organisation, and endeavours.
- **The Royal Society of New South Wales Citation** – awarded to a Member or Fellow of the Society who has made significant contributions to the Society, but who has not been recognised in any other way.

- **The Poggendorff Lectureship** – awarded for research in plant biology and, more broadly, agriculture.
- **The Warren Prize** - awarded to recognise research of national or international significance by early- or mid-career engineers and technologists.
- **The Jak Kelly Award** - created in honour of Professor Jak Kelly (1928 – 2012) who was President of the Royal Society of NSW in 2005 and 2006. The Award encourages excellence in postgraduate research in physics. It is supported by the Royal Society of NSW and the Australian Institute of Physics, NSW branch. The winner is selected from a short list of candidates who made presentations at the most recent Australian Institute of Physics, NSW branch postgraduate awards event.
- **The Royal Society of NSW Scholarships for 2021** - awarded each year to acknowledge outstanding achievements by young researchers in any field of science.

5 QUESTIONS

Questions can be sent to the President in advance, to president@royalsoc.org.au

6 THIS EVENING'S PRESENTATION

MANAGING PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS IN TIMES OF STRESS: HANDLING THE STRESS OF COVID-19

**Professor Richard Bryant AC FASSA FAA FAHMS
Scientia Professor of Psychology and Director, Traumatic Stress Clinic
University of NSW (Sydney)**

Professor Bryant's research has focused on the nature and treatment of stress reactions. He has identified key genetic, neural, and psychological factors underpinning stress reactions and strategies to manage them. His assessment and treatment protocols have been translated into over 15 languages and used in many countries. Professor Bryant has written 6 books, 75 book chapters, and 670 journal articles. He has worked with the World Health Organization to develop programs to manage stress reactions and has adapted these to manage mental health problems during the pandemic. This program has been shown to reduce anxiety, depression, and anxiety, and is being evaluated across Australia, Europe, and India.

Australia has a long tradition of dealing with environmental challenges, including seasonal impacts of bushfires, floods, drought, and severe storms. These events can result in marked deterioration in the mental health of Australians. This pattern has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has seen a significant increase in mental health problems across the nation. This has sparked calls both in Australia and globally for novel approaches to manage mental health problems in the wake of these mass events.

This talk will describe a body of work that has mapped many of the key mechanisms that promote better mental health after adversity. It will also describe work that has harnessed this evidence to develop brief mental health programs that can be readily disseminated to people in times of need. Controlled trials will be reported that have evaluated the extent to which these programs can improve mental health, and how this approach points to a re-think of how mental health is managed by governments.

7 VOTE OF THANKS

8 CLOSE – Immediate Past President, Emeritus Professor AO FRSN