

## 1320<sup>th</sup> Ordinary General Meeting of the Royal Society of NSW

### Minutes

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The 1320th Ordinary General Meeting of the Royal Society of NSW took place in the Metcalfe Auditorium, State Library of NSW, on Wednesday, 17 April 2024, commencing at 6:30 pm. There were 52 Members, Fellows and visitors in attendance. The meeting was recorded for those who could not attend in person.

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The President, Dr Susan Pond AM FRSN presided at the meeting. She welcomed Members and guests.

**2. MINUTES OF THE 1319th ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING**

Minutes of the 1319th Ordinary General Meeting were reviewed and approved. There were no matters arising.

**3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Fellows and Members Assessment Committee meets between Council meetings and makes recommendations to Council for the election of Fellows and Members. These are circulated to Councillors prior to the Council meeting, with sufficient time for Councillors to assess the nominations. If no valid objections are received from Councillors, they are proposed to Members for consideration at the next OGM.

At this meeting, the Council proposed the following candidates for admission to the Society:

**FELLOWSHIP**

**Professor Alan Davison**

*Laudation* – Alan Davison is a leading international scholar in cultural history of the long nineteenth century, especially the intersection of music and visual culture.

**Professor Michael Blumenstein**

*Laudation* – Michael Blumenstein has made an international contribution to the field of Artificial Intelligence.

**Professor Peter Philip Gray**

*Laudation* – Peter Gray has made a substantial contribution to the field of biotechnology.

**Professor Christopher Alan Armstrong**

*Laudation* – Christopher Armstrong has made a substantial contribution to higher education and government policy.

**Professor Chennupati Jagadish**

*Laudation* – Chennupati Jagadish has made pioneering contributions to semiconductor optoelectronics and nanotechnology and has provided leadership at the broadest level nationally and internationally.

**Professor Trevor Colin Brown**

*Laudation* – Trevor Brown is a leading researcher and teacher in physical and industrial chemistry, having made major contributions to university management and governance.

**Professor David Christopher Currow**

*Laudation* – David Currow has made significant contributions to cancer research and the field of palliative care.

**Dr Sarah Jones**

*Laudation* – Sarah Jones is a historian and active researcher including in the fields of Higher Education administration and innovation.

**Professor Victoria Katharine Haskins**

*Laudation* – Victoria Haskins has made an international contribution to history through the study of gender and colonisation.

**Professor Andrew Baker**

*Laudation* – Andrew Baker has contributed significant research on water, cave science, and geochemistry.

**Professor Lyria Kay Bennett Moses**

*Laudation* – Lyria Bennett Moses is a pioneer in research on the relationship between law and technological change.

**Professor Robert John King**

*Laudation* – Robert King has made significant contributions to the fields of phycology, marine botany, ecology and higher education.

**Professor Stuart James Khan**

*Laudation* – Stuart Khan is an internationally recognised expert on water quality and treatment research.

**Professor Clement Tien-Hui Loy**

*Laudation* – Clement Loy has made a substantial contribution to clinical research and policy development.

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Professor Philip Michael Hansbro**

**Felicity Nelson**

**Dr John James Byrne Timmins**

**Christopher Michael Finn**

**Sarah Christina Bartlett**

**Associate Professor Christopher Stephen Paschal McErlean**

**Dr Michael Alexander de Percy**

**Dr Hugh Douglas Goad**

**Nicholas John Meagher**

**Dr Vafa Darren Ghazavi**

**Dr Shakeel Ahmed Ibne Mahmood**

**Assoc Prof Elizabeth Stockdale**

**Dr Catherine Ball**

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

**Jennifer (Jeny) Broughton Baume**

**4. CONFIRMATION OF FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP AND PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES**

The President presented certificates to new Fellows and Members whose nominations were tabled at the previous OGM and were present at this meeting.

**FELLOWSHIP**

**Prof Sarah Brough**

**Prof Min Chen**

**Prof Les Copeland**

**Prof Peter Keegan**

**Prof Francesco Marino**  
**Mr John McDonald**  
**Dr James Renwick**  
**Prof Graham Town**  
**Dr Peter Wells**  
**Dr Robyn Williams**

**5. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL**

The President reported on the progress on the master planning process that is now being implemented.

The plan consists of five essential strategic programs on which detailed implementation is well underway. The programs are:

- RSNSW Future Fund – leader: Susan Pond
- Activities with Impact – leader: Christina Slade
- Effective Communication – leader: Davina Jackson
- Member Engagement – leader: Peter Shergold
- Operational Excellence – leader: Lindsay Botten

Members will be updated regularly on progress on the plan. Members were encouraged to contact a Council member if they are interested in committing time to developing these programs.

**6. OPEN LECTURE**

**“Putting the 'Civil' Back in Civil Society”**  
**A conversation with Professor Kristy Muir and Professor Peter Shergold**

**Emeritus Professor Peter Shergold AC FRSN FASSA**  
**Former Chancellor, Western Sydney University**

**and**

**Professor Kristy Muir**  
**Chief Executive Officer, Paul Ramsey Foundation**

A generation ago, it seemed that democracy was a given. No longer.

Democratic governance appears fragile, under the threat from authoritarianism, xenophobia and populism. Trust in political leaders is wavering, thanks to the rise of AI and the increasingly powerful role of social media as a primary news source. In Australia, as elsewhere, public discourse seems riven by increasing social divisiveness and political discord. What's going wrong? Who or what is to blame? What can be done to restore a truly civil society?

***About the speakers***

**Professor Peter Shergold** AC FRSN is an Australian academic, company director and former public servant. Between February 2003 and February 2008, as Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Peter was the most senior official in the Australian Public Service. He was the Chancellor of Western Sydney University from 2011 through 2022. Currently, Peter is Vice President of the Royal Society of NSW.

**Professor Kristy Muir** is Chief Executive Officer of the Paul Ramsay Foundation. She is also a Professor of Social Policy at UNSW Sydney Business School and Chair of Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropy Australasia. She has worked for more than three decades as a support worker, academic, collaborator, leader, funder and board director with for-purpose organisations that enable children, families, and communities to thrive.

She is a seasoned keynote speaker and internationally recognised leader. She has published widely and has delivered her insights on governance for social impact to hundreds of non-executive directors and CEOs through formal executive education programs. She founded the

AGSM Governance for Social Impact course and the Social Impact Leadership Australia program which she currently teaches to for-purpose CEOs.

Kristy has undertaken more than 100 social impact projects with partners across sectors, including governments, not-for-profits, corporates, social enterprises, academics, and philanthropists. Many of these projects were designed to work alongside families and communities, and they spanned housing, education, employment, social participation, disability, mental health, financial resilience, wellbeing, and the social purpose sector.

Kristy was CEO of the Centre for Social Impact (2017-21), served as an elected academic member of UNSW's Council (2016-2021), and was a non-executive Director of the Community Council of Australia and the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Young People (ARACY). She has a PhD in social history and is a graduate of executive education at Harvard Business School and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Kristy and Peter previously worked together at the Centre for Social Impact, Kristy as CEO and Peter as Chair.

Kristy Muir and Peter Shergold argued across a contested terrain and led a lively discussion from the floor.

**7. VOTE OF THANKS**

The vote of thanks was given by Dr Christina Slade FRSN.

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**9. CLOSE**

The President closed the meeting at 8:05 pm.

The minutes were recorded by the Secretary, Dr Donald Hector AM FRSN.

Signed as a true record  
Dr Susan Pond AM FRSN  
President