

November 2021



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# Australasian Neuroscience Society Newsletter



*Upcoming Australasian Neuroscience Society  
40th Annual Scientific Meeting*

## Notifications

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### **Become an ANS member or student member!**

Please join us by becoming a Member of ANS.

You can join online at any time!

<https://tas.currinda.com/register/organisation/172>

### **Check out our website**

[www.ans.org.au](http://www.ans.org.au) and follow updates on the ANS

Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/AusNeuroSoc>)

or via our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/AusNeuroSoc>).

# Acknowledgements

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## Sponsors *(We thank our Society partners)*

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- Melbourne Neuroscience Institute, The University of Melbourne
- Neurological Foundation of New Zealand
- Otago Division of Sciences, University of Otago
- University of Tasmania
- The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health
- The Eccles Institute of Neuroscience, The John Curtin School of Medical Research, Australian National University
- Centre for Neuroscience, Flinders University
- Centre of Excellence for Integrative Brain Function, ARC Centre of Excellence
- South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
- Hopwood Centre for Neurobiology, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
- Queensland Brain Institute, The University of Queensland

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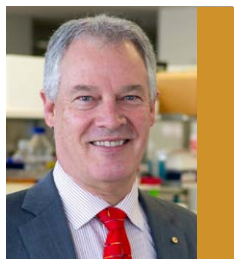
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# Message from the President

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As the eastern states emerge from lockdowns, the Executive and Council shared a sigh of relief that we avoided the pandemic uncertainty by making an early decision to reschedule the Melbourne Annual Scientific Meeting to December 2022. While it is a great disappointment that we can't meet in person this December, the uncertainty as to how events would play out left us with no other realistic option. However, ANS members won't miss out on intellectual stimulation this December as we provide an outstanding program of talks from our many award winners and named lecturers on 9th December at the virtual ANS 2021 Conference and Society's Annual General Meeting.

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**Prof Peter R  
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## **International Brain Bee Competition**

As detailed elsewhere in this newsletter, Peter Susanto from Darwin has just won 3rd place in the delayed 2020 International Brain Bee Championships. Peter was the Australian Brain Bee Champion in 2019 and the challenges he faced, including difficult time zones, made his result all the more impressive. My thanks to Ramesh Rajan and the Australian Brain Bee Committee for their work in progressing the state rounds of the 2021 challenge over the past few months. The Australian Brain Bee Challenge is an important initiative to encourage neuroscientists of the future.

## **Australasian Course in Advanced Neuroscience**

The Australasian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN) provides an outstanding opportunity for early and mid-career researchers to gain hands on experience in a wide range of cellular neuroscience methods from some of the world's leading neuroscientists. Led by Director Prof Chris Reid, ACAN was to be held at the Florey Institute from 25 July to 14 August. Again, the pandemic left no option than to defer the in-person course to next year, but Chris and the Co-Directors, Karl Iremonger, Lucy Palmer, Ian Forster and Jay Bertran-Gonzalez opted to deliver a shorter 2 week online course from 11 to 22 October. Course fees were refunded and a program of morning lectures and interactive discussions covered the majority of the topics that would have been addressed in the original course. Despite the challenges of virtual learning, the student responses were very positive. Our thanks to Chris and his team for being so adaptable this year and I know that they are looking forward to offering the full ACAN course in 2022.

## **Membership**

Thank you to the many members who showed their continued support for the society by renewing their membership this year. While there are many benefits of membership, one of the biggest incentives is the substantial discount for attending the in person Annual Scientific Meeting, which isn't available this year. We therefore particularly value the ongoing support of our members.

## **ANS 2021 Online Conference and Annual General Meeting**

The ANS 2021 Conference will be delivered free (ANS members only) and online on 6th December 2021. The program will include an outstanding range of talks from the winners of the ANS named awards and lectures, as well as hosting the finals of the 3 Minute Thesis competition. Please reserve the date for a jam-packed program of outstanding neuroscience.

The late afternoon will see our Annual General Meeting. Details of the AGM will be sent separately to members, and I want to thank in advance those who have offered to serve their fellow neuroscientists on the Council and Executive. Following the AGM, 2014 Nobel Prize recipient Prof Edvard Moser will present a lecture outlining his work on discovering hippocampal place cells that provide a positioning system for the brain.

## Message from the Secretary

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The ANS has four annual awards, the A.W. Campbell, Mark Rowe, Nina Kondelos, and Paxinos-Watson Awards. It was very encouraging to see the number and quality of the nominations/applications for these awards this year.

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There are certainly some amazing neuroscientists doing fascinating and very impressive research in our region, and ANS is proud to have them as members! I want to thank the current membership of the ANS Council for the efforts they put into assessing the numerous applications (and also Claire Shepherd of Neuroscience Research Australia who kindly assisted one of our assessment panels). The winners of all of the awards will be announced at our Annual General Meeting although you can read about two of them already elsewhere in this newsletter.

Immediately before the announcement of the ANS Award winners, former ANS President Prof Laurie Geffen will deliver a 30 minute presentation on 'Australasian Neuroscience Pioneers'. Laurie has informed us he will,

***"...concentrate on the contributions of some of the pioneers that preceded the Society. In it I will be discussing the contributions of Lorna Forster, James Wilson, Elliot Smith, Alfred Wallace, Raymond Dart, and John Eccles."***

I am looking forward to seeing his presentation and as many ANS members as possible at ANS2021 and our AGM.

Michael  
Lardelli

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ANS Secretary  
[michael.lardelli@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:michael.lardelli@adelaide.edu.au)

# ANS2021 (online)

I would like to invite all ANS members to join us online for ANS2021 on December 6th. We have secured an impressive line-up of neuroscience presenters, and registration is free for ANS members.

Nobel laureate, Professor Edvard Moser, will lecture on the topic of 'Neural population dynamics of the entorhinal cortex'. Professors Linda Richards, Clare Parish, Bernard Balleine and Lars Ittner will deliver lectures on diverse topics that span molecular, cellular and behavioural neuroscience, and we are pleased to feature research presentations by Dr Christina Mo and Professor Elizabeth Coulson – this year's recipients of the ANS AW Campbell and Nina Kondelos Awards. To increase audience participation in this online meeting, each of our speakers has agreed to take questions at the end of their presentations.

I am pleased that ANS student members have embraced the 2021 ANS three minute thesis competition, and finalists will showcase the quality and breadth of our student research as part of ANS2021 online. Conference attendees will be asked to cast their votes to help us decide the winner!

The society's annual general meeting will be held in the afternoon, allowing the ANS Council to report on the activities of ANS throughout 2021, announce ANS prize winners and acknowledge the significant service by our membership. Professor Laurie Geffen will also give a short presentation on 'Australasian Neuroscience Pioneers'.

I look forward to seeing you online!

**Kaylene Young**

*Conference Executive Chair*  
[kaylene.young@utas.edu.au](mailto:kaylene.young@utas.edu.au)



## ANS2021 Online Conference & AGM

**Monday 6th December 2021**  
(Australian Eastern Daylight Savings Time)

Sponsored by:



illumina®



Register now by following the zoom link and entering your name and email address:  
[https://utas.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAsfu2gqj8vHtDI6veYXq\\_d-uR0EV5Nq4h-](https://utas.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAsfu2gqj8vHtDI6veYXq_d-uR0EV5Nq4h-)

This will also add the conference to your calendar.

*Program listed overleaf.*

November 2021

# ANS2021 (online)



Australasian  
Neuroscience  
Society

ANS2021

Online Conference & AGM

## Program

08:45 – 09:00	President's Welcome <b>Prof Peter Schofield</b>	13:15 – 14:10	Lawrie Austin Plenary Lecture <b>Prof Clare Parish</b> , Florey Institute of Neuroscience & Mental Health <i>Next generation stem cells therapies for Parkinson's Disease</i>
09:00 – 09:55	ANS Plenary Lecture <b>Prof Bernard Balleine</b> , University of New South Wales <i>The cortical and striatal circuits subserving goal-directed action</i>	14:10 – 14:40	Finalists for the ANS student body 3-minute thesis competition
09:55 – 10:25	2021 AW Campbell Award Lecture <b>Dr Christina Mo</b> , University of Chicago <i>Transthalamic cortical pathways – underappreciated routes of information processing</i>	14:40 – 15:00	Afternoon tea break sponsored by the Tasmanian Accident Commission
10:25 – 10:35	Morning tea break sponsored by the Tasmanian Accident Commission	15:00 – 17:00	ANS Annual General Meeting
10:35 – 11:30	Elsbeth McLachlan Plenary Lecture <b>Prof Linda Richards</b> , Queensland Brain Institute <i>Wiring the brain for interhemispheric communication</i>	15:00 – 15:30	<b>Prof Laurie Geffen</b> 'Australasian Neuroscience Pioneers'
11:30 – 12:25	Eccles Plenary Lecture <b>Prof Lars Ittner</b> , Macquarie University <i>TBA</i>	15:30 – 16:00	ANS Award announcements & winners of ANS 3MT competition
12:25 – 12:40	Lunch break sponsored by the Tasmanian Accident Commission	16:00 – 17:00	AGM business
12:40 – 12:45	Launch of the <b>ANS-Illumina Neurogenetics Research Award</b> .	17:00 – 18:15	International Plenary Lecture <b>Nobel Laureate, Prof Edvard Moser</b> <i>Neural population dynamics of the entorhinal cortex</i>
12:45 – 13:15	2021 Nina Kondelos Plenary Lecture <b>Prof Elizabeth Coulson</b> , Queensland Brain Institute <i>Causes and consequences of cholinergic degeneration with a focus on dementia</i>		

# 3MT Competition

Three minute thesis competition held by the Australasian Neuroscience Society.



## Australasian Neuroscience Society

# 3 Minute Thesis

**Open to ANS Postgraduate Student Members**

Promote your research by competing in the 3MT® Competition held as part of the ANS2021 Online Meeting.

**HOW DO I ENTER?**  
Register your interest and upload your 3MT® recording by scanning the QR code below or following this link <https://bit.ly/2Z1SfSN>. Submissions are due no later than **November 17th, 2021!**

**FINAL COMPETITION**  
Eight finalists will be selected to present at ANS2021 Virtual Conference held on **Monday 6th of December, 2021.**

**1st Place: \$500**      **2nd Place: \$350**      **3rd Place: \$150**

*This competition is subject to the 3MT Virtual Competition Rules available on the UQ website.*

Image by Aws Ahmed



# ANS EMCR Collaboration Hub

Dear ANS EMCRs and ANS members, We welcome you to register to attend the virtual ANS EMCR Collaboration Hub. At this event you will hear important insights on scientific collaboration from world leaders in neuroscience, Prof Alan Finkel, Prof Trent Woodruff, and Prof Cathy Stinear (see attached for speaker bios).

**Date:**

3/12/2022

**Time:**

2:00 – 3:30 pm AEDT (NSW/VIC/ACT)

**Location:**

Zoom (details provided after registration)

**Register here:**

<https://forms.gle/U7HHkUjw6h8VeCEG6>

Here is a preview of Prof Alan Finkel's *Shades of Collaboration* speech:

***Alan will describe what he values in collaboration, what concerns him about overemphasis on collaboration, and the secrets he has learned from his years in research, business and providing policy advice to governments.***

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Rebecca San Gil. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Rebecca  
San Gil

*on behalf of the  
ANS EMCR Committee*  
[r.sangil@uq.edu.au](mailto:r.sangil@uq.edu.au)

3rd December  
2.00 – 3.30 pm AEDT  
(NSW/VIC/ACT)

Australasian  
Neuroscience  
Society

zoom

## ANS 2021 EMCR Collaboration Hub

Prof Alan Finkel    Prof Trent Woodruff    Prof Cathy Stinear

The banner features three circular portraits of the speakers: Prof Alan Finkel, Prof Trent Woodruff, and Prof Cathy Stinear. The background is dark blue with a white central area containing the event details and logos.



# ACAN 2021 Report

The Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN) was held online from Monday the 11th to Friday the 22nd of October 2022. 2021 was an eventful year. It was challenging with the continued changes in times and the eventual cancelation of the hands on course.

However, ACAN 2021 did go ahead and the online course was a success. Much of the preparation completed in 2021 will flow to 2022 where we expect to hold a full hands-on course at the Florey Institute.

Some of the feedback clearly highlights the ongoing success of the course, even during a pandemic.

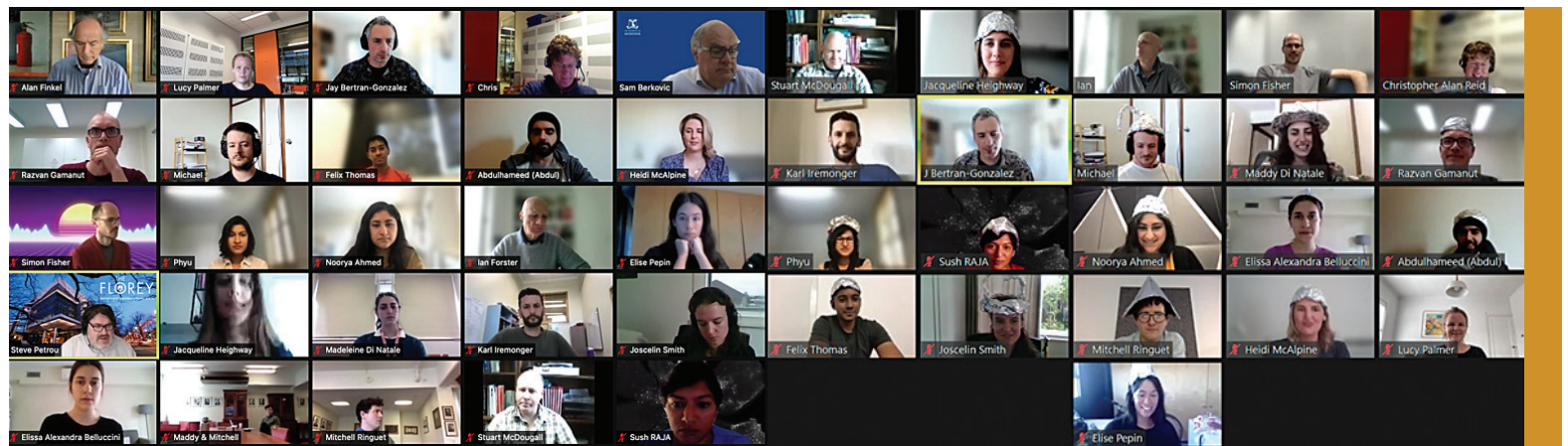
*"I enjoyed the flow of the course – It was carefully thought out and moved from the fundamental principles of electrophysiology to the current trends in correlate measures of neural activity really nicely. It provided me with a lot of the background I'd been lacking in terms of electrophysiology and opened my eyes to new imaging techniques and the new technological 'flavours' that neuroscientists are using and where the field is likely heading."*

*"The lecturers were amazing!! The organizers were amazing. I would have loved to meet all of you in person. The pairing up of students to lecturers with roughly the same research focus was brilliant."*

*"Thank you to all the organizers. In the difficult circumstances I don't think it could have been run any better. The format and length were perfect."*

We thank everyone involved and the ACAN Board of Directors Chris Reid, Lucy Palmer, Ian Forster, Jay Bertran-Gonzalez, Karl Iremonger

The Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN) was held online, covering a variety of techniques, theories, and information presented by leading experts in the field.



# ACT Brainteaser

COVID-19 is pushing us towards the digital world of outreach, but this has provided unique opportunities for public engagement. Brain Teaser 2021 was an event organised by five PhD students from the Eccles Institute of Neuroscience at ANU as a part of National Science Week 2021.



This event was held to bridge the gap between neuroscientists and the general public, providing them with an approachable platform to learn about their nervous system and brain in a fun and engaging way. Initially the event was supposed to be held in-person during science week with a lot of interesting and interactive demonstrations designed to draw the general public's interest, but it was postponed and moved online due to the COVID-19 lockdown in ACT.

The move to an online format didn't dampen the appetites of the public, with ~100 participants joining on Zoom throughout the rainy Saturday. Presentations from experts in the field and passionate students guided attendees through the inner workings and development of the brain, underpinnings of memory, changes to the nervous system in pathology, and some of the history and methods of neuroscience.

The following week, Brain Teaser hosted a collaborative live event with science communications podcast "The Wholesome Show". Throughout the live podcast, Dr. Rod Lamberts and Dr. Will Grant explored the history of Electroconvulsive Therapy alongside Dr. Shaam Al Abed from the Eccles Institute of Neuroscience, ANU.

Overall, the feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, and this successful event will be run again as part of Science Week in 2022. The value of this initiative didn't go unnoticed and was generously sponsored by both the Australian government initiative "Inspiring Australia" and the Australian National University's Postgraduate and Research Students Association (PARSA).

*ACT Brain Teaser organisers:  
Top left to bottom right:  
Angela Nicoli, Nathan  
Reynolds, Noorya Ahmed,  
Rakshanya Sekar and  
Felix Thomas.*

# International Brain Bee Championships

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On Monday 8th November, 15 year old Peter Susanto from Darwin won 3rd place in the delayed 2020 International Brain Bee Championships. Peter was the Australian Brain Bee Champion in 2019. At the age of 13 and from the Northern Territory, he was the youngest winner of the Australian Bee Challenge and the first ever from the NT. The 2020 International Brain Bee Championships were cancelled because of CoVID-19 and were rescheduled as a virtual online competition in November this year, together with the 2021 International Brain Bee Championship.

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Peter's very fine achievements are especially to be admired considering he was at a huge disadvantage – the finals were held on Sunday 11.30pm – Monday 1.30am, Australian Central Standard Time, and Peter is in the middle of his Year 12 exams, having had exams all week leading up to the IBB and another on Monday at 1.30pm ACST. There was also a last-minute rule change which also affected the contestants who had done the best in the previous day's competition. Despite all this, he went on to prove himself to be a very fine representative for Australia, and for the Australian Brain Bee Challenge. Peter was ably prepared for the IBB finals by Dr Matthew Kirkcaldie from the University of Tasmania and Dan Binks from University of Western Australia. He aspires to enter medical school after Year 12.



*Congratulations to Peter Susanto, who won the 3rd place in the International Brain Bee Championships.*

## ANS SBC

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Are you interested in representing and advocating for postgraduate neuroscience students? Would you like to help organise events for neuroscience students in your region and across Australasia? Looking to expand your scientific career network, boost your CV, and gain invaluable committee experience?

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**The Australasian Neuroscience Society Student Body Committee (ANS SBC) is inviting applications for regional representative and executive (chair, deputy chair, secretary) roles in 2022!**

If this sounds like you, apply now!

- A current student and ANS member and not expecting to finish your PhD in the next 12 months.
- Can attend a minimum of six 1-hour online committee meetings throughout the year.
- Enthusiastic to promote ANS to neuroscience students in your region, and help to encourage membership.
- Prepared to voice the needs of local student members to the SBC.
- Keen to establish a network or local working group of students to help host regional student events (eg. seminars, workshops, social networking events or scientific outreach programs), and to keep ANS student members in your region in the loop about relevant scholarships, workshops etc.

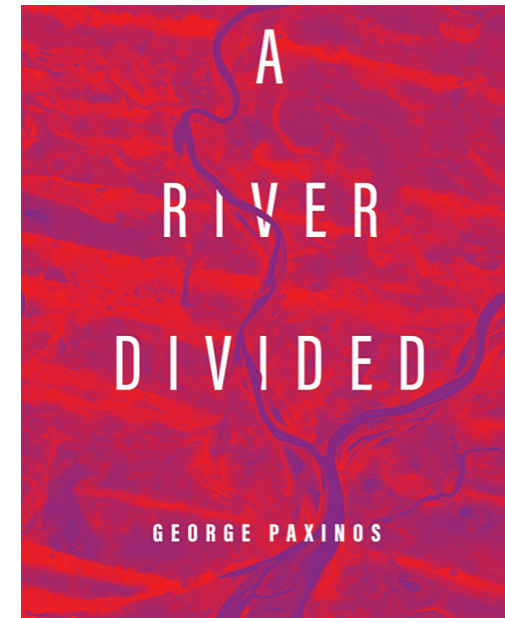
If you are interested in joining the committee, please send through a short bio and expression of interest to [ANS.studentbodycommittee@gmail.com](mailto:ANS.studentbodycommittee@gmail.com) by 10 December 2021. We look forward to hearing from you!

## A Novel by...

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Did you know that Australian neuroscientist George Paxinos who, together with Charles Watson, established the Society's Paxinos-Watson Award, has published 58 books including in the science fiction genre? He has been described as a "master storyteller" and you can find out about his latest novel here.

<https://www.angusrobertson.com.au/books/a-river-divided-george-paxinos/p/9780646846651>



## Communications

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### **Is there information you would like included in our ANS Newsletter, sent out in our monthly ANS Bulletin, posted on our website, or Facebook page, or tweeted?**

ANS has a Communications Committee to help members disseminate information and assist the Society in publicising its activities to Members and the public. This committee is Co-chaired by Dr Nathalie Dehorter (Australian National University) and Dr Marco Morsch (Macquarie University). It oversees the production of the Newsletter and ensures that current content is posted on the ANS website (<http://www.ans.org.au/>), disseminated through the monthly ANS Bulletin email to

members, ANS Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/AusNeuroSoc>; curated by Dr Nathalie Dehorter) and disseminated through the ANS Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/AusNeuroSoc>; postings by Dr Lila Landowski, University of Tasmania) and LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8362021/>; curated by Prof Thomas Fath).

If you have content for us, please email Marco Morsch ([marco.morsch@mq.edu.au](mailto:marco.morsch@mq.edu.au)).

### **Become an ANS member or student member!**

Please join with your colleagues in Australian and New Zealand by becoming a Member of ANS. You can join online at any time (<https://tas.currinda.com/register/organisation/172>).

## Policy

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### **ANS Policy on Requests for Publicity via Email, Newsletter, or ANS Bulletin Circulation**

The policy of ANS is to minimise email traffic to members. Advertisements for meetings and other significant announcements such as job vacancies can be added to the website and included in the Newsletter and monthly Bulletin if appropriate. Such requests should be directed to the ANS Secretary.

## Newsletter Editor

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