

July 2020



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Australasian Neuroscience Society Newsletter



Professor Marcello Costa and Professor Perry Bartlett received the Order of Australia for Neuroscience in 2020.

Notifications

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 and follow updates on the ANS

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

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

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Sponsors *(we thank our Society partners)*

- 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, Australian National University
- 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

Become an ANS member

Australasian Neuroscience Society

Why be a member?

The Australasian Neuroscience Society (ANS) is the largest network of neuroscientists and the peak neuroscience body in Australia and New Zealand. ANS leads and fosters excellence in neuroscience research and teaching, as well as the application of neuroscience discovery for the benefit of society. Membership of ANS provides a multitude of career-enhancing benefits at all levels of seniority.

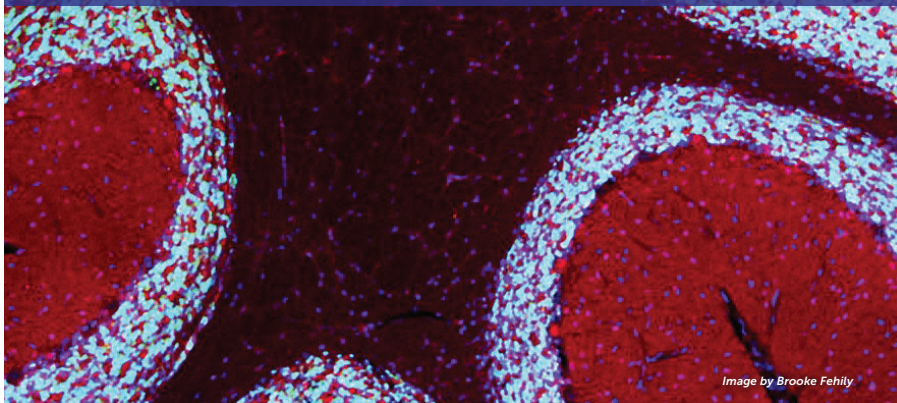


Image by Brooke Fehily

Benefits of ANS membership

- Enhance your career with education and networking opportunities
- Apply for ANS Research Awards available at all career levels
- Reduced registration rates to support your participation in the annual ANS conference
- Organise national conference symposia and nominate Plenary speakers
- Access State-based funding for local neuroscience events
- Global partner benefits including special registration rates at sister society conferences, such as FENS and SfN
- Be part of the Australian Brain Alliance, supporting neuroscience nationally and internationally
- Professional training opportunities locally and special access to courses offered internationally
- Participate in awareness activities in the public and political arenas
- Access resources and training for neuroscience teaching
- Support diversity in neuroscience
- Post and access free job and PhD position ads on our website
- Quarterly newsletter
- Career development opportunities for your research students



To become a member or find out more visit: www.ans.org.au

Message from the President

I'd like to begin this message by thanking all those who have renewed their membership in ANS for the coming year. It is greatly appreciated, and I hope that you are actively promoting the value of membership to your colleagues as well, as we still have quite a way to go before returning to last year's total

Our strength comes from our numbers, and simply put, how much we can give back depends on the size of our membership. But I'm preaching to the converted, and so thank you once again for your continued connection with, and participation in, ANS and its activities.

I also want to thank the 196 people who took our survey! As surveys go, I think this is an outstanding effort. More will be said in the newsletter below, but I will summarise a few key points. First, we had a good spread of responses from people of different ages and different career stages, and with approximately equal numbers of males and female responders. Right there I think that says something very positive about the Society. The percentage of those Strongly Agreeing or Agreeing with statements included: Good value for membership (49%, clearly a work-on here), the conference is a good networking event (77%), the conference showcases the best of our neuroscience (77%), the conference has been good value for money (48%, another work-on then). Importantly for going forward: Intending to attend a webinar (72%), and intending to next go to an ANS conference: 2021 (70%). We very much hope that latter prediction is

true, and that the situation in Victoria and across our two countries will settle to allow that. The full survey results will be made available in the Members' Only area of our website. The Equity and Diversity committee will be parsing the data on the effects of the pandemic and planning next steps.

Speaking of the webinars, I want to congratulate our Comms team, our conference Executive Chair Kaylene Young, along with Rebecca San Gil, EMCR committee chair, on getting our ANS2020 Online Webinar series up and running. The presentations have been outstanding, and well worth tuning in to. We are now actively seeking a sponsor for the series as well. Do keep an eye out for notices re the upcoming events.

From our recent Council meeting, I am pleased to report that we have agreed to retain The Association Specialists as our Secretariat for the Society for a further year. Early next year we will be undertaking a process of taking tenders for the Secretariat role to make sure we are getting the best service, at the best value for money. We are also undertaking a reform of policies, and these will be posted in the Members' Only area of the website as each is approved by Council.

One aspect of our ANS leadership is that there is always some turnover, so opportunities for you to contribute to the Society and develop your leadership skills routinely present themselves. We will shortly be advertising for nominations for the Treasurer and Secretary positions, and I believe both the Equity and Diversity Committee and the Animals in Teaching and Research Committee are looking for new Chairs. Don't be afraid to put your hand up! Get in touch with me if you are interested in any of these roles or want to learn more.

Finally, I hardly need to say that we continue to live in a rapidly changing social and scientific environment. Despite the upsurge in cases in Victoria, we need to take some relief that, at the time of writing at least, Australia and New Zealand are both in a much better situation than four months ago, with many of us back to a semblance of normal work. Still, the situation in Victoria at the time of writing puts our research endeavours there in a state of continued disruption, and we commiserate with our colleagues in Melbourne in particular as the battle continues. The rest of the states, and New Zealand, I'm sure are trying to apply the lessons learned. Now more than ever, society needs to have science operating, and to be seen to be operating. Neuroscience is one of the shining lights in that research environment that we need to keep sparkling in the eyes of government, the public and internationally.

Stay strong, and keep supporting each other.



Prof Cliff
Abraham

PhD, President, ANS
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Order of Australia

A big congratulations from all of us at ANS to Professor Perry F Bartlett and Professor Marcello Costa, who were awarded the Order of Australia this year's Queen's Birthday Honours list.



*Professor
Perry Bartlett*

As a pioneering neuroscientist, **Professor Perry Bartlett** has made ground-breaking progress in the discovery of how the human brain can be regenerated through stimulating the production of new nerve cells. Perry discovered the brain could produce new nerves in 1992, overturning traditional dogma and transforming the way we think of the brain. Once considered a static organ, the brain is now understood as an ever-evolving body part that can produce new nerve cells capable of altering learning, memory and mood. In 2003, Perry founded the Queensland Brain Institute at the University of Queensland, and through his leadership and vision, it has become one of the world's leading neuroscience institutes with over 500 staff. Perry and his team now have their sights set on slowing down dementia by activating stem cells to produce new nerves. With dementia currently affecting one in three adults over the age of 85, Perry's work has the potential to change the lives of many older Australians.



*Professor
Marcello Costa AO FAA*

Professor Marcello Costa AO FAA, from Flinders University, has made innumerable contributions to science and education. His particular research focus has led to major advances in the autonomic neural control of internal organs, particularly the gastrointestinal tract and enteric nervous system. He wrote with Professor John Furness the book "The Enteric Nervous System" that is now considered one of the bibles of the neural control of the gut. Marcello played a major role in developing numerous meetings and societies, including the South Australian Neuroscience Institute (SANI) and conceiving the Australian Neuroscience Society (ANS) itself, which had its first formal meeting in 1980. Marcello has been an unwavering supporter of the ANS and was indeed the President of the ANS in the early 1990's. He was elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Scientists (FAA) in 1988.

News from SA

Renée Turner and Lyndsey Collins-Praino have received a \$5000 Community Grant from National Science Week South Australia in order to take their popular Kids Navigate Neuroscience event virtual.

They will be producing a magazine for children that will introduce basic neuroscience concepts, with fun games that families can do at home to illustrate these (like building a brain from play dough, synaptic ping pong, action potential leap frog, etc.). They will also be shining a spotlight on neuroscience research happening in South Australia. Magazines will be placed into take-home packs with supplies to complete the activities and will be distributed to families at several regional libraries. Then, during National Science Week, they will run a live Zoom event to do the activities together and to answer questions, have a neuroscience quiz, etc. They are very excited as this will allow them to reach a regional audience that they have not been able to engage with previously.

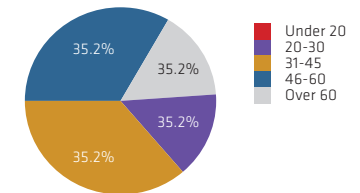
ANS Survey Results

The president has shared the latest ANS survey results with us and we wanted to include a few more of the outcomes with the Society.

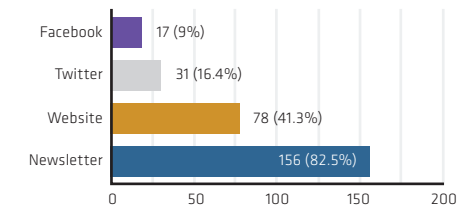
The ANS Equity and Diversity Committee has included several questions to the recent online survey related to the impacts of COVID-19 on ANS members. The goal has been to measure the impacts that COVID-19 disruptions have had on the careers of all of our members, with the added goal of gauging whether these impacts have been uneven across career stage or gender lines. We will add these results to a growing number of such surveys across institutions and disciplines, and depending on the outcomes, may use them to push for actions from universities, funding agencies, and government. Thanks to E&D Committee member A. Prof. Lyndsey Collins-Praino for her leadership on this initiative.

Summary of the results

Age range (196 responses):

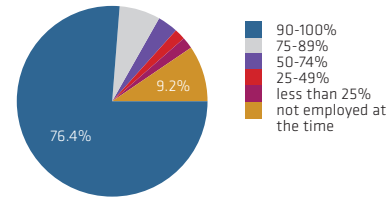


Which of the following do you use to stay current with ANS activities & membership opportunities (189 responses):

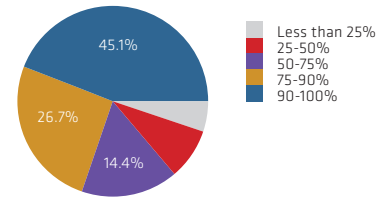


(ANS Survey Results... continued)

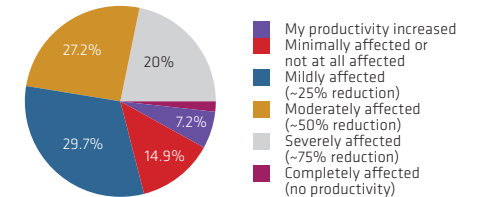
Just prior to the pandemic, were you employed in an academic/research setting? (195 responses):



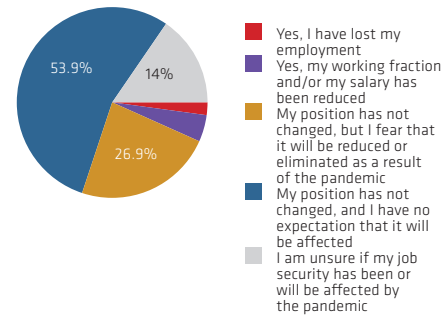
During the closures and disruptions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, what percentage of your normal working hours were you able to maintain? (195 responses):



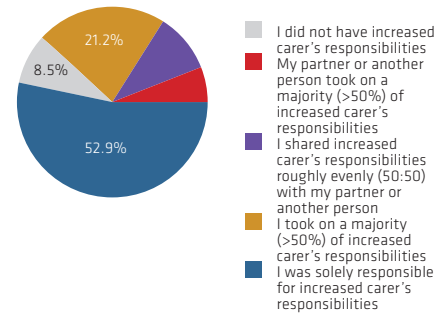
During the closures and disruptions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, how was your research productivity (data collection, grant/fellowship writing, manuscript preparation) impacted? (195 responses):



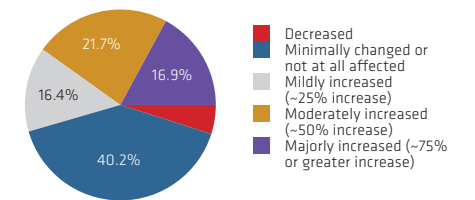
Is the security of your job affected by COVID-19 pandemic? (193 responses):



During the closures and disruptions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic: (189 responses):



During the closures and disruptions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, how was your teaching and/or administration burden impacted? (189 responses):



ANS2020 Online



Although we are unable to come together in Perth for ANS2020, the ANS membership will still be able to share their research through our new initiative, ANS2020 Online - a series of online neuroscience focused events that we will host throughout the year. This exciting new initiative includes presentations from long-standing members and new student members alike, and will allow time for your questions!

Monday 3rd August (12pm Australian EST)

EMCR Webinar

Zoom ID: 97660177170

Chair: Juliette Cheyne

Speakers:

- Dr Eduardo Albornoz Balmaceda, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Queensland: Peripheral immune contributions to neuroinflammation.
- Mr Simon Maksour, PhD Candidate, Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute, University of Wollongong: Expression profiling REST and RCOR genes in neurogenesis using 2D and 3D human pluripotent stem cell models.
- Dr Yukti Vyas, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Auckland: Influence of maternal high zinc diet on the development

of Autism-associated behavioural and synaptic deficits in Shank3-knockout mice.

- Dr Zhi Yi Ong, Postdoctoral Research Fellow: University of New South Wales, Hindbrain noradrenergic circuits in food intake control.

Monday 10th August (1:30-3pm Australian EST)

Brain Development and Regeneration

Zoom ID: 916 0598 2195

Chairs: Virginie Lam and Nathalie Dehorter

Speakers:

- Professor Zoltán Molnár, University of Oxford: High Fives and Low Fives – molecular, cellular and histological perspectives of cortical neurons during development.
- Professor Orly Reiner, Weizmann Institute of Science: Models, Mice and Cortical Malformations.
- Dr Saskia Freytag, UWA: Genetic Factors for Cortical Malformations.
- Dr Julian Heng, Curtin: What Functional Impact? Towards Precision Diagnosis, Mechanistic Dissection and Human Impact for Cortical Malformations.

Monday 14th September (12pm Australian EST)

Digital approaches to neuroscience education

Chairs: Alison Canty and Kristin Hillman

Speakers:

- Prof Charles Watson, University of New South Wales and the University of Queensland: Internet-based resources for neuroscience education.

- A/Prof Alison Canty, University of Tasmania: Moving the classroom online to teach the neuroscience of dementia in video format.
- A/Prof Lyndsey Collins-Praino, University of Adelaide: Game On! The use of gamification in neuroscience teaching to increase engagement and improve student outcomes.
- Professor Ramesh Rajan, Monash University: What does a coherent package of online materials need to have to promote metacognitive self-reliance in learning neuroscience?

Monday 12th October

Molecular insights into neuropsychiatric disorders

Speakers:

- Prof Cecilia Flores, McGill University, Canada: Drugs of abuse in adolescence target the Netrin-1/DCC system to disrupt prefrontal cortex development.
- Prof Helen Cooper, Queensland Brain Institute: Understanding the role of actin-related autism genes in cortical development.
- Dr Nathalie Dehorter, Australian National University: Overcoming the Cognitive and Motor Deficits in the Cntnap2 Mouse Model of Autism.
- Prof Jozef Geacz, University Of Adelaide: Stop the nonsense: Nonsense-mediated mRNA decay as a cellular 'mRNA policeman' and a fundamental regulator of brain development and function.

July 2020

ANS2020 Online... continued)

The full program and further information for ANS2020 Online can be [accessed here](#). The series will conclude on Wednesday 9th December with an extended event that will include the Eccles Plenary Lecture (Prof Kate Drummond), the A.W Campbell Plenary Lecture (Dr Philip Ryan), the Nina Kondelos Award Lecture (Prof Erica Fletcher) and the ANS Annual General Meeting.

Thank you very much to our ANS members that participated in the first ANS EMCR Webinar in June. It was a successful event and each of the speakers, Joanna Yau, Paul Marshall, and Iris Wang, gave excellent presentations. If you missed this webinar, a link to the full recording with timestamps is available in the [ANS members-only](#) section of the ANS website.

We are looking for EMCR speakers (0-10 years post-PhD) who are motivated to conduct a 15 min presentation for the ANS membership on December 7, 2020. If you have questions or would like to present please get in touch with the ANS EMCR Committee Chair (Rebecca San Gil, r.sangil@uq.edu.au).

ANS Developmental Neuroscience Forum

ECR/MCR members of ANS, are you interested in developmental neuroscience research? If YES, then we welcome you to sign up (see below) for virtual events in the upcoming ANS Developmental Neuroscience Forum (ADNF)!

Who we are: We are members of the Australasian Neuroscience Society (ANS), with an interest in developmental neuroscience. Our mission is to provide year-long engagement for ANS members and our colleagues all over the world.

What we do: (i) monthly virtual symposia (4 speakers over a 2h session) comprising national and international speakers, and with gender and equity targets; (ii) hold regular morning/afternoon teas, depending on where you are in Australasia/the World; (iii) provide peer-to-peer exchange of ideas and panel discussions.

The target audience is EMCR/MCR, as the ADNF is a forum through which early and mid-career researchers can promote their emerging developmental neuroscience research excellence and learn from experienced practitioners as well. We, the programming committee, are making sure that there is very strong representation of ANS EMCR and MCR as speakers.



How to participate: [Sign up](#) here to join our mailing list for full details of presentations and speakers. We also encourage members to nominate speakers for this series, or even nominate yourself to speak about one of your exciting projects which you have published as a pre-print, or recently online.

Join the ADNF, as audience member as well as speaker!

Best wishes,
The ADNF team

**Kelly
Glendining**

ADNF Team Member

**Nathalie
Dehorter**

ADNF Team Member

Julian Heng

ADNF Team Member

Michael Piper

ADNF Team Member

Call for Nominations to ANS Executive & Council

Positions on the ANS Executive and Council will become vacant at the 2020 AGM, and nominations (including self-nominations) are now invited from the membership.

The positions that will be available are the following:

- Treasurer
- Secretary
- New South Wales Representative
- New Zealand Representative
- Queensland Representative
- South Australia Representative
- Tasmania Representative
- Victoria Representative

Details of these roles can be obtained from the Secretary. Should more than one nomination be received per position, a member vote will be held prior to the AGM.

The current Victoria Representative, Tony Hannan, has indicated that he will re-nominate for the position. Details of these roles can be obtained from the Secretary. Should more than one nomination be received per position, a member vote will be held prior to the AGM. If you are a current member and wish to nominate for any of the above positions, please email the ANS Secretary, Thomas Fath (thomas.fath@mq.edu.au), with your name and contact details, stating the position for which you are nominating.



Deadline for nominations:
COB Monday September 7th, 2020.

*Audience at the
ANS Meeting in 2019*

If more than one nomination is received for a position, a vote by the ANS members will ensue.

We are also inviting expressions of interest for the Chair positions of the Animals in Research Committee and the Equity and Diversity Committee. Please e-mail any EOI for these Chair positions to the ANS Secretary.

July 2020

Communications

Do you have information that you would like included in our ANS newsletter, posted on our website or Facebook page or tweeted?

ANS has a communications committee to help members disseminate information and help the Society publicise 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), and will oversee the production of the newsletter and ensure that current content is posted on the ANS website (<http://www.ans.org.au/>), 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 Omar Ibrahim (oe.abdelrahman@qut.edu.au) or Marco Morsch (marco.morsch@mq.edu.au).

The copy deadline for the next Newsletter is Monday 14th September 2020.

We encourage everyone to check out the ANS website.

www.ans.org.au



Policy

ANS Policy on Requests for Publicity via Email 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 if appropriate. Such requests should be directed to the ANS Secretary.

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