Australasian Society
for Continental Philosophy

Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy
Annual General Meeting 2023 (University of Sydney), 29 November 2023

Chair's Report

Prepared by Dimitris Vardoulakis

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2023
Chair: Dimitris Vardoulakis (Western Sydney University)
Deputy Chair: Robert Sinnerbrink (Macquarie University)
Treasurer: Charles Barbour (Western Sydney University)
Secretary: Marilyn Stendera (University of Wollongong)
International Liaison: Daniel Brennan (Bond University)
Conference Officers: Joe Hughes (University of Melbourne) and Jacinta Sassine (Western Sydney University)
Communications Officers: Brigid Martin (Macquarie University) and Joeri Mol (University of Melbourne)
Public Officer: Charles Barbour (Western Sydney University)
Government/Institutional Representatives: Marguerite La Caze (University of Queensland) and Lucy Benjamin (University of Melbourne)
Equity and Diversity Officers: Norma Lam-Saw (Western Sydney University)
NZ Representatives: Simone Drichel (Otago University) and Neil Vallelly (Otago University)
ECR Representatives: Thomas Corbin (Macquarie University) and Annie Sandrussi (Macquarie University)
Postgraduate Representatives: Luke Monks (Macquarie University) and Caitlyn Lesiuk (Deakin University)
Web Coordinator: James Garrett (Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy)

1. Acknowledgement of country

The ASCP would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which our conference is taking place. We respectfully acknowledge the Elders, past and present and acknowledge their 60,000 year unceded occupation of these lands.

2. The work of the Executive in 2023 (overview)

The Executive focused on

- expanding the Executive
- establishing new processes to enhance efficiency
- consolidating gains from last year's participation in the CHASS Congress conference, while planning for making the conference more sustainable in the future
- establishing the Advisory Board, as promised in last year's AGM
- continuing to policies and action plans to implement them (most of the work this year has been on developing schemes to support ECRs)
- persisting with external collaborations (such as with the AAP and with UNSW)

This has been a productive year which has seen an unprecedented number of members involved in the Executive and contributing to the Society.

3. Executive update

We expanded the Executive by promoting the sharing of roles for the Officer positions. The rationale is that this will ease the workload, involve more members in the decision making processes, and ease transition (when the Officers sharing a position have not both started their tenure in the same year). Specifically, we welcomed the following new members to the Executive in 2023:

- Conference Officer: Jacinta Sassine (Western Sydney University) – shared with Joe Hughes
- Communications Officer: Joeri Mol (University of Melbourne) – shared with Brigid Martin
- Equity and Diversity Officer: Norma Lam-Saw (Western Sydney University) – shared with Fiona Jenkins
- Governmental/ Institutional Officer: Lucy Benjamin (University of Melbourne) – shared with Marguerite Le Caze
- ECR Representative: Annie Sandrussi (Macquarie University) – shared with Tom Corbin
- HDR Representatives: Caitlyn Lesiuk (Deakin University) and Luke Monks (Macquarie University)

This has been a positive development for the executive, making it more dynamic and involved.

Thanks to Charles Barbour who is retiring from the role of Treasurer and Fiona Jenkins (EDI Officer) who retired during the year for personal reasons.

4. Administrative Officer

The executive has appointed Christine Polowyj as part-time Administrative Officer, with particular emphasis to help with the conference. Given that the ASCP now shoulders the organizing of the conference on an annual basis, we calculated that the conference committee needs assistance, especially with tasks such as monitoring the conference email, responding to queries, timetabling etc. We are grateful to Christine for her work in 2023.

5. New email and storage system

Following a review, the Executive decided to obtain a Google Workspace account. This gives us the following advantages:

- Easier access
- Multiple email addresses managed through one account
- Better cloud storage
- Customized email addresses

Thanks to James Garrett and Marilyn Stendera for leading this initiative.

6. Constitution changes

The changes proposed seek to optimize the operation of the Society. The most significant changes are to:

1. Allow for votes on urgent matters to be conducted via email
2. Include Members at Large in the Executive
3. Redescribe the position of Postgraduate Representative as Student Representative to include undergraduate students who may want to join the Executive.
4. Redefine the International Liaison Officer as an appointed position.

These are minor changes to optimize the operation of the Executive.

7. Advisory Board

According to §7.4 of the Constitution, the Society is to have an Advisory Board. We developed a policy about the Advisory Board, and started its establishment. We decided to have a Board of around 10 members, and to establish it over a period of 3 years, so that the appointments will be staggered. The Executive appointed 5 members to the Board in 2023:

- Dirk Baltzly (Utas, emeritus)

- Andrew Benjamin – chair (MelbUni, emeritus)
- Richard Colledge (ACU)
- Søren Overgaard (University of Copenhagen)
- Gail Weiss (George Washington University)

We thank Prof Andrew Benjamin who has agreed to be the Chair of the Board.

8. Policy developments

Since 2022, we have been developing a suite of policies that clearly state the principles for the Executive's decision making. Policies are published on https://ascp.org.au/executive/governing-documents
We have developed the following policies in 2023

- ECR Policy
- HDR policy
- Advisory Board policy

These policies are accompanied by plans to implement the principles recorded in the policies. The implementation plans were developed by the relevant Officers in consultation with the Executive.

9. ASCP affiliated journal: *Philosophy, Politics and Critique*

According to §9.4 of the Constitution, the Society is to have an affiliated journal. Since last year, the Society is affiliated with *Philosophy, Politics and Critique* (PPC), a new journal published by Edinburgh University Press. The journal website is: https://www.euppublishing.com/loi/ppc

As detailed in the 2022 Chair's Report, PPC will contain 1 ASCP issue per volume. It will be issue 3, to be published shortly before the annual conference. The first issue of the journal is planned for March 2024.

10. PPC Assistant Editors

As per ECR policy, the ASCP is committed to providing training to ECRs to improve their skills and strengthen their CVs. To this effect, PPC has established editorial assistant roles for ECR members of the ASCP. Following an appointment process at the end of 2022, PPC established 4 Editorial Assistant positions:

- Venessa Ercole, managing editorial assistant
- Scott Robinson, editorial assistant working on issue 1 (general issue)
- Lucy Benjamin, editorial assistant working on issue 2 (thematic issue)
- Annie Sandrussi, editorial assistant working on the issue 3 (the ASCP issue)

We thank all four for their work and the service they provide to the ASCP community.

11. ECR Essay Competition – new initiative

The ASCP has established a new ECR Essay Competition. The winning article will be published in the ASCP issue of PPC (issue 1.3 in 2024). The Competition has been announced through the ASCP email list and through social media. The web page announcement is available here: https://ascp.org.au/conference/ecr-essay-competition The text of the announcement is as follows:

> Every ECR participating in the annual ASCP conference is eligible to submit an article version of their presentation for the annual essay prize.
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> - The winning essay will be published in the ASCP issue of *Philosophy, Politics and Critique*.
> - The winner of the essay competition will be officially acknowledged at the AGM and in the annual Chair's report of the year in which the essay is published.
> - The winner of the essay competition will be awarded a free registration at the following year's ASCP conference.
> - The winner of the essay competition will be invited to organize a panel on the themes of the essay at the following year's ASCP conference.
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> To participate in the competition:

1. The paper submitted must be a paper that the author presented at the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy conference
2. The paper must be original work that has not appeared previously in print and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
3. The ECR must submit the full essay for consideration to contact@ascp.org.au by **31 January** following the annual ASCP conference.
4. The submitted essay should include a 200-word abstract, up to five keywords, and conform to the journal's style guide. https://www.euppublishing.com/page/ppc/submissions

Winning papers will be given further feedback for revision prior to publication.
The prize will be judged by members of the ASCP executive and / or the journal's editorial board.
Please direct all questions about the prize to contact@ascp.org.au

An early career researcher is defined as a researcher who graduated from their PhD in the last five years. They are eligible to apply for the prize of publication in Philosophy, Politics and Critique. The prize will be awarded for excellent scholarship engaging with the themes of the journal.

12. Dalton Bursary scheme

There were several applicants for the John Dalton Memorial Bursary. The Bursaries include free registration to the conference, as well as $500 assistance for travel and accommodation. Following a selection process, the ASCP awarded the 2023 to: Robyn Adler, Jai Bentley-Payne, Livia Cocetta, and Kyle Gleadell. Congratulations to all. The ASCP is committed to supporting young scholars to attend our conference.

13. ECR/HDR Mentoring Scheme – new initiative

The ASCP has established a new ECR/HDR mentoring scheme. During the 2023 conference registration, participants were invited to opt into participation in a scheme as either mentor or mentee, to connect HDRs and ECRs with more experienced scholars in order to broaden scholar networks and facilitate career support. This initiative is a practical strategy to deliver on the ASCP's commitment to provide support for ECR career development. The chair thanks the ECR officers Thomas Corbin, Annie Sandrussi and Lucy Benjamin for leading this initiative.

14. Continuing collaboration with AAP

The ASCP has kept in regular communications with the AAP. As a result of this, we:

- Prepared a joint submission with AAP on ARC Review (December 14, 2022) – thanks to Marguerite Le Caze
- jointly issued a public statement about the proposed Dianoia closure at ACU
- co-organized the Marion Tapper plenary panel (included on the last day of the ASCP conference)

We thank the AAP for the collaboration and look forward to furthering the links in the future.

15. ASCP at SPEP

This year's satellite panel at SPEP included a number of HDRs who started their academic career in Australia and who have been members of the ASCP, but who have in the meantime joined doctoral programmes in US Universities. Specifically, the following students who were previously based in Australia were include in the programme for this year's satellite panel:

- Michael Polios (Duquesne University)
- Bahar Teymouri (Vanderbilt University)
- Joshua Visnjic (Villanova University)

We encourage our members to apply to be part of the ASCP satellite panel at SPEP in 2024. An announcement will be issued by the International Liaison Officer in early 2024.

16. Collaborating with UNSW

The ASCP collaborated with the *Critique Now* research group at UNSW on public lecture with Bernard Harcourt at the State Library of NSW, scheduled for November 17, 2023. Unfortunately the lecture was cancelled as Prof Harcourt had to cancel his trip.
We look forward to other opportunities to collaborate with the *Critique Now* research group at UNSW and to forge further collaborations with other philosophy departments.

17. ASCP Conference

The first year of the participating in the CHASS Congress conference was a great success in 2022. The ASCP for the first time exceeded 300 members. The conference was well attended, and the joint keynote with the Women and Gender Studies Association shows the potential for collaborations within the CHASS model. Further, funding from the Vic government contributed to the conference making a profit that has strengthened the Society's budget reserves.

Unfortunately there was no funding from the NSW Government for the 2023 conference.

For the 2023 conference, we organized two collaborations with other associations:

- With the Australian Political Studies Association (APSA), who are co-sponsoring Prof Joanne Faulkner's keynote address. Thanks to Dr Peter Chen for facilitating this collaboration.
- With the Australian Association of Philosophy (AAP) on a plenary panel to celebrate the legacy of Prof Marion Tapper. Thanks to Dr Eliza Godard and Dr Joseph Ulatowski from AAP for making the collaboration on the panel possible.

The Conference Committee in 2023 comprised: Thomas Corbin, Joe Hughes, Jacinta Sassine, Marilyn Stendera, and Dimitris Vardoulakis. We thank them all for their contribution. We also thank Prof Alex Lefebvre, who participated in the Organizing Committee as the host institution's representative.

The programme of the 2023 conference included a series of events for HDRs and ECRs, for this we would like to thank Dr Thomas Corbin and Dr Annie Sandrussi (ECR Officers) and Dr Norma Lam-Saw (EDI Officer) as well as all our members who volunteered their time to make these events possible.

18. CHASS Board

The ASCP is represented on the CHASS Executive Board by Dimitris Vardoulakis. Dimitris was appointed to the Board in early 2022, and then formally elected later in the year for a 2-year term. This ensures that the interests of the ASCP will be strongly represented at CHASS.

19. School students at the ASCP conference

About a dozen students from Epping Boys High School attend part of our conference this year. Thanks to Alison Laird (Head Teacher, Teaching & Learning) who brought the students to our conference, and to Marilyn Stendera, who facilitated the excursion, including granting them gratis entrance. It is wonderful to see young, school-age kids at the annual conference.

20. Conference 2024

Even though participating in the Congress has been a positive experience for the ASCP, the executive has decided that the 2024 will not be held as part of the Congress. This is for practical reason. The Congress next year is held in Perth, while the vast majority of our members are in the East. We decided that it will offer a better service to our members to hold the conference at a location that is easily accessible to most. We look forward to joining the Congress again in 2025.

Next year's ASCP conference will be help at Deakin University, Melbourne, on 2 to 4 December. We thank the Philosophy Department at Deakin University for agreeing to host the 2024 conference.