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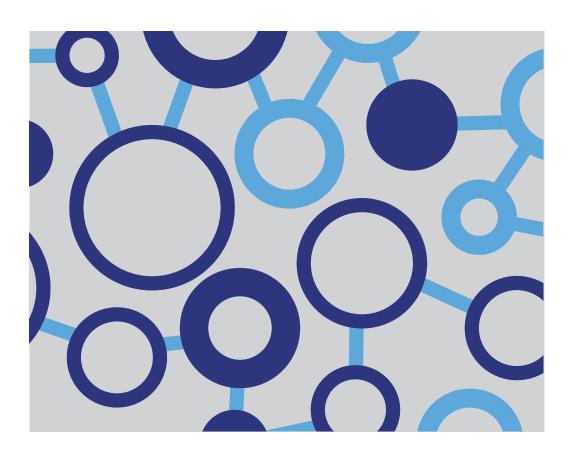
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### Newsletter



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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 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)

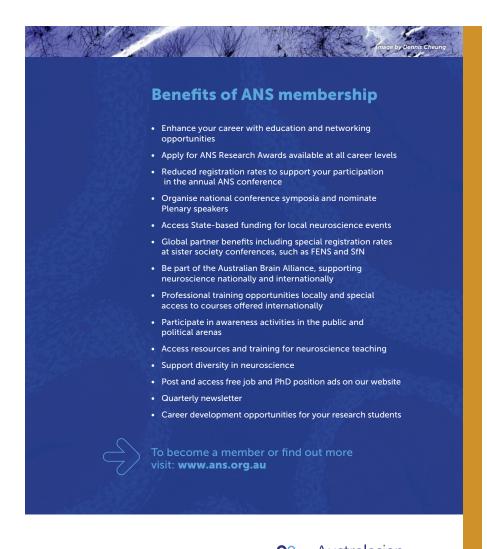
- Melbourne Neuroscience Institute, The University of Melbourne
- Neurological Foundation of New Zealand
- Otago Division of Sciences, University of Otago
- University of Tasmania
- The Florey institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health
- The Eccles Institute of Neuroscience, Australian National University

- 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







### Message from the President

Since the last newsletter, our feature webinar series has really come to life. If you haven't had the chance to tune in yet, do take the time! They're pacy, interesting, and coupled with some very engaging discussions.

It's also pleasing to see that researchers are lining up to take part in the upcoming Early and Mid-Career Committee sponsored events as well, and that the Student Body Committee has jumped into the frame with their online 3-minute thesis competition concept. We're also very grateful to Illumina for their generous sponsorship of the series. The adaptability and resilience of our Society's membership, and its desire to stay connected, is a tribute to the quality of the people involved. And our research continues to be at the leading edge of the field, as one quickly finds out if you search on publications from Australia and New Zealand.

Speaking of people, I would like to pay a special tribute to Stephen Williams, who has stepped down as ACAN Director. Stephen has been a supremely dedicated and conscientious Director who has built on the excellent earlier efforts of John Bekkers, continuing with the outstanding programme of speakers and laboratory bench experience while including for example the introduction of 2-photon microscopy and in vivo imaging. It is a real pity that the 2020 course had to be cancelled, in this his swansong year. But his energy, ideas, and rigour have provided the platform for the next phase of ACAN, which will be led by Chris Reid, and held at the Florey, at least in 2021. This new site for the course offers many advantages, and together with the leadership team that Chris has put together, I'm sure that ACAN will continue to thrive and provide the modern training that so many ANS members have now enjoyed the benefits of.

As I alluded earlier in the year, 2020 is a special year for ANS because it marks the 40th anniversary of the Society. Celebrations planned for the Perth conference have unfortunately been sidelined. However past-President

Laurie Geffen, together with Julian Heng, have been putting together an excellent history of the Society over these 40 years, drawing on the memories of many past Presidents. It will be great for ANS to have its written history all in one place, and we appreciate the efforts of all involved. We'll let you know once it goes up on our website later in the year, hopefully in time for our end of year online conference.

2020 has been a year where the unexpected pandemic has slashed dramatically at the hopes that we all began the year with. But at the time of writing, I can feel a slow turn of optimism as both New Zealand and Australia recover from renewed outbreaks that beset our countries in July and August. And now possible trans-Tasman travel is back in the news I see. Let us hope that it comes sooner rather than later, and that we can pick up where we left off after the Adelaide conference. enjoying fully the fruits and benefits of trans-Tasman interactions and collaborations. And maybe that can include addressing the current opportunity. and need, to investigate the neurological sequelae of having had Covid-19, which is attracting interest on both sides of the Tasman.

As I sign off on my final "President's message", I would like to take the opportunity to thank the outstanding Executive and Council that I have had the pleasure to work with over the past two years. Despite the many challenges that we have faced during these two years, I can't be more impressed by the professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm of our various committees and their chairs, including the conference local organising

committees. Working together with our Secretariat, The Association Specialists, these groups have evolved the Society's procedures in a number of productive and professional ways that sets a solid foundation for the incoming Executive and for the future of ANS. There is more to be done, of course, but I'm sure that they will rise to the challenge of recovering from the effects of the pandemic. The neuroscientists of Australasia are very special, I've come to learn, and I'm sure that the Society will continue to thrive as long as we keep supporting each other



Prof Cliff Abraham

PhD, President, ANS cabraham@psy.otago.ac.nz

# Gearing up to Reconnect for a stellar ANS meeting in Melbourne 2021

What a year! While scientific meetings globally were thrown into disarray this year, there is light at the end of the tunnel – with that light landing in Melbourne for the Australasian Neuroscience Society (ANS) 41st Annual Meeting to be held 6-8th December 2021 at The Pullman Albert Park.



Taking the reins for the Local Organising
Committee (LOC) will be co-chairs A/Prof. Jess
Nithianantharajah (Florey Institute of Neuroscience
and Mental Health) and Dr Toby Merson (Australian
Regenerative Medicine Institute, Monash Univ.)
supported by an outstanding LOC Team (Assoc./
Prof. Lucy Palmer (Florey Institute), Assoc./Prof.
Elisa Hill (RMIT University), Prof. Zane Andrews
(Monash Univ.), Dr Stephanie Simonds (Monash
Univ.), Dr. Sarah Stephenson (Murdoch Children's
Research Institute), Dr. Michael Lazarou (Monash
Univ.) and Assoc./Prof. Grant Dewson (Walter and
Eliza Hall Institute), with ECR and student members
joining soon.

The Team are excited to welcome the ANS community to Melbourne for an exciting program of neuroscience that will feature a stellar line-up of plenary speakers including Nobel Laureate Prof. Edvard Moser (Kavli Institute for Systems Neuroscience), Prof. Lars Ittner (Macquarie Univ.), Prof. Linda Richards (now at Washington University), Prof. Clare Parish (Florey Institute) and Prof. Bernard Balleine (UNSW). And so much more – including you!

Call for Symposia will start February 2021 and Call for Abstracts in May 2021 so get these dates into your diaries!

ANS 2021 Melbourne promises to be a fantastic timely meeting to reconnect with your colleagues.

We are looking forward to welcome you at the 41st Annual Meeting to be held 6-8th December 2021 in Melbourne

### From Elite Sport to Cutting-Edge Neuroscience: The Game-Changer for an Early Career Researcher

What do rugby and neuroscience have in common? Apparently, nothing. Yet, let me tell you about the journey of the athlete who became a scientist.



Daniel Palmer, PhD candidate, Eccles Institute of Neuroscience, John Curtain School of Medical Research, ANU Daniel Palmer is a PhD candidate in the laboratory of Prof John Bekkers at the Eccles Institute of Neuroscience, The John Curtin School for Medical Research (JCSMR) of The Australian National University (ANU). He finished school in 2006 and moved to Sydney from the south coast of NSW, where he grew up, to pursue a career in professional rugby. To date, he has had an impressive 13-year career as a professional rugby player in teams as ACT Brumbies, Australian Wallabies and even an international career with the FC Grenoble (France). He also has had experience as coach for the ACT Brumbies and Suntory Sungoliath (Japan). Quite impressive.

Dan says he is often asked how he went from rugby to science - it is certainly a rapid change of pace! In the latter years of his rugby career he developed a general interest in science and philosophy, and always found questions around the mind and brain most compelling. In the final couple of years of his rugby career, these interests far surpassed his willingness to run into other humans for a living, so he decided to make the change and to leave the game when he was 25 to start his undergraduate studies at the ANU. He achieved a double-degree in Psychology and Science (Hons), which gave him the flexibility to try different areas of Science, Psychology and Philosophy before deciding to pursue Honours in Neuroscience.

Dan says that he had to develop a work ethic and persistence that has been useful in Neuroscience. He has tutored a few courses during his PhD as well, which he finds has a lot in common with the type of rugby coaching that he did - both require breaking down ideas and concepts, while trying to present them in ways that different people can understand. The rigorous 'bottom-up' approach of Cellular Neuroscience as well as the immediate feedback of electrophysiology experiments appeals to him. Dan mentions that he has always enjoyed trying to understand things at fundamental levels and that now he is able to direct that level of detail to the questions that interest him most. He is currently working on synaptic plasticity and single-cell properties in the piriform cortex. His plan is to keep doing Neuroscience as long as he can!

#### Nathalie Dehorter

ANS ACT representative

### ANS2020 Online

#### Sponsored by



#### Program

19 October (12pm Australian EST)

ANS EMCR Webinar

#### Meeting URL:

https://unisa.zoom.us/j/91997543531?pwd=K3 M4WjB4V0I0NmFoTzZGNEImUVpvQT09

Meeting ID: 919 9754 3531 Password: 876305

**Host:** Brenton Hordacre, University of South Australia. Adelaide. SA

#### Speakers:

- 12.05pm Dr Cherry Mao, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, Modelling of SCN2A encephalopathies using human stem cell-derived neurons
- 12.20pm Sarah Broome, PhD Candidate, University of Technology Sydney, Targeting neuroinflammation in Parkinson's disease
- 12.30pm Dr Stephanie Rayner,
   Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Macquarie
   University, Rapid, unbiased identification
   of protein inclusion components from
   patient post-mortem brain tissue
   using Biotinylation by Antibody
   Recognition (BAR)
- 12.45pm Jessica Moretti, PhD Candidate, Perron Institute for Neurological and Translational Sciences, Concurrent LI-rTMS induces changes in c-fos expression but not behavioural effects during a progressive ratio task with adult ephrin-A2A5-/- mice

9 November (12-1.30pm Australian EST)

Rethinking energy balance – Neural circuits, peptides and mechanisms

#### Meeting URL:

https://utas.zoom.us/j/91315418164?pwd=QVR ROTV6TmF0K3YxZkNPNVJEZGZGQT09

Meeting ID: 913 1541 8164

Password: 655086 Chair: Zhi Yi Ong Speakers:

- Amber L Alhadeff Gut signaling engages coordinated homeostatic and reward circuitry
- Chi Kin (Kenny) Ip Transcriptomic profiling of NPYergic neurons in the central amygdala under chronic stress induced obesity
- Garron Dodd Intranasal Targeting
   Hypothalamic PTP1B and TCPTP Reinstates
   Leptin and Insulin Sensitivity and Promotes
   Weight Loss in Obesity
- Sarah H Lockie Targeting central feeding circuits to improve outcomes in cancer cachexia

**7 December** (12pm Australian EST)

ANS EMCR Webinar

**Host:** Luke McAlary, Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute (IHMRI), University of Wollongong, NSW

Speakers: TBA

### ANS2020 Conference and AGM

Hello ANS members, I would like to invite you to register for the ANS2020 Online Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM).

This event has been sponsored by the Chen Institute, Abcam and Monash University and will be hosted online on 9th December 2020. We are pleased to announce that Prof Kate Drummond will deliver her Eccles Plenary Lecture on 'Quality of Life in Brain Tumour Patients'; our student members will participate in the final of their ANS2020 online - 3 minute thesis competition, and lectures will be delivered by the 2019 and 2020 winners of the Nina Kondelos and A.W. Campbell Awards. Please see the full program and follow the below link to register. I hope to see you there.

Register free today with Zoom: (https://utas.zoom.us/j/96661644804)

#### Kaylene Young

Conference Executive Chair

We thank our sponsors:







#### Program

#### Meeting URL:

https://utas.zoom.us/j/96661644804

Meeting ID: 919 9754 3531

Meeting ID: 966 6164 4804

Password: 797792

#### 10:00-10:15am

Prof Cliff Abraham and A/Prof Kaylene Young ANS President and Conference Executive Chair Welcome Delegates

#### 10:15-10:45am

Chair: Dr Hamid Sohrabi (ANS Regional Representative for WA)

Dr Robyn Brown - 2020 A.W Campbell Award Lecture: Title 'Why do we overeat? Unravelling the neural mechanisms underlying maladaptive eating behaviour'

#### 10:45-11:15am

Chair: Dr Kristin Hillman (ANS Regional Representative for NZ)

Prof Kay Double - 2020 Nina Kondelos Plenary Lecture: Title 'Hiding in plain sight – what does a new pathology mean for Parkinson's disease aetiology?'

#### 11:15-12:15pm:

Chair: Dr Ann-Maree Vallence (Chair of ANS2020 Perth LOC)

Prof Kate Drummond – ANS2020 Eccles Plenary Lecture: Title 'Quality of Life in Brain Tumour Patients - Do we understand it and what can we do ahout it?'

#### 12:15-12:45pm:

Lunch break / Break-out chats

#### 12:45-1:15pm:

Chair: A/Prof Alison Canty (ANS Regional Representative for Tasmania) Dr Philip Ryan – 2019 A.W Campbell Award Lecture: Title 'The neurocircuitry of fluid satiation'

#### 1:15-1:45pm:

Chair: Dr Nathalie Dehorter (ANS Regional Representative for ACT) Prof Erica Fletcher – 2019 Nina Kondelos Plenary

Lecture: Title 'The role of microglia in regulating retinal homeostasis'

#### 1:45-2:30pm:

Chair - Mr Amr Abdeen (ANS Student Representative) PhD student 3-minute thesis finalists

#### October 2020

(ANS2020 Conferenceand AGM ... Continued)

#### 2:30-3:00pm:

Tea break

#### 3:00-5:00pm:

Chair: Prof Thomas Fath (ANS Secretary) ANS Annual General Meeting

Announcement of ANS Award recipients

Announcement of 3MT competition winners A/Prof Jess Nithianantharajah and Dr Tobias Merson, Looking Forward to ANS2021 in Melbourne

Prof Peter Schofield ANS President's Closing Remarks

### 2020 ANS Awards

We are congratulating the recipients of the 2020 Nina Kondelos and A.W. Campbell awards.

The 2020 Nina Kondelos Prize is awarded to Prof Kay Double (Brain and Mind Centre and Discipline of Pharmacology, The University of Sydney). The 2020 A.W. Campbell Prize is awarded to Robyn Brown (Florey Institute of Neuroscience & Mental Health, University of Melbourne. Both recipients will present their award lectures at the online ANS2020 Conference. Please see above for the detailed program of the ANS2020 Conference.



'Brain Bees' at the 39th Annual Scientific Meeting in Adelaide 2019.

### **ACAN 2021**

Covid-19 impact has been far reaching including the cancellation of ACAN 2020. With a strong cohort of students selected and an impressive Faculty ready to teach, this was initially a very difficult decision, although ultimately it would have been taken out of ACANs hands.

ACAN 2020 would have been the last course directed by Stephen Williams. We would like to take this opportunity to recognise Stephen for running ACAN over the last 5 years. This was an amazing course with over 50 students who benefited from his expertise, both technically and theoretically. It really is a lot of work running ACAN and what many don't appreciate is the impact it had on Stephen's laboratory. So from the Australasian Neuroscience community, we wish to express our sincere thanks to him and his lab.

The 2021 course will be directed by Chris Reid with co-directors Karl Iremonger, Lucy Palmer, Jay Bertran-Gonzalez and Ian Forster. Due to the uncertainly of Covid we have decided to run the course in Melbourne. This decision was not taken

lightly given the long association of ACAN with Stradbroke Island. However, given the difficulties in getting commitments from suppliers and organising faculty, it was decided that Melbourne offered the best chance of holding ACAN in 2021. This will certainly be different from the previous ACANs in many aspects but holding the course in Melbourne does offer exciting opportunities.

The team has already worked hard to develop a curriculum to take advantage of what is on offer. The course will be structured into three weeks with each supporting distinct but interrelated themes. Week 1 (Fundamentals of electrophysiology: the excitable cell and synaptic transmission) will be headed by Chris Reid, Karl Iremonger and Ian Forster and focuses on teaching single-cell electrophysiology. Week 2 (Cortical Processing and Neuronal Networks) will be headed by Lucy Palmer and focuses on in vitro and in vivo imaging techniques. Week 3 (Subcortical Systems and Behaviour) will be headed by Jay Bertran-Gonzalez and focuses on neuromodulatory systems and behavioural neuroscience. Our goals are to provide students with hands-on experience across a range of experimental methods and complement this with a theoretical underpinning taught by a world class faculty.

For more details on the course please visit our website (http://ans.org.au/acan). The tentative course dates are: 27th June to 16th of July. There is an opportunity for you to register to a mailing list that will keep you abreast of application timing and any changes in dates. Alternatively, you can join our Twitter account (@ACAN\_Course). We have also introduced an Alumni page on the website. If you are interested in being involved, please contact Alex Tang through acanadministration@ans.org.au.

### The ACAN Team

ACAN is looking for photos to add to the Alumni tab on the ACAN website. If you can contribute please contact Alex Tang through acanadministration@ans.org.au

### Research Highlight

Superior colliculus modulates cortical coding of somatosensory information. It is well established that the cortex sends a direct projection to the superior colliculus.

What is largely unknown is whether (and if so how) superior colliculus modulates activity in the cortex. Dr Saba Gharaei, post-doctoral fellow at the Eccles Institute of Neuroscience at the Australian National University, directly examined this issue, showing for the first time that activation of superior colliculus modifies information processing in somatosensory cortex. Specifically, she shows that optogenetic activation of the superior colliculus changes the input-output relationship of cortical neurons to whisker movement, enhancing whisker responses to low amplitude whisker deflections. While there is no direct pathway from SC to somatosensory cortex, she found that activation of superior colliculus drives spiking in the posterior medial (POm) nucleus of the thalamus via a powerful monosynaptic pathway.

Furthermore, she shows that POm neurons receiving direct input from superior colliculus provide monosynaptic excitatory input to neurons in somatosensory cortex. Importantly, silencing Pom abolished the capacity of superior colliculus to modulate cortical coding of somatosensory information. These findings indicate that superior colliculus, which plays a key role in attention, modulates sensory processing in somatosensory cortex via a powerful di-synaptic pathway through the thalamus.

Gharaei S, Honnuraiah S, Arabzadeh E & Stuart GJ (2020) Superior colliculus modulates cortical coding of somatosensory information. Nature communications 11 (1), 1-14. https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-020-

#### About the first author: Dr Saba Gharaei

15443-1

Saba was awarded a PhD from the University of Sydney in 2016. Since then, she has been a post-doctoral fellow at the Eccles Institute of Neuroscience at the Australian National University. She is supervised by Prof Greg Stuart and Prof Ehsan Arabzadeh and funded by the ARC Centre of Excellence for Integrative Brain Function. Her expertise is in in vivo electrophysiology, optogenetics and behavioural neuroscience.



Dr Saba Gharaei Postdoctoral fellow, The John Curtin School of Medical Research The Australian National University

### Are You Passionate About Teaching?

### Have you had to reconfigure and reflect on your teaching in 2020?

The Neuroscience Education and Outreach (NEO) Committee came together last year as an eight person working committee of the ANS. The committee aims to help ANS members share teaching resources, develop new ideas, and foster excellence in neuroscience education across Australasia.

As one of our initial activities, we're keen to develop an online community for ANS members who are involved with or interested in teaching. This includes developing a site where we can share and/or create teaching resources, discuss classroom tips and tricks, compare neuroscience curricula across Australasian institutions, and foster research into neuroscience teaching. The ANS2020 Online September symposium provided a fantastic avenue to share some initial ideas, and now that the ANS website houses a members-only area this provides a great platform to start building a community.

Other activities towards which the committee are working include a teaching-focused satellite for ANS 2021, and increasing engagement with undergraduate- and youth-driven neuroscience societies.

The promotion of neuroscience through highquality teaching and outreach is part of the ANS' Strategic Plan. We'd like to build momentum in this area across our membership and help develop this element of the Strategic Plan.

We warmly welcome any ideas or suggestions that you may have in relation to neuroscience education, or in relation to how we can best share our collective expertise to enhance teaching quality across Australia and New Zealand.

Wishing you all the best for the final push of the 2020 academic year.

#### Kristin Hillman

Chair, Neuroscience
Education and
Outreach Committee
kristin.hilmann@otago.ac.nz

#### Did you catch the teaching-oriented symposium last month?

Digital Approaches to Neuroscience Education was held on September 14th as part of the ANS2020 Online Program. The four speakers shared some amazing ideas; a recording of the symposium is available in the members-only area of the <u>ANS website</u>.

### ANS Council Newsletter - October Edition

Are you interested in representing postgraduate neuroscience students in your state? 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 valuable committee experience?

Look no further! The Australasian Neuroscience Society Student Body Committee (ANS SBC) is now recruiting for the role of Regional Student Representative across all Australian states and New Zealand. To be eligible, the applicant is a current postgraduate neuroscience research student and an ANS member who is not expecting to complete their degree within the next 12 months.

Key requirements of the role of Regional Student Representative include, but are not limited to:

- Representing the voice of neuroscience research students within your region;
- Promoting ANS to neuroscience students in your region to encourage membership growth;
- Engage the student membership by organising regional student activities and events (e.g. seminars, workshops, etc.);
- Establish collaborations and networks to engage the student membership;

- Work to provide funding for existing local based student events and provide ANS sponsorship of awards at existing neuroscience meetings in your region;
- Aid in the organisation of student activities at the ANS Annual Scientific Meeting;

If you are interested in the position of Regional Representative, please send through your resume and an expression of interest detailing your relevant experiences and what you can contribute to the committee to <a href="mailto:ans.studentbodycommittee@gmail.com">ans.studentbodycommittee@gmail.com</a>. Please note that no applications will be accepted past **November 30th, 2020**.

If you have any further questions, then please do not hesitate contact us at the email listed above.

#### Student Body Committee

A sub-commitee
of the Australian
Neuroscience Society

### SA Representiative Council Member Report

Things have, thankfully, been fairly quiet on the coronavirus front in South Australia. This seems to be promoting some excellent publication efforts by South Australian neuroscientists. A team led by Dr Tim Sargeant at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) but including affiliates from Flinders University and the University of South Australia has published a paper in the leading journal Autophagy showing that aggregates of MAPT/Tau are cleared, primarily, by the autophagy-lysosome axis under the control of the retromer complex. On the funding front, a team of researchers, including University of Adelaide ANS members A/Prof Lyndsey Collins-Praino, A/Prof Renée Turner, and Dr Frances Corrigan, was recently awarded over \$1.9 million to study traumatic brain injury as part of the FIND-TBI study. The study has a focus on the connnection between TBI and neurodegenerative disease. More details are available at <a href="https://www.adelaide.edu.au/">https://www.adelaide.edu.au/</a> newsroom/news/list/2020/06/24/19-million-fortraumatic-brain-injury-research

#### Michael Lardelli

ANS South Australian Representative



## 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 (<u>oe.abdelrahman@qut.edu.au</u>) or Marco Morsch (<u>marco.morsch@mq.edu.au</u>).

### The copy deadline for the next Newsletter is Friday 15th January 2021.

We encourage everyone to check out the ANS website.



#### 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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