

Minutes

Date: 2nd November 2011

*Institute for Molecular Bioscience, University of Queensland, Brisbane*

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**Present:**

Phil Robinson, Gavin Lambert, Kay Double, Carol Wicking, Patrick Tam, Elizabeth Coulson, Nigel Laing, Linda Richards, Fred Meunier, Peter Visscher, Mike Roberts, Paul Hodges, Judith Clements, Dagmar Wilhelm, Bostjan Kobe, Rohan Teasdale

Guests: Anne Abbott (NARF Award winner), Alexander Fornito

**Apologies:**

Claire Vajdic, Glenda Halliday, Natalie Sims, Olivier Piguet, Sarah Robertson, Andrew Lawrence, Philip Beart

**Minutes:** Kay Double (Secretary)

<b>1. Welcome</b>
Meeting called to order at 4.47pm. The President Phil Robinson welcomed Members. The Minutes of the 2010 AGM were accepted (Mike Roberts moved, Fred Meunier seconded).
<b>2. Secretary's report</b>
<b>Kay Double:</b> In October 2011 we had a total of 224 members. Of 230 Ordinary Members we have: 44 SPRF 40 PRF 98 SRF 7 PF 21 CDA 4 AF 1 ARC We have 5 Honorary, 3 Associate (some of which are defined at Fellowships levels above) and 6 undefined Members. Election of the Executive Committee election and two State Representatives will be voted upon at this AGM.
<b>3. Treasurer's report</b>
<b>Gavin Lambert:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Presented the 2011 financial report (attached). Motion for the acceptance of the financial report (moved by Linda Richards, seconded by Rohan Teasdale.)</li></ul>

- Discussion of annual income loss due to increasing costs and the low number of Fellows able to attend the annual symposium and AGM. Ideas of holding AGM via Skype or always in Melbourne where the majority of Fellows are based or another large conference where there are a number of Fellows in attendance. Possibility of holding the NARF Symposium every two years, rather than annually.
- Motion that the membership fee be increased to \$55 (moved by Elizabeth Coulson, seconded by Linda Richards), members voted to accept this motion. Life members will be exempt from fees). Advantages of membership should be provided to potential/current members at time of notification of the fee increase.

#### 4. State Representatives' reports

##### Victoria report: Andrew Lawrence (presented by Phil Robinson)

- Collation of ongoing issues with RGMS
- Rally for Research April 12<sup>th</sup> Melbourne
- Local grant-reading for project applicants
- Local mock interviews for Fellowship applicants / reappointments
- Promotion of NARF symposium / awards
- Preparation of annual return (as Public Officer)

##### WA report: Nigel Laing

- 11 Fellows funded/re-funded in 2011
- Health & Medical Research Review: WA Fellows met with Ian Frazer two weeks ago
- Salary Gap problem ie difference between NHMRC PSP 3 and UWA initial postdoc salary is 31%, estimated to be 41% difference in 10 years time
- Future Fellowship packages are more attractive than a SRF position as FF as it includes DRC and travel

##### NSW/ACT report: Oliver Piguet (presented by Phil Robindon)

- July 2011: Mock interviews for fellowship applicants was held at NeuRA with support of senior NeuRA staff:
- 5 expressions of interest but only 1 person took part
- Membership:
- 2011: 57 (NSW: 54; ACT: 3)
- 2010: 60 (NSW: 57; ACT: 3)
- 2009: 62 (NSW: 60; ACT: 2)

##### Queensland report: Carol Wicking

- **Mock fellowship interviews:** 6/6/2010-16/6/2010, Brisbane
- 10 applicants participated in the mock interviews. Three panels of 3-4 members were convened, covering a range of expertise and seniority. Most applicants were from QIMR or IMB, and panel members came from these institutes and QBI. As always, the major issue was getting sufficient panel members to volunteer their time. Most applicants indicated that the mock interviews were useful.
- **NARF Dinner:** This year the NARF dinner will be held in conjunction with the NARF symposium and AGM on 2 November 2011 at My Thai Restaurant in Auchenflower, Brisbane. At this stage we anticipate 10-12 people will attend.

- Promotion of Rally for Research

**SA report: Sarah Robertson**

- NARF members were active in the Discoveries Needs Dollars campaign and ‘Rally for Research’ event at SA Parliament House, on April 12th 2011. The Rally involved ~400 people with excellent media coverage and contributed to the national success of the campaign.
- Practice interviews for new and renewing applicants to the NHMRC Fellowship scheme was held during May and June 2010. Applicants were interviewed with constructive feedback on 2-3 occasions by senior academics and fellows.
- New NHMRC Research Fellows in SA are Prof Claire Roberts and Dr Robert Gilchrist, and CDFs are Dr Tanya Little, Dr Alice Rumbold, A/Prof Leanne Dibbens and Dr Lisa Moran. All have been encouraged to join NARF.
- A NARF members meeting and dinner is scheduled for 29 November 2011.
- Retiring SA NARF representative Sarah Robertson has agreed to join NHMRC RGMS Reference Group commencing November 2011.

**4. President’s report**

**Phil Robinson:**

- 87 new Fellows funded in 2011 round at a cost of \$63m, 18 new Practitioner Fellows and 65 new Career Development Fellows.
- Trend of annual increase in application numbers for Fellows but no change in number given.
- The consequence of the new selection policy is that current Fellows who were not shortlisted for interview not given opportunity to argue their case. This disadvantages Fellows in small groups particularly.
- Currently 404 RF in 2011, dramatic growth in SRF level but little change in the number of PRF/SPRF since 2006. There was a discussion of the possibility that Fellows may apply at a lower level than their experience may suggest and being topped up by their University.
- Major change in 2010 and 2011 funding round: Only applications ranked “Outstanding” were funded and NO applicants ranked as “excellent”. Previously about 50% of applicants ranked as “excellent” were funded. This change has occurred due to lack of funding in the NHMRC, the increased costs of Fellows and Australia Fellows re-entering the NHMRC Fellowship system.
- Only 8% of SPRF are female (3 of 36 SPRF Fellows),
- 46% of Fellows are now based in Victoria, representing a broader distribution of Fellows around Australia.
- Little change since 2006 in Research Fellows by Broad Research Area.
- Fellows in their 6<sup>th</sup> Year: chances of re-appointment varies from about 0-50%, compared with about 24-30% success rate for initial applicants (although note this data is based on low numbers of applications to date).
- Practitioner Fellowships: 51 applicants in 2011 with 18 awarded (35% success rate). Mostly in Clinical Medicine and predominately males. Currently a total of 77 PF in the scheme.
- Number of new part-time Fellows unknown, no applications for the new Howard Florey Emeritus Fellowship in 2010 or 2011.

- This year Australia Fellows began re-entering the scheme, (9 ex-AF applicants in 2011 competing with about 15 SPRF applicants). NHMRC did move some money into the Fellowship scheme to accommodate this event but this is unlikely to be sustainable.
- Phil thanked the outgoing committee members.
- Review of Health and Medical Research is underway, including a review of the NHMRC governance. Report will be tabled in late 2012.
- Problems with the assessment of Project Grants were discussed.
- Discussion of whether NARF should support the move that applicants who have not progressed to interview be nevertheless be allowed to submit a CV update.
- Suggestion that low rated Project Grants not be required to submit rebuttals.
- Election of new NARF Executive and Committee: Positions open at this AGM were the President, Treasurer, Secretary and State Representatives for SA and Queensland.
- President: no nominations, Phil Robinson agreed to stay on as President until a new President is found
- Treasurer: Nomination of Kate Loveland was appointed unopposed
- Secretary: no nominations, Kay Double agreed to stay on as Secretary until Dec 2011.
- Qld State Rep: Fred Meunier was appointed unopposed.
- SA State Rep: Jozef Gecz was appointed unopposed
- State Reps continuing in their positions are Olivier Piguet (NSW), Andrew Lawrence (Vic) and Nigel Laing (WA).

Meeting closed at 6.20pm

# National Association of Research Fellows of the NHMRC inc Treasurer's Report November 2, 2011

National Assoc of Research Fellows of NHMRC Incorporated  
60 584 250 983

## Profit and Loss

November 2010 through October 2011

	Nov '10 - Oct '11
<b>Income</b>	
Bank Interest Income	807.61
Subscriptions	7,610.00
<b>Total Income</b>	8,417.61
<b>Expense</b>	
Advertising	990.22
Bank Fees	186.00
Credit Card Commission	190.96
Incorporation Fees	42.80
Labour Charges	355.67
Membership Fees	234.00
Miscellaneous Expense	110.00
Postage	441.60
Printing & Stationery	171.49
Prizes/Awards	1,500.00
Society Management Fee	1,551.84
Speaker Fees/Awards/Expenses	2,230.50
Travel & Expenses - Award	772.78
Travel & Expenses - Executive	2,748.09
<b>Total Expense</b>	11,525.95
<b>Net Income</b>	-3,108.34

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## Balance Sheet

As of October 31, 2011

	Oct 31, '11
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Current/Savings	
Bendigo Bank	899.11
NAB Cheque Account	25,114.41
<b>Total Current/Savings</b>	26,013.52
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	26,013.52
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	26,013.52
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
Retained Earnings	29,121.86
Net Income	-3,108.34
<b>Total Equity</b>	26,013.52
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	26,013.52