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## **ANSA 2015 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

This past year the ANSA Executive has worked with the aim of building upon the foundations laid in previous years, and focussed upon building more strength into the team, roles, and processes. By strengthening the core of the Network, we hope to leave it in good shape for future executive team members so they can focus their efforts on other areas.

In this report, I provide an overview of each key area of activity that the ANSA Executive has worked on since being elected in November 2014.

### **1. Membership**

At the time of writing this report, membership numbers are as follows:

ANSA members	278
Facebook "likes"	681
Twitter followers	99

As at this time last year, we had around 217 members, 483 Facebook "likes", and 47 Twitter followers.

### **2. AAS/ANSA 2015 Travel grants**

A large number of applications were received for this year's travel grants, which are funded by the AAS to support postgraduate students attending the annual conference to present their research. ANSA distributes the grants, which are approved by the AAS Executive.

For the first time since the travel grants were offered in 2006, in this past year ANSA implemented a new category of grant to assist those living and working in remote communities. While we were able to award the Remote Area Travel Grant, the offer was unfortunately unable to be accepted because the proposed recipient had since left that location. Nevertheless, I recommend that this category be maintained in future years as it clearly fills a need.

A refinement to the eligibility requirements for the Robyn Wood Travel Grant was made this year. Ordinarily, applicants who reside in the same State/Territory as the conference is being held are not eligible for an AAS Travel Grant, however an exception was made in 2015. This year's Robyn Wood Travel Grant recipient uses a wheelchair and thus has extraordinary financial costs associated with attending the conference. I recommend that in future years, such exceptions remain in consideration by ANSA and AAS Executive members.

The 2015 travel grant funds were distributed to students from eight different institutions who will be presenting at the conference:

Robyn Wood Travel Grant:



Ainslee Hooper, Deakin University

AAS/ANSA Travel Grants:

Henrike Hoogenraad, Adelaide University

Sarah Cameron, Macquarie University

Md Mujubul Anam, Queensland University of

Technology

Benjamin Hegarty, The Australian National University

Alice Neikirk, The Australian National University

Kirsty Wissing, The Australian National University

Ying-Cheng Chang, The Australian National University

Markus Bell, The Australian National University

Stephanie Betz, The Australian National University

Channa Abdul Razaque, The Australian National University

Alexandra Smith, The University of Queensland

Esther Anderson, The University of Southern Queensland

Crystal Abidin, The University of Western Australia

### 3. **Postgraduate panel at AAS2015**

This year's postgraduate panel is the largest ever, with 26 papers across 7 sessions. Themes range from issues in medical anthropological theory and practice, to online identity and worldview, to religious moralities and creative practice. We are pleased to be able to host presenters from a broad range of Australian and New Zealand universities, and support postgraduate students as they begin their academic careers. A special thanks goes to those who are kindly giving their time and energy to serve as discussants in the sessions:

Medical anthropology theory and practice: Dr Narelle Warren, Monash University

Ethnographic theory and practice: Dr Gillian Tan, Deakin University

Online identity and worldview: Dr Jolynna Sinanan, RMIT University

Religious moralities and creative practice: Dr Debra McDougall, The University of Western Australia

Migration, identity, and place: Dr Celia McMichael, La Trobe University

Social hierarchies: Dr Sharyn Graham Davies, Auckland University of Technology

### 4. **Workshops at AAS2015**

ANSA organised some pre-conference workshops for postgraduate students and early career researchers on publishing, networking, and grant writing. There is no cost for the workshops, thanks to the generosity of a number of people. My heartfelt thank you for facilitating these goes to:

A/Prof. Martha Macintyre, Dr Lara McKenzie, and Dr Tarryn Phillips: Getting published

Dr Yasmine Musharbash and Dr Gerhard Hoffstaedter: Breaking the ice: establishing and maintaining relationships in the post-degree workplace

Dr Hannah Bulloch and Dr Bill Fogarty: Successful grant writing skills

My thanks also go to ANSA university representative Ruth Constantine and conference organiser Catie Gressier for assisting with arranging facilities and catering.

### 5. **Photography competition**

Following the success of the previous AAS/ANSA photography competitions held in 2013 and 2014, the AAS and ANSA were very pleased to announce another competition this year. The competition theme was 'Moral Horizons', in keeping with the theme of the AAS conference. With this in mind, we encouraged submissions of images depicting aspects of morality in all its various forms. The prizes are \$300 for First prize, \$200 for Highly commended, and there will also be a \$100 prize for the winner of the People's Choice Award, which will be voted for by conference delegates. All three awards will be presented during the AAS conference dinner but may be given in absentia if winners are unable to attend the conference.

**6. Website**

The key focus area for ANSA's website activities this year was undertaking a review of our website provider. This work was generated primarily through the upcoming conclusion of the contract for the ANSA website. The review of website providers and products resulted in our decision to move to a different host. In doing so, we aim to have a more user-friendly platform from which to share information and communicate with members. Once the migration is complete, members of the ANSA Executive will experience a greater ease of use and website users will notice aesthetic differences. The former website URL (<http://www.ansa-aas.net/>) will remain the same. Thank you to Ainslee Hooper, the current ANSA Web Officer, for her work in researching options and migrating the content from the existing website to the new one.

**7. Postdoctoral writing fellowship**

ANSA was very pleased to work with members of the AAS Executive in setting up the inaugural Postdoctoral writing fellowship award, which was intended to provide some financial support to a PhD graduate in developing the writing up of research already conducted for publication. We received ten submissions of a very good standard, making judging challenging. The fellowship recipient's submission, however, was outstanding and the judges' decision unanimous. Due to the number and strength of the applications received in this first year of the fellowship, I recommend that the initiative be funded on an annual basis.

Last of all, as this is my final term in this role I would like to say thank you to all those people I've had the pleasure of working with over the past four years. I would like to especially thank members of past and current ANSA executive teams and all the committee members who've worked so hard to build up the network. My deep gratitude also goes to all the members of the AAS Executive over the time I have been in office. Your support for postgraduate students and early career researchers is warmly appreciated, as is the opportunity to have served.

Michelle O'Toole  
ANSA Chairperson  
20 November 2015