



2020 WAIER AGM President's Report

Dear all,

It is with some sadness that I write my president's report for 2020. I would have loved to be with you tonight and deliver these words in person. Nevertheless, I hope you all have a terrific time. Thank You to Sonja for chairing our final executive meeting for 2020 and the AGM.

Living in unprecedented times

It is safe to say that not one of us has lived through a pandemic before. The continued threat of the disease has led to rapid, unpredictable and ongoing changes and challenges for all of us, personally and professionally. This global volatility required of us to quickly adapt to different ways of working, learning, living and connecting with each other. On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. This virus has disrupted the status quo.

Although we had to make a number of adjustments to accommodate the new reality of social distancing, we are certainly lucky, living and working in Western Australia. This said, many of us have friends and relatives who are much more seriously affected by COVID-19 than we are. I sincerely hope that you and your families are and continue to stay safe.

WAIER Forum during COVID-19

Similar to other organisations, we were forced to navigate the shifting landscape, and we have found new and innovative ways to use technology to ensure that there was a Forum 2020. It looked uncertain for a while, but under Fiona's great leadership, our first ever fully online forum went ahead and was a great success. There was a last-minute change of keynote speaker, due to David Ansell's sudden and unexpected illness, but Rosemary Cahill was kind enough to deliver the keynote prepared by David. Sonja presented the four WAIER awards and Paul chaired the Storytelling of Hope panel session. The forum was very well planned and very engaging. It was certainly a team effort. The forum feedback from participants was encouraging indeed and showed that a number of people would be interested in a similar future event. Although the forum was a great success, it was a free event and did not generate any income.

WAIER's financial position

WAIER's financial position is solid and our finances are well managed under Greg's leadership. Given our deductible gift recipient (DGR) status, it would be important to promote tax deductible gifts and donations to ensure that our balance sheet stays healthy. I had some informal discussions with Greg

and I am pleased to note that the strategic planning committee has made a great start brainstorming ideas for novel fundraising opportunities.

WAIER strategic planning

In January 2019 we held our inaugural Planning Day, which was followed by a second Planning Day on 21 January 2020, organised and chaired by Sonja. Many great ideas were developed and documented. Strategic planning was subsequently included in our monthly agenda and Sonja kept reminding us to engage with the ideas and initiatives throughout the year. On 16 November 2020, the strategic planning subcommittee (Sonja, Angela, Paul and Jette) shared the minutes of their first formal meeting. It is encouraging to see the strong plan presented to define advantages of membership, pave the way for new directions to keep us relevant, and also focus on our longterm financial viability. I would like to commend the members of the subcommittee for their initiative, vision and energy to move WAIER forward. I sincerely hope that their ideas will find traction and that many of them will be able to be implemented in the coming months and years. Given that the number of strategic documents is increasing, it is imperative that they all closely align with our constitution and updated WAIER Inc. Rules.

The question now is what is next for WAIER. How can the organisation remain relevant and truly innovative after 35 years? How will it be able to continue to capture the best thinking, the most innovative practices, and the most outstanding education research, breaking down barriers between school education, vocational/further and higher education? How can WAIER move IIER's outstanding reputation to even higher levels in the world of education research and academic publishing?

Only time will tell, but Sonja, Angela, Paul and Jette have presented promising ideas that will need to be reviewed and discussed by the members of the executive committee.

WAIER executive membership

It is truly encouraging and very pleasing to see that our WAIER executive membership has been growing and we were able to welcome new (and not so new) members to the executive committee. Given that WAIER's key purpose is to strengthen the collaboration among higher education institutions, government departments and their research active staff, it is pertinent that WAIER's executive committee includes representation from various public and private education institutions and government departments. Change to the membership is always to be expected and we had to say 'good bye' to Chris Glass and Brad Gobbi, both were longstanding member of the WAIER executive. As a matter of fact, both Chris and Brad joined the WAIER executive committee in 2007.

The time has come to hand over the baton

I am sad that I am unable to be with you tonight to deliver my second and final president's report. So let me be upfront, after 12 years on the WAIER executive committee, it is time to hand over the baton. Hence, I am not standing for reelection as president of WAIER. I had a wonderful time and I will always cherish the many good memories that we have made over the years. I would also like to inform you that I am resigning my WAIER executive membership effective 20 November 2020.

To conclude, I want to thank everyone on the WAIER executive committee for their time and commitment during these unprecedented times. WAIER certainly has a distinguished history and it is an organisation that is as relevant and forward looking today as it was during its past.

It is with mixed emotions that I bid you, my fellow WAIER committee members and friends, goodbye, and it is with pleasure and respect that I welcome a new and innovative president of WAIER! So once again Thank You to all of you for your commitment and contribution to WAIER and for your creativity in thinking of new ways WAIER can support research in our community.

I hope you all have a wonderful festive season. I wish you all the best for 2021 and beyond.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eva Dobozy', written over a horizontal dashed line.

Dr Eva Dobozy
WAIER President

20 November 2020