

President's Report for January – December 2022

Presented at the SASTA AGM 10th May 2022

As an association, SASTA continues to prove its resilience throughout yet another COVID year. While the pandemic certainly hasn't been a great experience, there are some positive takeaways. An example is how online meetings are now part of our 'new normal', and have enabled SASTA to connect more efficiently with its members and contributors. This was evident at the 2022 Annual Conference and Expo, where attendees were able to listen live to a keynote presentation from Heather Catchpole, CEO and co-founder of Refraction Media, via Zoom.

As always, SASTA must acknowledge its members, volunteers, workshop presenters, and sub-committees for their continuing contribution to the association. This is what makes our association such a strong one, where we can ensure that science education in South Australia is the best it can be.

2022 Membership

In 2022, SASTA saw a slight drop in its membership numbers, with a **total of 406**, compared to 427 in 2021. This was made up of **275 individual members**, and **131 corporate members**. Our corporate members can have up to 20 associates attached to their accounts, and in 2022, we saw **1074 associate members** make use of this.

Overall, our membership numbers continue to remain steady, where we predict a maintenance of the above numbers in 2023. SASTA continues to listen to feedback from its members, and in order to attract and keep members, are working on providing a wider range of professional learning, resources, and member incentives such as free teacher excursions.

SASTA is also working on communicating with a wider range of science institutions so that we may successfully offer the above to our members.

We are hopeful that these strategies will increase our overall membership numbers, although it may only be an addition to the Associate Member category, therefore no increase in income from memberships. However, we are confident in these initiatives and their ability to help us retain member numbers from year to year.

2022 Finances

The end of 2022 saw a **surplus of \$47, 438**, which is a decrease from 2021. SASTA Treasurer, Peter Turnbull, will elaborate further on this in his Treasurer's Report.

2022 Board

Words are unable to express the extent of my gratitude and appreciation for my fellow Board members, who have supported me in my first year as elected President. The Board plays a key role in the operations of SASTA, where we promote and support science education in South Australia, by providing a range of professional development and resources.

This is supported by its sub-committees, which include the Professional Development Reference Group (co-chaired by Katrina Elliott and Glen Arthur), Membership and Awards Reference Group (co-chaired by Anthea Ponte and Dina Matheson), and the Oliphant Science Awards Group (chaired by Peter Turnbull).

2022 Staffing

2022 saw a few staffing changes to SASTA, which included the **return of Rebecca Ashby** (née van Schuilenburg) in May. She resumed her role as the Oliphant Science Awards and Events Coordinator.

In September, **Bianca Warnock's employment ended**, as she pursues a different career pathway. We thank Bianca for her contribution to SASTA, and wish her all the best in her new job.

2022 Resources

A major source of income for SASTA is its sale of Study Guides. 2022 saw a **decrease in sales by approximately 8%**, compared to 2021 sales. This was mainly driven by the drop in sales of Nutrition and Biology Study Guides, which fell by 22% and 10% respectively.

As we look at SACE enrolment data, we can see that since 2015, there has been a decrease in the number of students studying Science subjects at Stage 2. However, numbers are starting to recover, particularly in Psychology and Biology.

Stage 1 workbook sales were very strong in 2022, whilst at Stage 2, sales remained steady.

2022 Professional Learning

In February, SASTA ran a series of **'Teachers new to' workshops, for Stage 2 sciences**. These were all run online due to the COVID restrictions at the time. Throughout the year, a number of other Stage 2 workshops were held, including **Marking/Moderation**, and **Task Design**.

Another online workshop was our **Psychology Summer Conference**, held in January. This was convened by Carolyn Pinchbeck, where 82 delegates attended.

Throughout the year, there were also a number of popular professional learning opportunities for primary and secondary teachers. These include: **Improving Science Literacy; 7-10 Australian Curriculum Science: How can we design and assess differentiated tasks?**; and **The SHE Task**.

Unfortunately, we had to **cancel the Early Career Teacher Conference**, usually held in October. This was due to a clash with a number of other professional learning opportunities (offered by other organisations). We suspect this cancellation is a major factor in the decrease in number of Student (pre-service teachers) Memberships in 2022.

SASTA continued to utilise Zoom for the delivery of its **Stage 2 Exam Post-mortems**. This enabled a much larger participation rate at each session. Many thanks to the generous hosts, and teachers who presented at these events.

In July, SASTA held its **Annual Conference and Expo** at Westminster School. This was attended by 87 delegates. We thank Westminster for welcoming us into their school, and all our workshop presenters who helped to make this a successful event.

The **STEM Conference** was held in December, a joint initiative from SASTA and MASA. This was held at the UniSA Magill Campus, where 107 delegates registered for the event. This included 43 SASTA

members, 28 MASA members, 19 presenters, and 17 non-members. Of the 43 SASTA members, 4 were pre-service teachers, 4 personal members, and 35 associate members.

In 2022, **Wine Australia commissioned SASTA** to write and deliver two professional learning opportunities on soil and viticulture. These were developed and delivered by Bianca Warnock, who also created amazing accompanying resources. Wine Australia also became a Gold Sponsor of the Oliphant Science Awards.

In May, the SA Museum hosted a **Women in Palaeontology** event, where Kate Dilger presented. This was held in their Fossils Gallery, and Learning Space. Kate gave a small presentation about the Oliphant Science Awards, and the Mary Anning Art Prize.

Also in May, Kate Dilger held a **professional learning session with fourth year Science and Maths students at UniSA**. The aim of this session was to help students prepare for placement by providing them the confidence to plan and teach these subjects in their final placement, and beyond. A range of rich, innovative resources were provided to support them with this, which included community contacts. This session was attended by 32 students, which UniSA have asked to be a feature of their course each year.

A free member excursion was held at the **Space Discovery Centre** in September. This was followed by a casual drink and chat at the nearby café. Members were shown some of the Centre's resources, and how it could be implemented in their classrooms.

SASTA New Partnerships

SASTA continues to provide rich resources and connections for its members, through its partnerships with science organisations and industries. In 2022, these included:

- **Ediacara Schools Resource:** A resource for Year 8 Science, produced in conjunction with Flinders Ranges Ediacara Foundation (FREF), Department for Environment and Water (DEW), Trevor Stephenson (Seymour College), and Sonya Arnold (Department for Education). This is funded by the FREF, led by Mary Lou Sampson.
- **Insect Investigators Project:** SASTA is a supporting partner of Erinn Fagan-Jeffries in this collaborative project, which seeks to inspire and educate Australia's emerging scientists in schools, as well as achieving scientific outcomes.
- **Premier's Reading Challenge:** SASTA aims to increase the awareness of and participation in the Oliphant Science Awards through this partnership. SASTA supported the STEM Reading and Design Challenge (part of the Premier's Reading Challenge) by providing sponsorship in the form of prizes for winning entries, and marketing.
- **Trees for Good Project:** In partnership with The Green Adelaide Landscape Board, University of Adelaide's Environment Institute, Australian Science Media Centre, and The Advertiser, this project aims to showcase issues of importance for Adelaide's natural environment.
- **Mary Anning Art Prize:** This is a partnership with SA Museum, Inspiring SA, and Dinosaur Museum. This competition asks young South Australian artists to create an original artwork that showcases prehistorical South Australia. Through this, we can explore and understand our past, and know our unique place in the history of life. All art formats are accepted, however must be submitted as a single photograph. As well as promoting the competition, SASTA also facilitates registration and collection of entries. We may also be involved in the judging and display of winners.

2022 Oliphant Science Awards

The Oliphant Science Awards continued to grow in 2022, as outlined below:

	2022	2021
Registered entries	2256	2292
Entries submitted	1692	1797
Registered students	3121	3069
Student submissions	2328	2328
Number of schools	105	106

Many thanks to the Oliphant Science Awards committee, volunteers, sponsors, teachers, students, and SASTA staff who continue to work tirelessly to help make this event so wonderful each year. The range of entries never cease to amaze me, and just prove that we are on the right track with science education in South Australia.

2022 has been another great year for SASTA. Thank you to the staff, volunteers, Board members, workshop presenters, venues, and sponsors who continue to support South Australian science educators. Without you, SASTA would not be as successful as it is.



Dina Matheson
SASTA President
1 April 2023

SASTA Annual Report 2022

SASTA Board

As at 5 May 2022:

- **President:** Peter Beveridge
- **Vice President:** Anita Trenwith
- **Treasurer:** Peter Turnbull
- Glen Arthur
- Henry Johnson
- Katrina Elliott
- Katie Bell
- Dina Phan
- Anthea Ponte

As at 31 December 2022:

- **President:** Dina Matheson (née Phan)
- **Vice President:** Anita Trenwith
- **Treasurer:** Peter Turnbull
- Glen Arthur
- Katie Bell
- Samantha Brown
- Katrina Elliott
- Anthea Ponte

Staff

- **Executive Officer and Education Manager:** Kate Dilger
- **Office Manager:** Rebecca Cooke
- **Marketing and Communications:** Tegan McClean
- **Administration and Member Services Assistant:** Bianca Warnock
- **Events Coordinator:** Rebecca Ashby

Awards

- **SASTA Medal:** not awarded
- **Helen Castle Memorial Scholarship:** Grace Edwards, Mount Gambier High School
- **Credit Union SA/SASTA Outstanding Teacher Awards:** Katie Gloede, Senior Secondary
- **SASTA Honour Award:** Glen Arthur, and Katrina Elliott

Professional Learning

- **Psychology Summer Conference:** 14 January via Zoom, convened by Carolyn Pinchbeck
- **Workshops for Teachers new to SACE Stage 1 and/or SACE Stage 2 Sciences:** February
- **Annual Conference:** 12-13 July at Westminster School, 87 delegates
- **Marking Workshops for Stage 2 Psychology, Biology, Chemistry & Physics:** Term 3
- **STEM 6-11 Conference:** 2 December, in conjunction with Mathematical Association of SA, at UniSA Magill Campus
- **Workshops in STEM and Science teaching and learning:** Kate Dilger, and other presenters
- **Teacher Excursions** for members provided

Resources

SASTA published a range of resources including:

- SACE Stage 1 and 2 Workbooks
- Study Guides
- Trial exams
- Topic Tests
- *Living Science* Biology textbooks, Stage 1 and 2
- Research Project Workbook and Guide
- Year 8 and 9 Student Practical Workbooks
- *What if we do Science?*
- *Watch This, & Watch This Too!*

Publications/Communications

- **Newsletter:** Distributed in February, May, and August
- **SASTA E-News:** Distributed the first day of each month excluding January.
- **Journal:** Two editions per year.
- **SASTA Website**
- **Facebook:** approximately 1798 likers (up from 1510 last year)
- **Twitter:** 1378 followers

Student activities

The **2022 Oliphant Trophy winner was Isaiah Ajaero**, Concordia College, SA. 1979 entries were submitted by 2251 students who entered the competition.

National Science Week grants

Grant applications: Katie Bell

Examination prep seminars (The University of Adelaide)

- **Biology:** 27 August, Karen Palumbo and Jeremy LeCornu
- **Psychology:** 3 September, Carolyn Pinchbeck
- **Chemistry:** 10 September, Glen Arthur

Representation and advocacy

- **Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA):** Peter Turnbull represented SASTA as Federal Councilor
- **SASTA Patron:** Professor Caroline McMillen; we appreciated her support throughout the year
- **Educators SA:** Peter Beveridge represented SASTA