

2021 WAIER AGM President's Report

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you to everyone for all that you have done over this year. Every one of you has put aside precious time, on top of already busy jobs and lives, to further the work of WAIER in promoting educational research – whether by organising events, communicating to our members, rounding up forum attendees, managing the journal, helping make decisions at meetings and managing our funds.

Together we have helped WAIER turn a corner this year and the future is looking pretty promising.

We now have a substantial amount of money in the bank, thanks to the wonderful stewardship of the Forum by Sian and Cindy. What a wonderful event we put on this year. Trish was like a trojan packing the bags and manning the tables. Janene and Cindy prepared a never-ending array of delicious food all day long. Sian managed to produce some beautiful hampers to raffle off – thank you to everyone who donated items for these. She also wrangled her daughter (name) to create our beautifully graphically designed Forum program cover and advertising posters. Patrick was everywhere and across everything on the day- from IT, to washing dishes. Saul and Greg welcomed and charmed all at the registration desk. Maddie made sure we would all remember the event by taking photos and managed Forum registrations in tandem with Greg, our treasurer, and Clare. Paul helped the event start off in a very polished way by chairing the panel- with two of our wonderful committee – Jette and Janene as panel members. Michelle, our sponsorship coordinator, made a special trip – even though she was sick on the day - to bring in materials for the Forum bags. Thanks to all those that chaired the sessions and kept us to time. The great success of the Forum is due to not only those that I have mentioned but all of us just pitching in – doing what was needed – with grace and finesse on the day. The day had such a lovely feel and the participants were clearly aware of that vibe from their feedback.

This year we tried something new – the HDR Forum and the Undergraduate Forum. The feedback for both these was so positive and shows there is a need for nurturing our emerging educational researchers. Thanks to Sian and Saul for managing the HDR Forum and to Paul for the undergraduate workshop – I am looking forward to seeing how we grow this in 2022.

Special thanks to Roger (Journal Business Manager) and Clare (Journal Desktop Publisher) for all their continued contributions. They expertly manage the development of the Forum program and the printing of it, manage the abstracts and look after the presenters, print the badges, organise the session chairs -as they have done for many, many years. This is on top of the incredible work in managing and editing the journal. This year they also generously donated all the drinks for the sundowner! Clare's nomination for the PTCWA award this was long overdue – it is a shame that I could only nominate one person. Roger made the great discovery, as our resident archivist, that WAIER is indeed almost 100 years old – there will be centenary celebrations in a few years' time.

Thank you to Sue who took on the organisation and adjudication of the Early Career Award, the WAIER Fogarty Postgraduate Student Prize and the PGA award. Thank you also to the judges – Sally Murphy and Felicity Roux. As usual, Sue managed it all, including the printing and presentation of the certificates, with her usual calmness and precision. I would also like to thank Sue for two significant introductions which have made a great contribution to WAIER. The first was the Fogarty Foundation, who are now a major sponsor. The second, was to Pina Tarricone at ACER, which has led to our seminar partnerships and connection to our sister organisation - SAIER.

I would also like to thank our wonderful secretary, Jette Oksis, and Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis, who together with Paul, our Vice President, and me, are the Strategic Planning Committee. We now have a strategic plan, vision statement and have created a fresh new look and logo for WAIER. Our new website, thanks to Maddie, is going to serve us well into the future.

Thanks go to the communications team, Rebecca, Saul and Maddie who have been instrumental in communicating to our members via regular website updates, WAIER Digest and social media posts. Our university representatives: Paul (Curtin), Trish (ECU), Patrick (Notre Dame), Sian (Murdoch) and Angela (UWA) have made sure all our events were well promoted at their respective institutions. The committee charged with increasing and reconceptualising the WAIER membership this year included Paul, Saul, Felicity, Cindy and Janene. The work of this group will ensure we remain financially viable into the future.

In 2021 we are sadly saying goodbye to three of our cherished Committee members. It is with great sorrow that we say farewell to Susan Beltman, our esteemed past president. Sue has been a wonderful mentor within and outside of WAIER. Sue has been a WAIER member for 27 years joining WAIER in 1994 and joining the executive committee in 1998.

Sue became our first female president in 2012 and led the organisation until 2019 with a steady hand - affirming and supporting newcomers onto the committee - with wisdom and dedication. Sue has been the glue that has held us together for so many years taking on so many roles- coordinator of research seminars, secretary, vice president, and awards coordinator. Sue has also been instrumental in gaining sponsorship from Teachers Mutual Bank and the Fogarty Foundation, establishing a Research Grant, using social media to communicate to members and ensuring our annual Research Forum is a welcoming space for new researchers.

I was shocked to receive Sue's resignation and even more so with Angela's. Angela has been a stalwart on the WAIER Committee being a member since 2009- so she has been a member for 12 years. I so admire Angela's great attention to detail and have relied on her knowledge of grammar and style when editing – she is our 'unofficial WAIER editor'. She has been a great guide and teacher for our professional writing student, Simon. Her editing skills have also been put to good use with the IIER Journal – a most welcome Assistant Editor (for five years) to assist Roger and Clare. Angela also led the subcommittee to develop the new WAIER constitution ensuring our compliance with the new legislation for professional associations. In addition, Angela coordinated the WAIER Research Seminars for two years and was secretary for three years. In all her time at WAIER Angela has been, and remains, the sole representative of UWA on the Committee. Angela has always been such a reliable committee member who willingly contributes when needed – promptly and enthusiastically.

Again, with deep regret, I also accepted the resignation of Maddie. She leaves us, after being with us since 2018, as the pressures of work and other commitments now take up more of her time. As soon as she joined WAIER Maddie rolled up her sleeves and got right to work. She assisted with the development of the WAIER website, and was instrumental in getting us on to social media (Facebook & Twitter), as well as creating a professional looking newsletter – our WAIER Digest. She has managed the website updates and communications to members with efficiency. We are grateful for the work Maddie has put in to ensure WAIER has a professional look and feel. Her skills and contribution will be greatly missed but I am reassured that she has passed the baton on to others.

We shall miss these wonderful people on our committee. Their work has been incredibly appreciated. Please give them a round of applause in appreciation.

Thank you once again to each and every one of you for your commitment and contribution to WAIER. I am looking forward to what 2022 will bring.

Thank you.

Dr Sonja Kuzich
WAIER President
22 November 2021