

Patrons

Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG
Prof. the Hon. Gareth Evans AC QC
Dr Fiona Stanley AC



**RATIONALIST
SOCIETY OF
AUSTRALIA**

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc.

2024 Annual General Meeting

Draft Minutes

1. Formal matters

Acknowledgement of country: President Meredith Doig welcomed attendees and acknowledged the Indigenous custodians of the land of Australia.

Election of a chair: It was moved by Si Gladman, seconded by Steve Marton, and carried without dissent that Meredith Doig be the chair of the meeting.

Attendees and Apologies: The chair noted no apologies, and 33 registrants for the AGM on Zoom, with 22 in attendance.

Meredith Doig	Luke Beck	Arash Rashidian	Si Gladman	Stella Thomas
Collin Acton	David Magson	Ken Derrick	Lesley Vick	Leslie Allan
Michael Henry	Alison Courtice	David Cohan	Robert Bennett	Rod Bower
Rod Paterson	Rohan Navaratne	Rosemary Lynch	Steve Marton	Steve Munro
Vicki Caulfied	Victor Franco			

Proxies: The chair noted 39 proxies received - 22 to the chair; 14 to Meredith Doig; 3 to Si Gladman.

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Craig Sankey (chair)	Ferdi Klesch (chair)	Jon Cook (chair)	Mary Aerts (chair)	John Barrett (chair)
Max Bourke (chair)	Adrian and Kathy Gargetts (chair)	Gwyneth Anderton (chair)	Elizabeth Dangerfield (chair)	Noel Turnbull (chair)
Rachel Roberts (chair)	Nigel Sinnott (chair)	Robyn Friend (chair)	Kel Medbury (chair)	Maurice Honner (chair)
Lindsay Gilligan (chair)	Edmund Munday (chair)	Marcia Manning (chair)	John Keay (chair)	Greg Norton (chair)
John Barrell (chair)	Iain MacPhail (chair)		Galena Debny (Meredith Doig)	Derek O'Reilly (Meredith Doig)
Richard Mills (Meredith Doig)	Sean Spence (Meredith Doig)	Patrick Alilovic (Meredith Doig)	Ric Streatfield (Meredith Doig)	Peter Consondine (Meredith Doig)
Michael White (Meredith Doig)	Phillip Schudmak (Meredith Doig)	Dave Collins (Meredith Doig)	Barbara Panelli (Meredith Doig)	Ian Robinson (Meredith Doig)
Paul Monk (Meredith Doig)	Trevor Lee (Meredith Doig)	Ari Sharp (Si Gladman)	Tanya Marwood (Si Gladman)	Geoffrey Williams (Si Gladman)

Quorum: RSA Rules specify that a quorum comprises the lesser of 10% of the numbers entitled to vote, or 40 members entitled to vote. The chair noted that quorum was achieved.

2. Minutes of the last AGM

The chair noted that there is no formal business arising from the Minutes of the last AGM.

Motion 2.1: That the Minutes of the 2023 AGM be accepted as a true record.

Moved: Luke Beck

Seconded: Ken Derrick

Motion carried.

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3. Reports

President's report

The president gave a short oral report and invited the Executive Director to summarise the Society's campaigns and communications over the past 12 months.

Motion 3.1: That the President's report be noted.

Moved: Les Allen Seconded: Vicki Caulfield

Motion carried.

Treasurer's report

Treasurer Arash Rashidian spoke to the tabled Financial Statements and pointed out that the RSA's investments had done particularly well over the past 12 months, achieving a 30% return. The Society remains in a strong financial position.

Motion 3.2: That the Treasurer's report be accepted.

Moved: Meredith Doig Seconded: Steve Munro

Motion carried.

4. Election of a Committee

As per the RSA Rules, the committee of the RSA comprises at least five and not more than seven members (Rule 44).

Motion 4.1: That the following members be elected to the committee until the AGM of 2025.

1. Luke Beck
2. Arash Rashidian
3. Stella Thomas
4. Simon Gladman
5. Vicki Caulfield
6. Victor Franco
7. Collin Acton

Moved: Meredith Doig Seconded: Alison Courtice

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Motion carried.

5. General business

Annual membership subscription and fee on joining

As per the RSA Rules:

(1) At each annual general meeting, the Association must determine—

(a) the amount of the annual subscription (if any) for the following financial year; and

(b) the date for payment of the annual subscription

(2); The Association may determine that a different annual subscription is payable by other classes of members.

(3) The rights of a member (including the right to vote) who has not paid the annual subscription by the due date are suspended until the subscription is paid.

Motion 5.1: That the following annual subscription (membership) fees be confirmed for a further 12 months.

Moved: Stella Thomas Seconded: Steve Munro

Motion carried.

12-month membership fees

Standard membership: \$60
Concession membership: \$45
Couples membership: \$80

Motion 5.2: That the following proposal for a new Enduring Membership category be adopted.

Enduring Membership category

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An Enduring Membership category be established to allow those who want to make a significant upfront contribution to purchase a long-term membership. The term would be for 20 years. The cost would be \$1000. The category would confer the same rights as the current membership categories.

Members discussed the proposal and agreed in principle. However, it was suggested that it be made clear that the upfront amount would not be refundable if the Enduring Member's circumstances changed - for example, if the Member died. It was pointed out by a member with legal training that this should be made clear for all categories of membership, not just a new Enduring Membership category.

To accommodate this suggestion, it was moved by Meredith Doig and seconded by Alison Courtice that, in the Schedule 1 of the Rules which lists Membership categories, the following introductory sentence be added: "Membership fees are non-refundable". This was approved.

With this amendment approved, the original motion creating a new membership category called Enduring Membership was put by Stella Thomas, seconded by Steve Munro, and carried by a majority, with one objection by Lesley Vick.

Life Membership

As per the RSA Rules, Life Membership may be conferred upon Members who have made a distinguished contribution to the Rationalist Society of Australia over a sustained period of time. Nomination for Life Membership is made by the Committee and approved by Members in the general meeting. Life Members continue to enjoy for free all the rights and privileges of ordinary Members for the rest of their lives. Life Members may vote at general meetings of Members (Schedule 1: 1).

Given her conflict of interest in this matter, Meredith handed the chair over to vice president Luke Beck to conduct the vote.

Motion 5.3: That Life Membership be conferred on Dr Meredith Doig OAM in recognition of her contribution to the RSA over 20 years.

Moved: Luke Beck

Seconded: Si Gladman

Carried unanimously.

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6. Next meeting

The next AGM will be held between 1 July and 30 November 2025. The Committee of Management will decide the actual date and notify members at least 21 days prior.