



AUSTRALASIAN COLLOID AND INTERFACE SOCIETY

Newsletter 34, March 2024

President's Corner

We started the year with a wonderful celebration of all things colloidal and interfacial – ACIS2024 in Terrigal was a delightful opportunity to see new work, meet new people and, of course, catch up with old friends.

Congratulations to Erica Wanless and her team of organisers for delivering this event with a short lead time, and many thanks to all those who contributed to the scientific success of the meeting through organising keynote speakers, fundraising, promoting the conference, presenting, asking questions, and discussing great science over a proverbial beverage.

The new year also brings in a new Board of Directors for ACIS; many thanks for entrusting the stewardship of ACIS to us. Heart-felt thanks to our out-going directors who each contributed so much to ACIS over their terms: Tamar Greaves, Frank Sainsbury, Joe Berry, Michael Higgins, Christine Browne.

There are plenty of opportunities to get involved with ACIS, with organisation for the 2025 ACSSSC and 2026 ACIS meetings underway, and vacancies in our Equity & Diversity and Communications teams. ACIS is completely reliant on volunteers to deliver all its activities and input from across the broad spectrum of our membership helps shape the best activities for us all. See the articles below for more details.

I'm keen to hear your ideas on what ACIS could work towards in the coming years. What activities could the society organise that would be beneficial to our members and to our community? Are there training courses for students and ECRs that you wish we had? Would practice sharing activities around research, teaching, supervision, mentorship be useful for academics? Your input is most welcome – please email me (s.prescott@unsw.edu.au) with your most outrageous thought-bubbles; even if you can't see yourself organising the activities, capturing the idea is still valuable.

I look forward to a fun-filled 2024 in ACIS-land and I hope to see you at some ACIS activities soon.

Welcome to the New Board

After new members were announced at ACIS2024, the new board (along with some members of the old) met to hand out roles. It is with great pleasure that we welcome the new ACIS Board:

President – Stuart Prescott

Vice-president – Marta Krasowska

vice president – Maria Kruczkova

Treasurer – Maggie Zhai

Equity & Diversity – Livia Salvati Manni

Awards – Jitendra Mata

Communications – Saffron Bryant

Membership – Nhiem Tran

Geoff Willmott will continue as an unassigned member of the board to lend a hand wherever it's needed!

All members of the new board say an emphatic **thank you** to the previous board members and hope that we can continue the good work.

Congratulations

To start off the new year with a round of applause, we would like to announce the winners of the 2023/2024 awards.

The ECR Lectureship is awarded to Dr Kaye Minkyung Kang from the University of Sydney for their seminar entitled “Single Entity Electrochemistry”.

The Best Thesis award is given to Dr Jun Ki Hong of the University of Sydney for his thesis on “Liquid-Infused Surfaces for Anti- Thrombogenic Cardiovascular Medical Devices”.

A huge congratulations to both winners.

Everyone else, make sure to keep an eye out for calls for the next round of awards. You never know what it might lead to – as described by Travel Bursary winner Dr Saffron Bryant, below.

ACIS2024

A few weeks ago ACIS2024 went off with a bang in the picturesque Terrigal. There were concurrent sessions, all jam-packed with outstanding presentations from all niches of the colloid and interface community.

It was also the 10-year anniversary of ACIS which was celebrated at the conference dinner with photos from the past ten years and of course... cake!



Photo: Celebration of all the people who have been involved in ACIS conferences, events, and boards over the last ten years. Credit: Calum Drummond.

A massive thank you to everyone who attended including speakers, poster-presenters, students, industry reps, and enthusiastic audience members. ACIS is always a lot of fun, but it takes many hands to make it a resounding success and so a special thank you to the organizing committee: Professor Erica Wanless, Professor George Franks, Associate Professor Stuart Prescott, Dr Deborah Wakeham, and Dr Jiali (Maggie) Zhai.

Which leads us into...

Call for Assistance – ACIS2026

Marta Krasowska (UniSA) and Chun-Xia Zhao (UoA) have generously put their hands up to co-chair ACIS2026 in Adelaide. Based on the success of ACIS2024, it is clear that great things can be accomplished with representatives from different regions. Therefore, we're currently accepting expressions of interest from people who would like to be session chairs or to assist Marta and Chun-Xia in organising ACIS2026. This is a fantastic opportunity to get involved in the ACIS community, but also to shape the conference into what you think it should look like.

For expressions of interest, please send a short introductory email about

yourself to Marta: marta.krasowska@unisa.edu.au and Chun-Xia: chunxia.zhao@adelaide.edu.au

Get Comms Experience

Calling students and ECRs

Would you like to build up your CV? Would you like experience in communication, copy-writing, and editing? Would you like to get more involved in ACIS?

Then this is the opportunity for you. We are currently accepting expressions of interest from students and ECRs who would like to be involved with the ACIS newsletter and social media channels.

Just email Saffron at saffron.bryant@rmit.edu.au with a few lines about yourself and what you'd bring to the team.

Equity and Diversity Committee Needs You!

We all know the importance of equity and diversity, but change requires passionate people. Are you tired of some voices not being heard? Do you have ideas for events or initiatives that could make a real difference?

Then the Equity and Diversity Committee is for you.

The new board contains multiple members of the Equity and Diversity committee, leaving the committee short of people. We need enthusiastic volunteers to get involved.

Express your interest by sending a short introductory email to the new Committee Chair, Livia: salvatil@ansto.gov.au

Renew Your Membership

Membership renewal happened on the 1st of March, so make sure you pay up for this year. For more information visit:

<https://acis.wildapricot.org/membership>

A Visit to the Spiceman

By Dr Saffron Bryant

Most of you already know that I write science fiction/fantasy, so please excuse me if I wax lyrical for a moment, but I couldn't resist reference to the 'Spiceman' with the renewed interest Dune is getting.

This tale began a few years ago when I made a little trip to UNSW and was taken for a tour around the labs of the most esteemed A/Prof Patrick Spicer. Here I saw some incredible things, including drones and methods of studying rheology that I didn't even know existed. But what really caught my interest was the massive vat of bacteria he had growing in a plastic tub in the back of the lab. There it was... an environmentally-friendly production method for cellulose.

Patrick was using this cellulose to make hydrogels. "But!" (I cried) "Hydrogels are so last decade! Ionogels and Eutectogels are where it's happening!"

Thus was born a wonderful partnership.

I submitted an application for the ACIS Travel Bursary not long after and was lucky enough to travel to Patrick's lab and stay for a week or so to learn all about extensional rheometry and many other weird and wonderful things.

Many good things have come out of this partnership, including mine and Patrick's first paper together which should go live any day now. (A second one has been in preparation for quite some time... Patrick...). The partnership has also indirectly led to a patent, and significant orders (at least from me) for more of Patrick's bacterially-grown cellulose.

All good stories should be inspiring (I think), so let this one inspire you. Because of that vat of bacteria and the ACIS Travel Bursary, Patrick and I now have a fruitful collaboration, with research that I am genuinely hoping to translate into a marketable product.

So reach out to people, make connections, and apply for funding, because you never know where it will take you.

Thank you ACIS for the bursary and Patrick for putting up with my sass.

Saffron

Jobs and Opportunities

Instrument scientist position on Quokka open now.

See here for more information: <https://careers.ansto.gov.au/job/Sydney-Instrument-Scientist-Small-Angle-Neutron-Scattering-%28Quokka%29-NSW/949331610/>

ECIS 2024 - 1-6 SEPTEMBER

**38th Conference of the European
Colloid & Interface Society**

ECIS 2024

The deadline for abstract submission for the 38th conference of the European Colloid and Interface Society is fast approaching. The conference will take place from 1st to 6th of September in Copenhagen, Denmark, a city which blends history with modernity. The Society's objective is to advance colloid and interface science and promote cooperation between scientists both in Europe and internationally.

If you'd like to contribute to this, be sure to submit your oral and poster abstracts by the 29th of March, and book your accommodation early.

Website: <https://ecis2024.org/>



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