

ANNUAL REPORT

2012

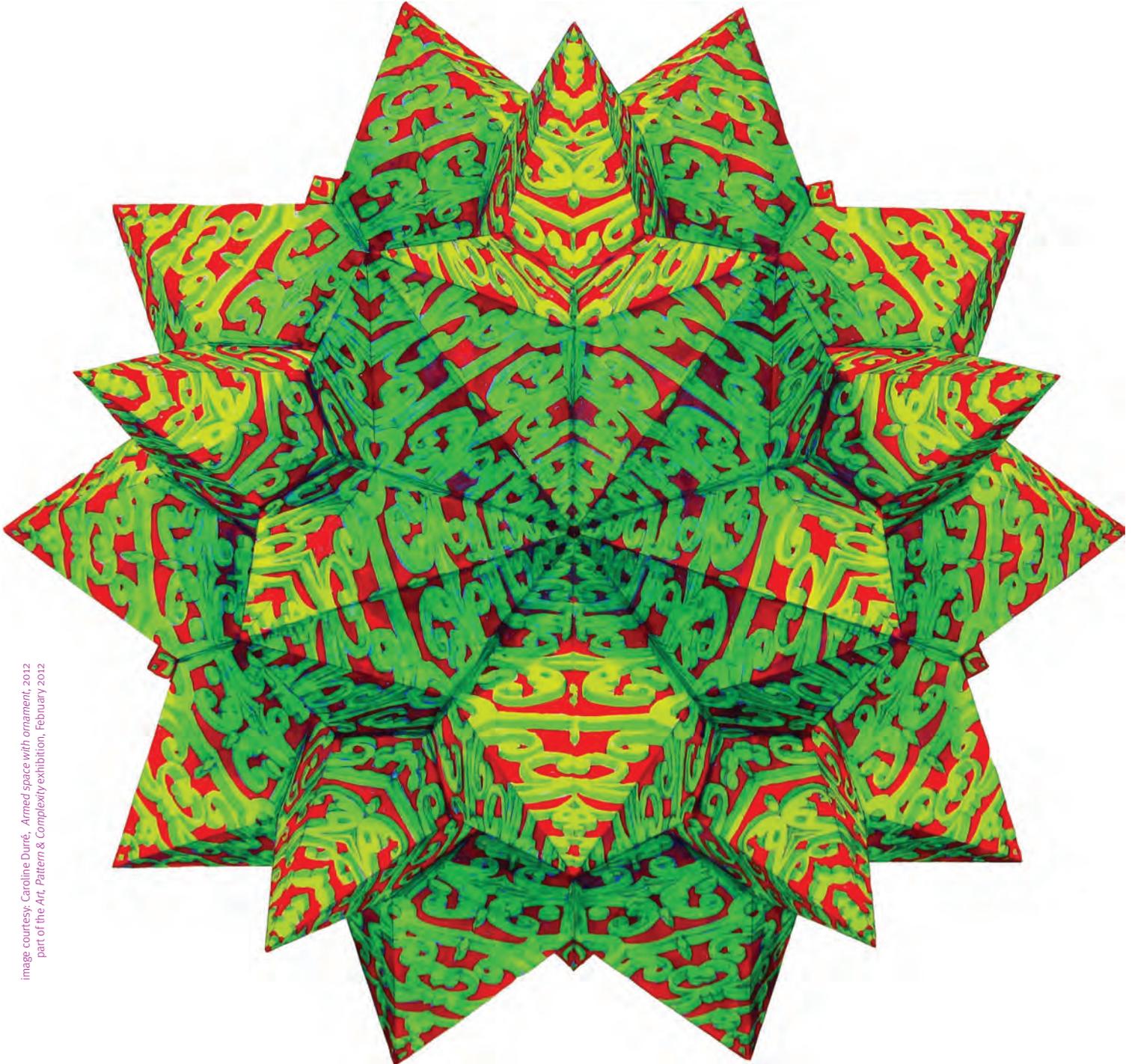


image courtesy: Caroline Durré, Armed space with ornament, 2012
part of the Art, Pattern & Complexity exhibition, February 2012

*Bringing science to people ...
... and people to science*

From our Chairman

With the completion of our third full year of operations, I am pleased to report that RiAus has made significant progress over the past twelve months.

A range of highlights for the year have provided great satisfaction as the organisation starts to become a truly national organisation, with the objective of “changing the dial” on the perception and positioning of science and engineering within our Australian culture and overseas.

The Council set itself the objective of using the suite of digital production and broadcast facilities at RiAus to leverage our outreach activities onto a national platform. After a full year as Director, Dr Paul Willis, who brings significant production and broadcast skills, has taken the organisation from strength to strength, especially in this digital space. Regular viewers of our digital content will have seen first-hand the high quality of our products. In addition, recent technological changes have allowed our events to be streamed live to a range of mobile devices, bringing our live and archived content into the hands of smartphone and tablet users. It is now possible to watch our events anywhere in the world. It is particularly pleasing that the close collaboration between RiAus and the Australian Science Media Centre has evolved into a weekly science news podcast.

A visit from our Patron, HRH The Duke of Kent, in January was a major highlight for the year. Given that it was almost three years since HRH formally launched RiAus, it was a proud opportunity to demonstrate our significant achievements since he was last here. A key feature of his visit was the induction of Australia’s newest Nobel Laureate, Prof Brian Schmidt, to our prestigious Bragg Membership. Brian was a most fitting inductee, and has become a strong supporter of RiAus in terms of his time and energies.



Chairman, Peter Yates AM with RiAus Patron, HRH The Duke of Kent and Director, Dr Paul Willis

We have had a number of changes in our key executive team. Dr Jane Lomax-Smith formally ended her role with RiAus in February, following her assistance in organising the visit by our Patron. The Council is indebted to Jane for her work on this major project, which followed her role as Acting Director in the previous year. Jane is a firm friend of RiAus and she is warmly welcome to visit any time she chooses. We also welcomed our new General Manager, Bradley Abraham, following the departure of Damian Scanlon.

The Science Exchange continues to grow as a popular venue in Adelaide. Its technological benefits and professional services are quickly becoming in high demand. We look forward to the continued growth of this patronage and the benefits it brings in terms of engagement with the corporate and government sectors which further assists RiAus in continuing to deliver exciting and engaging events and other activities.

The physical programming continued to reach new audiences as well as our regulars. Highlights of this year included the Transit of Venus, What Sank the Titanic, and even a partnership with ABC TV’s Catalyst on the topic Let’s Talk About Sex. Events in the community included our Free Range Science Program in regional Victoria, our highly popular Adelaide Fringe Program, and outreach activities around the Tour Down Under and World Solar Challenge. We continue to develop these events into high quality engagements, which are sold out and watched online - a great step forward in our development.

It’s been a challenging but exciting year, particularly with the effects of the shift in our resources further into the use of digital technologies in our outreach mission. However with a dedicated and committed staff, and an equally committed Council and support from our expanding membership and sponsor base we will continue to develop even further in the year ahead. I thank all those who have contributed to our position to date, and look forward to what will be a most exciting and rewarding future.



Peter Yates AM
RiAus Chairman

From our Director

This year marks my first full year at RiAus and it is thrilling to be part of such a rapidly growing and evolving organisation. We are still young, barely three years old, but already we have moved out of our exploration phase and into a period of consolidation. In our early years we took on a wide variety of activities and programs, experimenting to find out the best ways that we could take science to Australia. This last year has been a time to assess those experiments and select what works. Now we have a solid foundation for the future.

Our first Strategic Plan and Business Plan have brought considerable clarity about who we are, what we do and how we do it. We are now Australia's premier science engagement organisation, formulating the messages and ideas of science into ways in which the community can actively connect: interactions that go beyond science communication.

We have had great success online, creating live events that span the nation and the world. We can livestream an event held in Adelaide in high definition (HD) format. People can pick up that livestream across Australia and internationally and participate directly via social media. A landmark event of this nature was our live cross to Mawson Base in Antarctica: a live event with participants on four continents.

We have also physically crossed the continent many times delivering science to communities right around the country. We travelled ahead of the World Solar Challenge teams from Darwin to Adelaide delivering solar science activities. We criss-crossed Victoria with Free Range Science events and presented blockbuster lectures in Sydney with Lawrence Krauss and Richard Dawkins in collaboration with COSMOS Magazine.

We have hosted, acted as MC, co-presented and spoken at events in Brisbane, Newcastle, Canberra and Adelaide and across regional South Australia.

From our base in Adelaide we have blogged and operated online providing another avenue for science interaction. We have held five science/art exhibitions as well as supported theatre productions and other performances - all with science themes.

At RiAus, we aim to take science to Australians and we are doing just that. But we also aim to draw Australians toward science and our increasing participation rates indicate that we are hitting the mark. It is a nation-building collaboration and it is our future.



Dr Paul Willis
RiAus Director

Supporting science

As an independent charitable organisation, RiAus has received wide support from its many partners and donors during the year. Both cash and in-kind support has enabled RiAus to deliver high quality public programs. RiAus values and is grateful and very thankful for the generosity of its partners, donors and members. However RiAus needs to secure ongoing support if it is to achieve its mission of positioning science at the heart of society.

Fundraising initiatives included the inaugural RiAus lottery; a cocktail party with Susan Greenfield: What will be the new 40; and an end of financial year donation campaign.

RiAus will continue to work with inspiring thinkers, innovators and leaders to help build Australia's future through science.

MEMBERSHIP

As a member based organisation, RiAus offers Individual and Corporate memberships.

Individual membership

Membership grew to 324 as a result of increased awareness of RiAus and its successful events and activities (up from 282).

The support received from members assists RiAus in achieving its goal of providing a national forum for science awareness and communication.

With benefits including special members-only networking functions, discounted or free tickets to events and regular newsletters, RiAus membership offers individuals an opportunity to join a unique community of supporters with interests similar to their own.

Corporate membership

RiAus is proud to have had three Gold Corporate Members join during the year: Leighton Holdings; Motor Accident Commission (MAC); and BP, as well as eight Corporate Members: the South Australia Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology; Advantage SA; Intellectual Ventures; Flinders University; the Australian Centre for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (ACEAS); Australian Institute of Management (AIMSA); BioSA; BAE; and the University of Sydney.

Corporate memberships help companies align their brand with best-practice science communication, while helping RiAus develop ongoing partnerships locally and nationally.



Engaging our audiences

RiAus brings the findings of science closer to society through activities designed to raise scientific awareness and foster informed debate. RiAus has delivered a broad range of science-related content to audiences across the world in the past year.

Event content captured from RiAus programmed events is available on the RiAus website: www.riaus.org.au. This extends the lifespan and reach of RiAus events, and provides ongoing enrichment and engagement opportunities for our audiences.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS

Science Inspiration 2011

High school students around Australia had the chance-of-a-lifetime to be inspired by Adelaide-born NASA astronaut, Dr Andy Thomas. Students were able to ask about his adventures in space and were delighted with his down-to-Earth responses.

Scinamations - animated explanations of science

These delightful animations explain complex scientific concepts in a friendly and engaging way. Topics covered include Synthetic meat, Food security and Nanotechnology. New topics are being added and are available to view on our website, Vimeo and YouTube channels.

World Solar Challenge

As part of this internationally prestigious event, an RiAus team travelled from Darwin to Adelaide (and five regional centres on the official route), to share the science of solar power and promote this amazing transport technology of tomorrow.

Science Outside the Square

These family-focused engagements are held in conjunction with other community-based events. This year RiAus teamed up with the Italian Carnevale Festival and Tasting Australia to produce two hugely popular cultural events – the archaeology of Pompeii and a look at the science of cravings and taste, and food safety and security.

Science Behind the Headlines

In a collaboration between RiAus and AusSMC, this masthead event has been held regularly at The Science Exchange, providing a platform for scientists and the media to discuss the latest events and issues in science reporting.

RiAus Art and the FutureSpace Gallery

Our gallery space makes RiAus the ideal venue in which to bring together artists and scientists. Highlights this year included the RiAus Adelaide Reef, a crochet coral reef that engaged over 250 local crafters in the creation of beautiful artworks highlighting the mathematics of hyperbolic space, marine ecology and the environmental effects of pollution. The award-winning Art, Pattern and Complexity exhibition held during the Adelaide Fringe wowed audiences with a stunning exploration of art, science and mathematics.

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

In addition to events-based programs, RiAus also delivers a range of special projects and initiatives that target and provide opportunities for diverse audiences.

Free Range Science delivered 16 engaging activities across regional Victoria and continued its mission of science by stealth working in collaboration with local communities.

PDplus online briefings and teacher notes continued to provide professional development opportunities for teachers, delivered exclusively to schools, online.

VOLUNTEERS

RiAus has been a member of Volunteering SA & NT since opening in 2009. Volunteers assist with our programs by undertaking stewarding, photography and ticketing tasks as well as blogging about events and contributing to our social media presence. A volunteer directly contributed to the RiAus program by running a series of building tours at The Science Exchange. Volunteers are a crucial and valued part of RiAus operations, and we thank them for their continued efforts.



COMMUNICATING ONLINE

Further improvements have been made to the RiAus website throughout the year with benefits flowing from upgrades in late June 2011 and another in April 2012. Our aim is always to make access to our content as easy as possible for people viewing the website.

Our blog posts have continued to drive traffic, and the introduction of online chat during events has made it even easier for people, nationally and internationally, to be directly involved with our events.

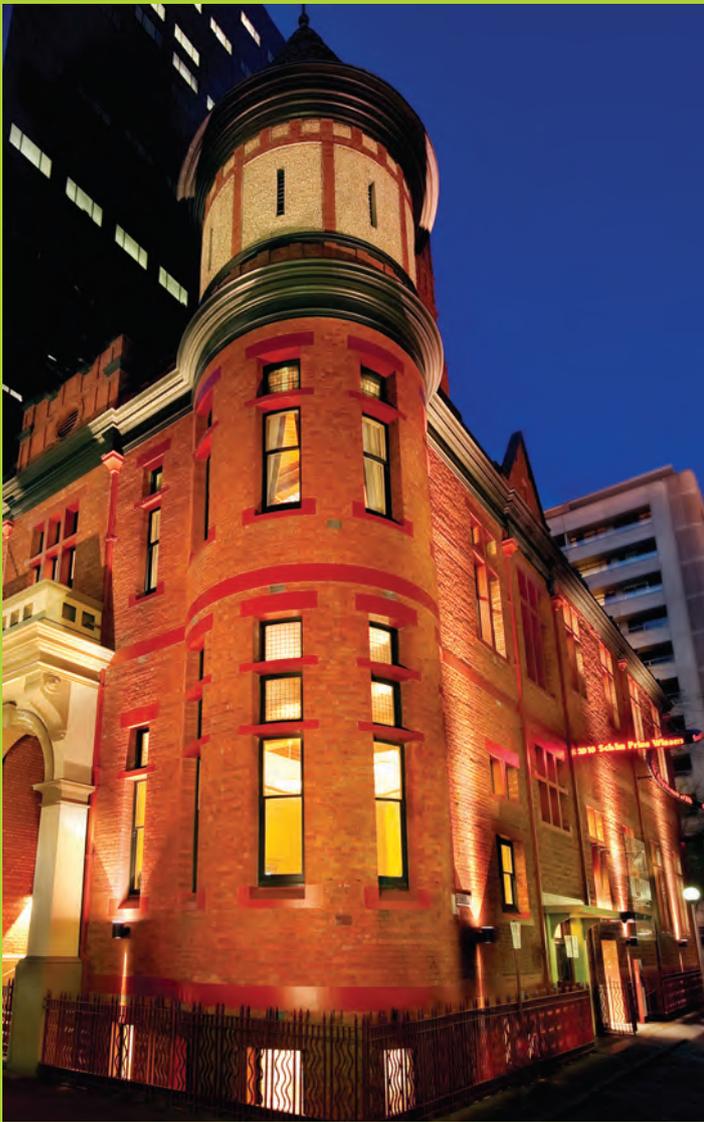
Social media doubled its growth, with 1598 Facebook and 1942 Twitter followers (up from 744 and 1004 respectively last year). Each week over 3760 people received our newsletter, which showcases our events and activities. Vimeo and YouTube views have also increased as people access our event content at their leisure.

Livestreaming has been a very successful tool to share science events with the world. During the livestreaming of the Transit of Venus our capacity was stretched to the limit with 7000 viewers in just one day.

Planning was undertaken for a new website for The Science Exchange. This will provide an easy way for venue hire clients to access information about our range of services and facilities. Having its own Facebook page also gives another avenue for information about the venue side of our activities.

The Royal Institution of Australia Inc Abridged Financial Statements year ended 30 June 2012

INCOME STATEMENT	2012	2011
INCOME		
Donations	155,212	141,530
Funding/Grants	2,260,575	2,090,766
Fundraising	90,700	–
Membership	26,213	14,259
Investment Income	616,597	909,395
Venue Hire	198,757	137,561
Other	189,094	93,793
Total Income	3,537,148	3,387,304
EXPENSES		
Programs	278,013	359,956
Contract Programs	424,232	412,139
Management & Administration	2,572,507	2,117,317
Investment Costs	49,089	40,242
Venue Hire	31,670	14,522
IT & Website	123,135	105,519
Depreciation	495,495	735,902
Other	61,642	69,613
Total Expenses	4,035,783	3,855,210
Net operating surplus/(deficit)	(498,635)	(467,906)
SUMMARY OF POSITION		
Current Assets		
Cash	8,054,284	9,512,238
Other Current Assets	349,469	347,239
Non-Current Assets		
Investments	4,367,501	4,719,708
Property, Plant & Equipment	2,391,478	2,747,406
Other non-current assets	2,624	2,277
Total Assets	15,165,356	17,328,868
Less Current Liabilities	7,035,793	9,323,241
Net Assets	8,129,563	8,005,627
Total Equity	8,129,563	8,005,627



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RiAus Council Members

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Prof Peter Andrews AO
Dr Gregory Clark
Sir Rod Eddington
Baroness Prof Susan Greenfield CBE
David Knox
Catherine Livingstone AO
Javier Moll
Martyn Myer AO
Prof John Yovich AM

RiAus recognises and is grateful for the financial support of its partners:

Foundation Partners:

Australian Government; Government of South Australia; and Santos Ltd.

Series Partners:

Free Range Science:

Victorian Government: Department of Business and Industry (DBI)

Road Safety Science:

Motor Accident Commission (MAC)

Education Partner:

South Australian Department of Education and Child Development.

Project Partners:

ASSETS:

Collier Charitable Fund; ElectraNet; Flinders University; IBM; Mining, Engineering and Education Academy (MEEA); OzMinerals; Santos Ltd; St George Foundation; Tim Fairfax Foundation; Queensland Government; UNESCO; University of Melbourne; University of Queensland; University of South Australia; University of Southern Queensland; University of Sydney; Wannik (Vic); and Warru Recovery Program

Community outreach:

Inspiring Australia, an initiative of the Australian Government

PDplus:

Adelaide Shores; Bendigo Bank; COSMOS Magazine; and Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education: National Enabling Technologies Strategy

RiAus Editing Suite:

South Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet

SpiRit of Science:

South Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet

Scinamations:

Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education: National Enabling Technologies Strategy

Event Partners:

ABC Catalyst; Adelaide Fringe Festival; ANZ; Arts SA; Bridge8; British Council Australia; CSIRO; Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education: National Enabling Technologies Strategy; DonatLife: Australian Organ and Tissue Authority; Inspiring Australia; National Science Week; New South Wales Government; South Australian Living Artists Festival (SALA); Sexpo; South Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet; South Australian Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology; Ultimo Science Festival; Walkerville Council; and World Solar Challenge.

The Royal Institution of Australia Inc (RiAus) is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (SA). The Royal Institution of Australia Inc is a Charitable Institution and is a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR).
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