THE ROYAL INSTITUTION
OF AUSTRALIA

Ri Aus

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Peter Yates AM
Chairman

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

From a national and international perspective, 2023 has acutely demonstrated the value of the Royal Institution of Australia to the nation.

Many pressing societal issues now come with exciting solutions, but with science at the core of understanding those issues and solutions. The societal impact requires that as many of us as possible have access to the necessary skills to interrogate and comprehend the science and the proposed solutions.

With the effects of climate change becoming more apparent in the global consciousness and the complexity of the energy transition required to solve the climate problem, now a day-to-day practicality, comfort in science, is at the core of success in our community's acceptance of climate change mitigation processes.

At the same time, more and more Australians have migrated to uncurated digital platforms as the place where they are increasingly turning for information. Accordingly, Australians are becoming exposed to more and more misinformation, some of which is maliciously designed to divide and disrupt us.

In this complex societal environment, our work of bringing science to the people and people to science has never been as important.

> "Comfort in science, is at the core of success in our community's acceptance of climate change mitigation processes.

Science of course, makes for a very broad genre of media, and in this regard, the Commonwealth government's draft scientific priorities is a useful agenda from which to consider what science we should bring to which audience with what objective. I am pleased to report many of these priorities have been, and are, covered by the Royal Institution of Australia in its publishing and educational output daily. While the Commonwealth has these draft scientific priorities, it is interesting to note that a policy to ensure the science behind these priorities is communicated to the public as effectively as possible is yet to be established. With effective communication and reporting to the public, these priorities could be more impactful and amplified in implementation. The Royal Institution of Australia endeavours to be one of the national instruments that ensures that these priorities and the most comprehensive understanding of the science behind them are communicated to as many people as possible.

I was encouraged in reviewing government science policy, to note that one of the KPIs set is to ensure equity and equality in access to scientific information in the community. Ensuring that as many Australians as possible have access to an introduction to the science in their lives is a principle that drives our strategy and is behind our partnerships and distribution activities.

Given that our role has never been as important, I'm happy to report that the organisation has risen to the occasion in its output to deal with the challenges of the times.

In the last year, we've redesigned and relaunched cosmosmagazine.com and the Royal Institution of Australia education websites. As a result, the audience to our digital products has increased pleasingly. Across all our platforms and syndicated distribution avenues we have reached more than 15 million people for the year, with nearly 50% of this reach coming from international audiences.

Also of note, the organisation has run three prominent national podcast programs. They are *The Science Briefing* and *Huh! Science Explained*, produced in conjunction with Southern Cross Austereo and *Debunks* with Nine Entertainment. *The Science Briefing* and *Debunks* have often featured in the top 10 science-based digital audio programs in Australia.

We've also launched more public lectures and events from our building in Adelaide, capturing these events on video and audio for wider distribution. Science City, one of these live events, is a monthly lecture series that we've implemented in the last few months and is held at lunchtime to invite city workers in Adelaide to our building to learn more about the science relevant to the economy and society.

Recently, we published the 100th edition of our quarterly *Cosmos* magazine. The occasion was celebrated with the inaugural Hope Oration delivered by Professor Mark Hutchinson. We also unveiled the Hope Mural that was commissioned to mark the 100th edition and featured on the magazine's front cover. We were honoured to receive Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, to unveil the Hope Mural and introduce the Hope Oration.

As Professor Hutchison noted in his address, science brings us facts, the foundation on which hope is built.

This year also saw the organisation front and centre in reporting the science behind the pardoning of Kathleen Folbigg, convicted 20 years ago for the deaths of her four children, who tragically died over several years. Painstaking and extraordinary scientific developments have shown that at least two of the children, possibly all four of them, were more likely to have died tragically due to a rare genetic condition.

> "We have reached more than 15 million people for the year, with nearly 50% of this reach coming from international audiences.

Our science newsroom has covered this story for many years leading up to Kathleen's release from prison this year and has played a crucial role in bringing an understanding of the genetics behind the story to the public. We are proud that we have been able to bring our journalism to a story that sees science underpinning justice.

As a not-for-profit, our content and social dividend precede any push to make content specifically for profit. However, we do need to earn income to sustain our activities. Our journalism and educational content takes a lot of work to create. And there is little precedent to work from in creating income from science content in Australia. In this light, we are very grateful to our major supporters, the South Australian Government, Google, the Walkley Foundation, and the Minderoo Foundation for their support. We're also happy to report that our other income-generating activities are gaining cadence as we aim to become financially self-sufficient, a journey that we forecast will take 4 to 5 years. We will complete year 2 of the plan in April 2024.

However, far more work needs to be done until I can report a sustainable long-term future for the organisation. We forecast our future in months rather than in years, doing what we can on a month-by-month basis to keep operating. Progress is being made. But we are far from a sustainable position. We're doing all we can to put the organisation's financial future on a surer footing.

Given the intensive and successful activity over the past year, both on content operations and the work being done to secure the organisation's financial future, I'd first like to thank the board for their attention and assistance. I'd also like to thank the Royal Institution of Australia team for its tireless effort in making and sustaining an organisation of excellence and importance to Australia.

Peter Yates AM
Chairman

Will Berryman
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As noted in the chairman's report, the organisation has performed well in delivering its mission. We've been able to maintain and grow our content platforms and continually improve our content quality. Our websites have been redeveloped, as have our podcasts and video programs. The result of this has been that our content is reaching farther and deeper into the community than before, which is the organisation's mission.

The RiAus has been able to maintain and increase its reach across digital platforms and deep reach into the community through designing and refining industrialised processes in content development and distribution that allow not only for reliable delivery, but also encourage a continual improvement culture in the quality of our content. This continual improvement is seen not only in our content creation and publishing parts of the organisation, but also in our education function and the function that delivers our public engagement and live events.

This means that a team of 17 people, complemented by a small team of freelance writers and contributors, can provide science to approximately 15 million people in a year across four podcasts per week and 35 to 40 features per week on our daily news site, cosmosmagazine.com. These processes also allow us to publish Australia's last science magazine *Cosmos*, available each quarter in both print and digital. The processes and the team also facilitate regular digital video programs, a national education program that provides teacher curriculum materials and teaching aids to over 8,000 educators, in-person teacher professional improvement programs, and hands-on lab sessions in our building for science students.

“

A team of 17 people, complemented by a small team of freelance writers and contributors, can provide science to approximately 15 million people in a year.

Our output also includes multiple public events each month in our building in Adelaide, captured in video and audio for distribution to global audiences. Each day, our staff can be heard on third-party national and local radio programs discussing science news. Our feature articles can be read in syndicated third-party avenues as we share our content with others, seeking to ensure that as many Australians as possible have access to science so that it can assist them in making sense of the complex world around them through the lens of facts that good science brings.

We assert that our social mission represents excellent value for money and that we use our resources, the product of South Australian government support, philanthropic donations, public donations, and our own modest commercial activities, efficiently and effectively.

Our partnerships with mainstream media organisations to seed science content, mainly through our podcast programs, firstly with Southern Cross Austereo and lately with Nine Entertainment, also includes the regular syndication of our text featured in national newspapers and digital publications, means that we are perhaps bringing a scientific perspective to readers, listeners and viewers who may not have engaged with science since they were in school.

Our education platform materials are reaching excellent Australian teachers who, due to circumstance, are teaching science to primary school and early high school students when they may not have had formal scientific training themselves, improving their effectiveness in teaching science at a time when in our experience, most if not all, young people find science fascinating and engaging.

Also, of the 15 million people a year who engage with us in some way, nearly 50% of them are reading, listening, or viewing our content outside of Australia, we have become a significant way that Australia reflects its scientific innovation and excellence internationally. There are a few other organisations in Australia that have the depth in connection to the public to reflect this vital part of Australian society, which is scientific endeavour, discovery, and free and independent speech and thought to the global community. Science and its communication represent an essential part of Australia's democracy and democratic values.

I believe Australia would be all the poorer without the Royal Institution of Australia, and Australia without the RiAus is an Australia without a critical avenue to improve its population's ability to enlighten itself. Without organisations like the RiAus, Australia becomes more exposed to the waves of misinformation sweeping through and unsettling the world. We take our unique mission and the responsibility that comes with it very seriously.

Examining the RiAus resource use you will find that nearly all our resource is pushed towards daily content creation in publishing, education, and engagement. This year, the organisation has added an engagement function to the team so that we can better measure our social dividend and make sure that what we are doing is having an impact and benefit to our mission. We hope, with further support, to grow this engagement so that we can learn how to make our content reach additional people and see if it is going where it is needed. I believe (and our own experience and data demonstrate) that those who peddle misinformation and untruths on digital platforms have better distribution and engagement strategies than those like us, who create content based on fact. We need to do the work and research to become more effective than the divisive forces in the community that seek to misinform and, consequently, unsettle us.

“

I believe Australia would be all the poorer without the Royal Institution of Australia, and Australia without the RiAus is an Australia without a critical avenue to improve its population's ability to enlighten itself.

Eighteen months ago, we received a very generous funding injection from the South Australian Government. And we're very grateful for this. This money has allowed us to continue and improve our publishing, education, and public engagement activities. But it's also allowed us to continue to develop those activities that derive income, and thus move us slightly closer to becoming eventually one day self-sustaining. Since the report last year, we've built and matured our advertising and sponsorship mechanics so that we can, with tight guidelines and controls, start to monetise the free content that we provide to the public. I'm happy to report that these new and sophisticated income channels are supplying the organisation with some modest revenue. We have also grown our income through grants by working with other organisations who share goals and KPIs with us. We thank both Google and the Walkley Foundation, for their support as together we try to improve Australia's access to factual content. We've also been successful with philanthropic support. We are very thankful for the Minderoo Foundation's support of our ocean and marine science content that has allowed us to develop and distribute our *Cosmos* 'Ultramarine' content to thousands of people. Since March this year, with the support of Minderoo, our ocean and marine science content has been viewed over 600,000 times.

The chairman, in his report, referred to the organisation's science news coverage of the Kathleen Folbigg matter. While it was a privilege to participate in the scientific community's quest to underpin justice with science that saw Ms. Folbigg released from prison, such coverage, is very resource intensive, and it is very difficult for a small organisation such as ours to undertake rolling daily news coverage, especially at a location well away from our office and sustain it with audio and video for weeks on end. We are grateful to the anonymous benefactors who donated to our organisation to allow us to comprehensively bring world-class scientific journalism, both impartial and factual, to this important case that saw justice delivered. And we also thank all those who, like us, value our position in society and have donated to the overall mission.

> "It is hard to deny that we represent a valuable input into the Australian community. Without us, there is a gap in the quest to combat misinformation and provision Australians with a knowledge toolset for the future.

In the last few months, our team has also rolled out a new initiative, the My Cosmos membership scheme. As many of you will know, most of our publishing content and all our educational content is free to the community. It is the basis of our mission. We do, however, publish some long-form and specialist content for those who want to dig deeper into science. The My Cosmos membership initiative allows members to access all this specialised content we create. At the same time, allows these members to donate and participate in the longevity of the mission of bringing science to the people and people to science. I'm pleased to report that we're starting to drive members to the initiative. But it's early days across all these income-generating activities.

Eighteen months ago, when we wrote the plan to develop self-sustaining lines of business for our not-for-profit organisation, and 12 months ago, when we kicked off the plan, we did note that we would need four to five years to mature these initiatives, such as we could rely on them to sustain us long into the future. As we enter year two of the plan, we will need another significant funding injection shortly to both operate the social mission and to continue to develop the self-sustaining activities that we need to cast a long-term view of the organisation into the future. The chairman expressed it so clearly in his report when he stated that we can only look forward in months and not years to our future. I want to be in a position where my head can say what my heart wants to say, that the RiAus, having served Australia for the last 15 years, will be able to serve it for the next 15 years. But at the current time, I cannot. However, intensive work is going on behind the scenes to secure this next injection of funding.

We hope to be in a position soon to cast a longer view of the organisation's future. It is hard to deny that we represent a valuable input into the Australian community. Without us, there is a gap in the quest to combat misinformation and provision Australians with a knowledge toolset for the future. We also represent excellent value for money in this undertaking. For these reasons, I have some confidence that we'll be able to secure the means we need so that next year, we can present a more long-term, strategic view of our future.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the board of the Royal Institution Australia for the support that I've received from them as I undertake this mission as Executive Director. I'd also like to thank the Chairman, Peter Yates, for the time and support that he gives the organisation and for the counsel and support that he gives me daily. I'd also particularly like to thank the staff. The organisation is only as good as the people who work in it and the passion they bring to their job. Without the staff, this organisation would not have achieved what it's completed in the last 12 months. I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank those who read our articles, listen to our podcasts, and watch our videos. It's your shared ambition for us that drives us forward each day to do a better job in providing science to the Australian community.

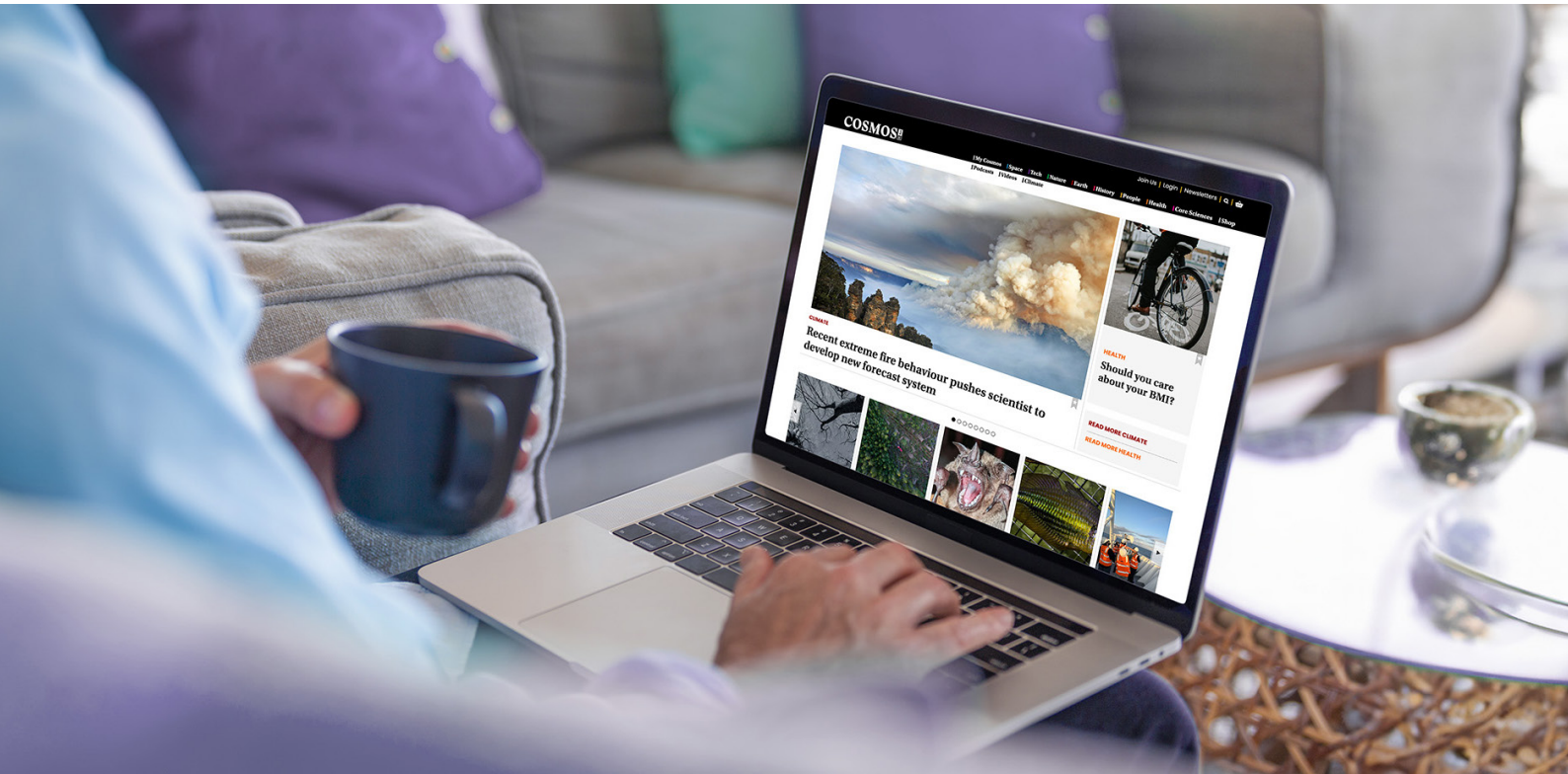
Will Berryman
Executive Director

COSMOS
THE SCIENCE OF EVERYTHING

Another busy year in the *Cosmos* newsroom, with a number of developments to grow our reach and to get science and scientific knowledge to where people are through multiple platforms.

Science journalists (clockwise from top left) Evrim Yazgin, Ellen Phiddian, Jacinta Bowler, Imma Perfetto, Petra Stock and Matthew Ward Agius

Our journalists – Ellen Phiddian, Jacinta Bowler, Imma Perfetto, Matthew Ward Agius, Petra Stock, and Evrim Yazgin produce about 50 articles – text, audio, and video each week. That's 2,500 items in the year. All the articles are based on science – some, particularly physics, chemistry, and biology – can be devilishly complex. Daily news is often fast-breaking. Often the interviewees are nervous and busy. Our team is young. The newsroom team deserves great praise for coming together and creating an atmosphere that is supportive of *Cosmos* goals, and the energetic approach in reaching them. The team also grasped new opportunities, with training in video and audio production; on-location reporting and news gathering; public speaking and dealing with news conferences. A growing relationship with the University of South Australia has resulted in a budding internship program and access to graduates in audio and video production in addition to journalism. We will develop this over the coming semesters.

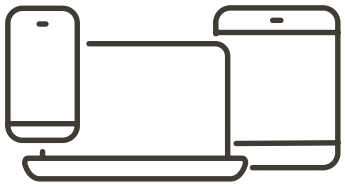


Website redesign

We've long known that the majority of our reads are on mobile and that readers are not being drawn to read more than the story they've come to. A refresh of the website with improved functionality has led to higher readership, increased engagement, and an increase in the number of stories viewed.

Daily digital

In the period cosmosmagazine.com grew to 19,600,685 page views. In addition to this impressive rise in numbers, the team worked on a series of in-depth projects engaging with science in a number of different ways for different audiences. Our work unpacking the science of the Folbigg Inquiry, explaining the complexity and the facts in a noisy world of opinion was a highlight.



MORE THAN 19 MILLION PAGE VIEWS

Another successful *Australian Mammal of the Year* (AMOTY) competition, attracted 127,661 views and more than 42,000 votes, and coverage on radio across Australia and national TV.

50,000 PEOPLE VOTED IN AMOTY 2023

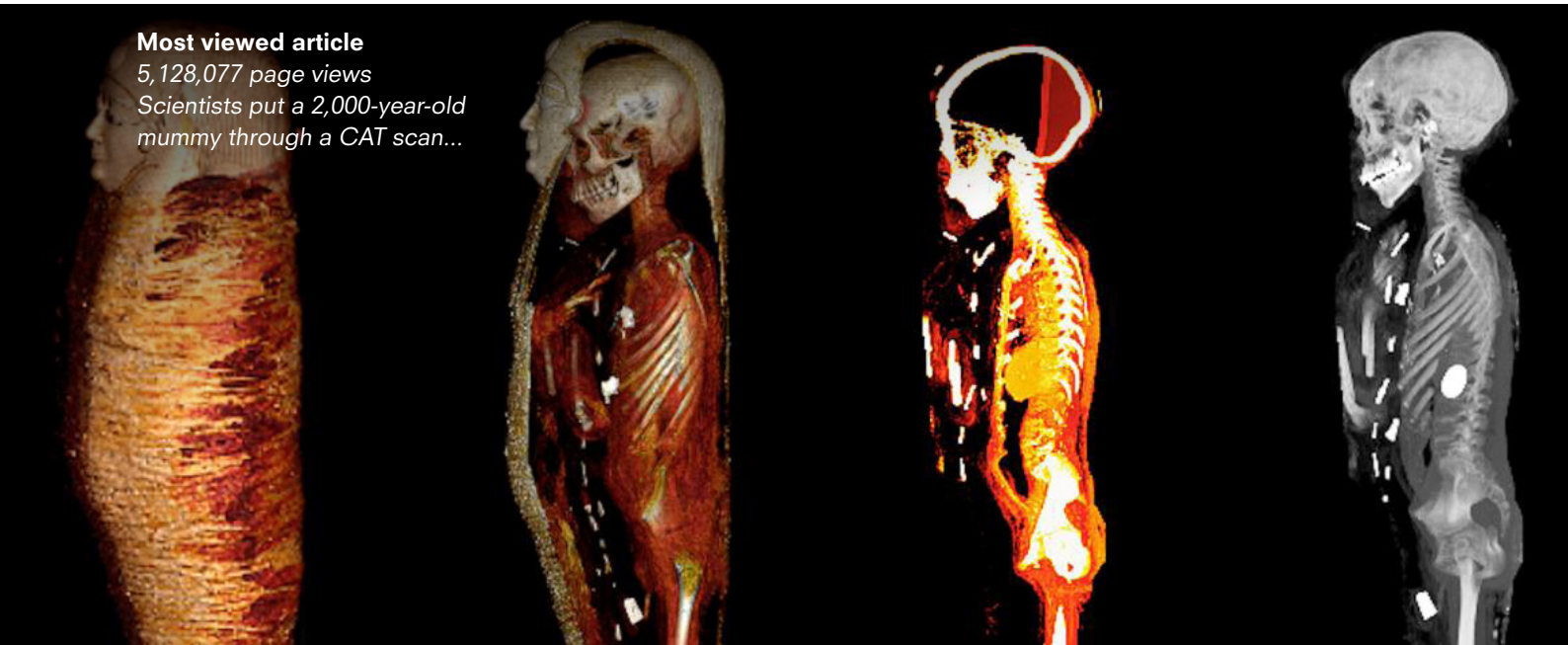
Articles that reflected our place in the media developed entirely in the newsroom, and which attracted substantial attention included: The problems with Peer Review; The SKA telescope; COVID-19; alternative EV energy sources, and brain injury.

The newsroom looked abroad this year to find stories in the Pacific nations and East Asia. Initially, this required us to reach out to universities in Australia's north, particularly James Cook Uni, and in New Zealand, but as contacts were made, we were able to begin sourcing content directly from the Pacific Islands, PNG, and Timor-Leste.

It has created more collaborations, such as teaming with the Australian Council of Learned Academies to create a list of outstanding scientists who were recognised as "Women of Science", coinciding with International Women's Day. It has also renewed a focus on Citizen Science, giving readers the chance to explore projects that might allow them to experience science by their own hand.

The newsroom has allocated a person to keep in touch with Citizen Science Australia and the South Australian branch and creates regular articles exploring new opportunities for citizens to become engaged in the scientific process and showcase the results of these collaborations.

As part of support from the Google News Initiative, we have been trialling new technology and forms – Web stories, which creates mobile-friendly digests of stories utilising AI tools, and Vidiofy, which offers quick turnaround short multimedia grabs of news stories for publication on our website and through social media.



Most viewed article
5,128,077 page views
Scientists put a 2,000-year-old mummy through a CAT scan...

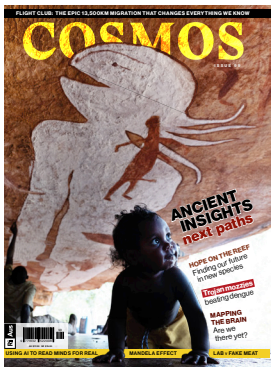
Cosmos Magazine
100th edition

Magazine

As Robyn Williams has pointed out, there are now more print magazines about tattooing produced in Australia than there are science magazines. At a time when science and scientific literacy have never been more important, we feel that responsibility keenly. We're delighted to bring the next generation onto the editorial team, with the addition of Lauren Fuge as the magazine's deputy editor. Lauren was an intern at both the Royal Institution and *Cosmos*, has degrees in both journalism and physics and is working towards a Ph.D. in creative writing. Her writing for *Cosmos* has won several awards, and her new long-form non-fiction book on the environment has been accepted for publication by Text Publishing in 2024.

Less happily, magazine subscriptions have declined, but the addition of an engagement manager to our team offers promise, with a strategic approach and a variety of levers being pulled and results analysed. This year we have also launched an audiobook version of the magazine read by professional voice actors and upgraded our pdf digital version to an all-singing, all-dancing interactive digital version which includes additional video and audio material.

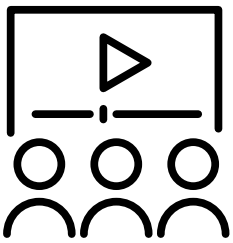
In more cheering news, an unprecedented six *Cosmos* articles were chosen for the annual anthology *Best Australian Science Writing*. *BASW* is chosen from the entire spectrum of science journalism published by an Australian in its 12-month qualifying period, and 25% of its articles came from the four annual issues of *Cosmos*. Two of the stories – Amalyah Hart's 'Model or Monster?' and 'Point of View' from last year's Bragg winner Lauren Fuge – have also been shortlisted for the Bragg Award for best science article of the year. 'Model or monster?' and Tania Ewing's 'The Clinical Trial That Learnt On The Go' were both highly commended in The Melbourne Press Club's Excellence in Science, Medical & Health Reporting category.



Podcasts

Audio is a genre of great growth in Australia, and we're growing with it. We have a number of streams, including The *Cosmos* podcast, where the newsroom explores different ideas and formats, including *Habichat* and *Would you rather…*, which grew to an audience of 1,500 listeners. We partnered with the National Youth Science Forum to create *Podcast Next Gen* where secondary school students offer their take on the big issues, from energy and climate, to kelp, tattoos, and vaping. These garnered more than 5,000 listens and invited younger Australians to join the *Cosmos* tribe. Our two podcasts on the LISTNR platform: *Science Briefing* and *Huh, Science Explained* reached an average monthly audience of 9,830 and 6,874 a month, covering daily science and explainers in two different ways for two new and loyal audiences. As a result of this learning, we are now partnering with Nine on *Debunks*, with the newsroom creating podcasts with increased competence and skills.

9,830
MONTHLY LISTENERS



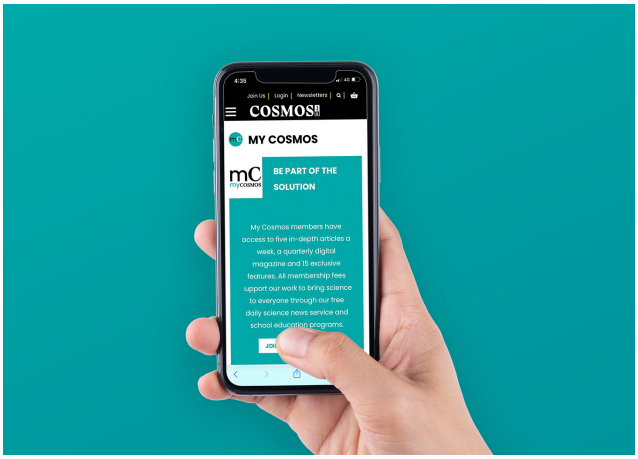
431,000
VIEWS ON YOUTUBE

Video

YouTube is a platform we positioned ourselves on many years ago, and still generates consistent and substantial audiences. For some stories, video is the best platform, and the team is being skilled up to deliver quickly and effectively, more in the style of TV news content instead of studio-based documentaries. Content created some years ago continues to draw a substantial audience. In the last financial year, our YouTube channel achieved 431,000 views; 49,000 hours of watching and has 17,000 subscribers.

Membership

Cosmos Weekly has undergone a metamorphosis to form the foundation of the Royal Institution's new offering of My Cosmos membership. This change aims to harness readers and supporters into a model that's relational, rather than transactional. Each week the newsroom posts five long-form articles to My Cosmos, drawn mostly from nearly two dozen freelance reporters, as well as material from the newsroom. Its subscribers also have access to online stories from *Cosmos* and its digital issues. Membership subscriptions continue to rise at a faster rate than *Cosmos Weekly*, with plans for its continued growth in the coming months.



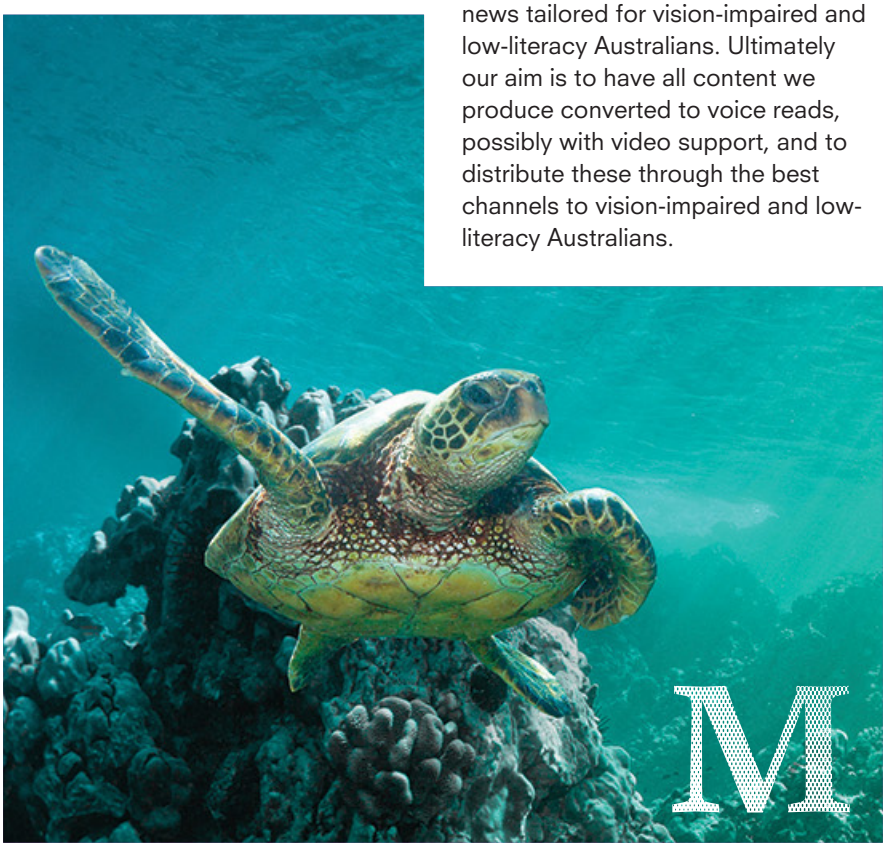
Advertising

A new approach to advertising has seen carefully curated banner ads on the site, and t-shirts for sale, with strategic advertising relationships with reputable brands such as universities in the works.

Greenlight project

Support from the Walkley Foundation in its second year enabled *Cosmos* to create content around the way regional and rural Australia is adapting to climate change and to look at Indigenous culture and technology. Under the banner "*Greenlight*," a small team of freelance reporters, led by Marie Lowe, and including Glenn Morrison and Jamie Seidel, created articles and occasional features. Articles such as recycling windfarm blades and the WA water table drew strong audiences.

Indigenous content was sourced from National Indigenous Times reporters who gave us an eye on events in remote parts of Australia.



Democratising science

Our major new externally funded – also by *Walkey Foundation* – project is an ambitious tilt at producing engaging science stories for a much wider range of reader capabilities. In stage one we commissioned a new writing and style guide from the *Plain English Foundation*; this has been in use in the newsroom for several weeks. We're now undertaking discussions with *Vision Australia* and the *Reading Writing Hotline* and its affiliates to understand the optimum way to produce science news tailored for vision-impaired and low-literacy Australians. Ultimately our aim is to have all content we produce converted to voice reads, possibly with video support, and to distribute these through the best channels to vision-impaired and low-literacy Australians.

Ultramarine and Energise

This year saw the launch of two specialist newsletters, *Ultramarine* – focussing on oceans science – and *Energise*, exploring the various and important research into various energy initiatives. The transition to clean energy is a story of national significance, and science will lead the way in developing new clean energy sources, giving *Cosmos* an opportunity to develop mining and energy, chemistry, and related physics content.

Support from the Minderoo Foundation has allowed us to create engaging stories about Australia's oceanic environment. We've created a multi-part feature on Saving the Great Barrier Reef and explored the Great Southern Reef, as well as providing regular material on the regions biology, exploration, agriculture, climatic importance, and sustainability.

EDUCATION

SUPPORTING STEM LEARNING

The resources RiAus Education provides continue to be recognised as a go-to source for verified and current STEM education content. 2023 has seen the incorporation of key initiatives, led by our new Education Manager, Michelle McLeod. Michelle brings a wealth of STEM education experience from her background in STEM education leadership and development of specialist STEM learning opportunities and programs, her committee membership of STEM education associations, and from her time as a teacher in residence within the University of Adelaide's Faculty of Sciences, Engineering, and Technology.

To enhance resource access for over 8,000 education members we have rolled out a comprehensive update to the RiAus education platform, with a design centred on better connecting our resources with key curriculum areas and learning topics, the format aims to streamline engagement and improve ease of use for our education members. A particular area of importance has been the incorporation of member feedback in the final design. The updated platform and further connections with education associations have supported the enhanced promotion of our content, including expanding school community participation in National Science Week with the inaugural Australian Mammal of the Year Colouring Competition, the 2023 SCINEMA International Film Festival, and the *Cosmos* magazine 100th Edition Reasons to Hope campaign.

8,000+

EDUCATORS SUBSCRIBED TO USE OUR RESOURCES

450,000
STUDENTS SUPPORTED

500
STUDENTS ATTENDED NEW STEM EXPERIENCE WORKSHOPS

2023 CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

- SASTA Annual Conference (within CONASTA 70)
- MASA* Annual Conference
- SASTA Early Career Teacher Conference
- SA STEM Connections Conference
- STEM Day Out
- Science Alive
- STEM Aboriginal Learners Congress

** MASA – Mathematics Association of South Australia*

A popular key initiative has been the introduction of a STEM Experience Workshop program. Designed for upper primary and middle secondary school groups, these student-centred events aim to foster interest and engagement in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, bridging the gap between school-based STEM and STEM careers, whilst also showcasing how STEM makes a positive impact in our world.

Run at school sites and at The Science Exchange with content created across other Royal Institution of Australia divisions, these events have been very well received and they also help further collaborations with tertiary institutions, including the University of Adelaide's Architecture and Civil Engineering and Chemical Engineering schools. Events incorporating soap making, chemical engineering and entrepreneurship, civil engineering, town planning, and stem communication and filmmaking techniques, have allowed us to welcome over 500 students and 50 teachers from 25 schools across metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia, including over 100 students from the 2023 South Australian Aboriginal STEM Learner Congress.

Across 2023 our education manager has furthered our strong presence (including sponsorship) at professional learning conferences and STEM student events, including a continued presence at Australia's largest science education conference, CONASTA.

CONASTA 70, held in Adelaide in 2023, brought together education delegates from across Australia. In addition to an exhibitor booth showcasing the updates and enhancements to our popular education portal, our education manager facilitated two workshops.

As a professional learning facilitator and organising committee member for several South Australian events, our education manager has furthered our connections and engagement across STEM education associations and communities, including the South Australian Science Teachers Association (SASTA), the Oliphant Science Awards, and New South Wales and South Australian education departments.

SCINEMA
INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FILM FESTIVAL

The SCINEMA International Science Film Festival in 2023 attracted a large number of registrations and a diverse selection of science films from around the world. This year's festival showcased the global interest in science and celebrated outstanding contributions to the genre.

33 TOTAL COUNTRIES

Registrations and Audience

The film festival saw 1,543 registrations to participate in screenings with 706 hours spent on viewing time, and an estimated audience of around 27,000. Registrations were more than double the number from the previous year, indicating the festival's growing popularity. Registrations also included 416 schools, of which 27 were international, including 22 from New Zealand.

Film Submissions

Films were submitted from all over the world, with 33 countries contributing their science-themed productions, including many junior film makers keen to make their mark. The top five participating countries were Australia, New Zealand, the United States, the United Kingdom, and India. This diverse representation reflects the festival's international stature and the global interest in science filmmaking.

Best Short Film:
"The Underground Astronaut,"
directed by Marleine van der Werf
from the Netherlands.

Best Documentary/Film:
"Fields of Devotion,"
directed by Dena Katzen Seidel and Micah Seidel

Education and Engagement

SCINEMA continued to foster its relationship with education as a tool for educators during National Science Week. The festival has firmly established itself as an engaging and entertaining activity for schools, providing a valuable platform for science communication and education. The new interface implemented in 2023, allowing viewers to select and watch films at their convenience, was particularly well-received by registered participants.

4,528
VIDEO VIEWS

416
SCHOOLS

706
HOURS WATCHED

Social Impact Award:
"Digital Energy Futures,"
directed by Sarah Pink

Award for Scientific Merit:
"Fungi: Web of Life,"
directed by Joseph Nizeti and Gisela Kaufmann

Conclusion

The SCINEMA International Science Film Festival in 2023 continues to draw a diverse array of filmmakers and this year's substantial increase in registrations is a great step for the future. The festival's impact on science communication and education was once again underscored, and it remains a significant event for science enthusiasts, filmmakers, and educators worldwide. SCINEMA looks forward to building on this success in the future, continuing its mission of celebrating and promoting science through the art of filmmaking.

INCOME STATEMENT	2023	2022
Income		
Donations	188,240	37,984
Grants	385,333	130,000
Publishing	373,878	384,682
Investment Income	-	231,933
Other	158,184	72,601
SA Government Funding	2,430,000	-
Total Income	*3,535,635*	*857,200*
Expenses		
Programs & Publishing	1,746,958	1,359,539
Management & Administration	982,147	1,059,664
Investment Costs	-	15,505
IT & Website	61,181	147,048
Depreciation	25,317	49,092
Other	20,690	36,708
Total Expenses	*2,836,294*	*2,667,557*
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	*699,341*	*(1,810,357)*

BALANCE SHEET	2023	2022
Current Assets		
Cash	2,346,922	1,409,553
Other Current Assets	145,459	194,407
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant & Equipment	44,854	65,003
Other Non-Current Assets	50,425	
Total Assets	*2,587,660*	*1,668,963*
Current Liabilities	871,333	650,510
Non-Current Liabilities	16,807	18,273
Total Liabilities	*888,140*	*668,783*
Net Assets	*1,699,520*	*1,000,180*
Total Equity	*1,699,520*	*1,000,180*

Partners

The Royal Institution of Australia is grateful for the financial and in-kind support of its partners:

Government of South Australia.
Department for Education South Australia
The Walkley Foundation
Google
Minderoo Foundation
Inspiring SA

The Royal Institution of Australia Inc. Council Members

Patron

Honorary Bragg Members

The Royal Institution of Australia Inc., 55 Exchange Place, Adelaide, SA 5000
08 7120 8600 | science@riaus.org.au | riaus.org.au