



**The Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT)**

**Queensland**

**Annual General Meeting 2021 (10PD)**

**Followed by PD Session: "Interpreters and Translators at the Frontline Series: Ethics with a Difference" presented by Patricia Avila (10 PD)**

**DRAFT Minutes**

The 2021 Annual General Meeting was attended by 38 AUSIT members and other guests.

1. The AGM was declared open via Zoom at 9:00 AM.
2. Sam Berner (Chair) acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Land and welcomed participants.
2. Anna Jenman (Secretary) informed there were 38 participants present, no apologies.
4. Renata Oliveira moved to accept last year's AGM minutes, 83% of participants approved it.
5. Sam presented the Chair's annual report for 2020-2021:

She stated that the onset of Covid brought an eventful year. Even with all the challenges imposed by the pandemic, the QLD Branch has done better than expected, providing high quality professional development, representing members in various forums, and growing local memberships.

There were a few face-to-face committee meetings and two face-to-face events in between lockdowns. It was a busy year for the committee and members. Special thanks to Leisa Maia, PD Coordinator, that has organised PD events online throughout the year, including the PD presented after the AGM by Patricia Avila on ethics.

Sam thanked the Committee and informed that some members were stepping down and nominations from the floor were acceptable then.

**Professional Development Report:**

Leisa Maia, PD Coordinator, has organised six webinars since last AGM. Due to Covid, these events were made available nationwide. In total, these events attracted 750 registrants.

There were also two face-to-face events: Networking Coffee, at the Botanical Gardens; and Poetry, Wine, and Cheese, facilitated by one of the branch members.

AUSIT and NAATI came together to offer 20 scholarships in collaboration with TAFE SA and RMIT to speakers of languages in demand to prepare for the NAATI Certification Exam. Seven recipients successfully graduated from the 10 week long course in December 2020. The QLD branch is planning to offer another set of scholarships soon with the remaining funds.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Treasurer Natasha Ziada informed that the QLD branch had excellent result for the 2020/21 financial year despite challenges due to COVID-19. A combination of professional development workshops and webinars that generated revenue and careful management of expenses resulted in a substantial income increase from approximately \$4,000 AUD in 19/20 FY to almost \$13,000 in 20/21 FY.

This growth was possible due to the quality of events offered by the QLD branch and venue expenses reduction. A summary of results can be viewed on page 15 of report.

### **Membership Report:**

Sorgul Maho, membership officer, informed that the QLD branch surpassed its strategic growth goal of 20% last financial year. Last year, there were 209 active members and now there are 305 members, an increase of approximately 50%.

## **6. External Committees Representation:**

**Renata Oliveira** represented AUSIT at CRH advisory group, part of a project run by True Relationships and Reproductive Health (TRUE). The group delivers workshops for interpreters and translators specifically in the area of Reproductive and Sexual Health. Traditionally, this training was offered as a face-to-face modality in Queensland; however, since the pandemic, it has become available online and is now accessible across Australia.

**Elisabeth Kissel** has been working a project between the Institute of Professional Editors and AUSIT. The project proposes affiliation between the two organisations which will allow members to attend events at member's rate. The project has been approved by NC in August.

**Mariam Elliott** attended the Refugee Health Interpreter Working Group QLD that discusses issues affecting interpreters assisting CALDs in health settings. Discussions include interpreter's pay, working conditions, barriers to engage interpreters and, recently, working to improve booking systems.

**Andrea Dallape** represented AUSIT at the NAATI Regional Advisory Committee to address regional challenges of the profession and provide advice to the NAATI's Board of Director. One of the issues discussed by RAC recently was the challenge faced by service providers in accessing the services of credentialed interpreters.

## **7. Committee point of view:**

AUSIT committee members explained the benefits of being part of the committee and invited members to join.

Secretary Anna Jenman has been a member for the past three years. She finds the team engaging, even though there were not many face-to-face meetings last year. “Sam is an inspiring leader”.

Leisa Maia, PD coordinator for the past 4 years, is stepping down. “Translation is a solitary job, being part of the committee has an added benefit to talk to peers and socialise in a professional environment.” She also considers her participation rewarding, “as it pushes you out of your comfort zone”. Leisa was grateful for her participation. It has brought her growth and opportunity to represent the profession, besides the added value to her cv.

Treasurer Natasha Ziada was a newcomer last year. She said the committee made her feel valued, even without experience. Having most of her clients overseas, made her feel removed from the industry but committee participation provided an understanding of AUSIT and connection to the profession.

Elisabeth Kissel has been a member of AUSIT for 10 years, 8 years in the committee. “Camaraderie and fellowship are the most valuable benefits of being part of the committee.” For Elisabeth, the opportunity of getting the first news about the T&I industry is an added value, besides increasing potential clients and network.

Sam Berner, outgoing Chair, joined in 2003 and has been a member for 18 years. She has won two awards and a fellowship, which she considers the highest possible honour a member can get because it is your peers recognizing your work for the profession. She said being part of AUSIT has giving her empowerment, knowledge, emotional maturity, and professional growth. When Sam joined AUSIT, there were 365 members. Today, there are over 3,000. Sam enumerated some of the benefits of being part of AUSIT: represented AUSIT at RAC Advisory Committee, organised two conferences, increased her network, met clients, and made lifelong friends. “Camaraderie and collaboration” have motivated her to work hard. As she steps down, she thanked everyone she has met, especially the committee. “Thank you for making my life worth living”.

## **8. Excellence Award**

Every year, AUSIT offers Excellence Awards to thank members for their engagement in the profession. Four students from the University of Queensland Master of Art program in T&I Japanese and Chinese won the award this year:

Hui Shi, Master of Art in Chinese T&I

Mariko Kishi-Debski, Master of Art in Japanese T&I

Brendan Tran, Master of Art in Japanese T&I

Yingqi Bi, Master of Art in Chinese Translation

## **9. Election**

Sam thanked the members and the committee and closed the AGM at 9:39 am and opened the election 21-22 for the QLD branch committee. There were 48 participants, but only current members were permitted to vote. The names of nominated committee members were then read out and the AGM was asked to vote in by zoom poll.

## **10. Voting result**

The following members were elected:

Natasha Ziada – Treasurer

Andrea Dallape – Secretary

Renata Oliveira – Committee member

Leisa Maia – Committee member

Elisabeth Kissel – Committee member

Zhen Guan – Committee member

Mariam Elliott – Committee member

Haifaa Elkadi – Committee member

Dylan J Hartmann – Committee Member

Han Xu – Committee member

Carina Mackenzie – Committee member

Leaksmey Khmer – Committee member

Sam welcomed the new committee and closed the event at 10:05.