



# ANZACA

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND  
ASSOCIATION OF CLINICAL ANATOMISTS

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*This newsletter has been compiled and  
edited by*

**DR MANISHA DAYAL**

*If you have anything you'd like to contribute  
to the newsletter, please email:  
[m.dayal@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:m.dayal@westernsydney.edu.au)*



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# The President's Report



Kia ora koutou, and welcome to our first newsletter of 2025. It is great to be able to share some ANZACA news with you all, and to introduce our Council for this year. We welcome new Council members Leanne Kenway, Heath McGowan, and Junhua Xiao, alongside Kajaal Prasad who has taken on the student representative role. At the end of last year we farewelled long-standing Council members Michelle Lazarus and Mark Midwinter, and sincerely thank them for their contributions over many years. I would also like to thank Annemiek Beverdam and her New South Wales team for hosting a successful ANZACA 2024 conference in Dubbo, with a theme of Inclusive Anatomy. As you will read about on the following pages, delegates were not only treated to an engaging array of presentations, but also unique opportunities to network and sample the local hospitality.

There are a number of important ANZACA events on the horizon, including this year's conference, which will be run as an online event (4–5 December, 2025; more information to follow soon). In addition, ANZACA will be hosting the next International Federation of Associations of Anatomists (IFAA) Congress in Melbourne, August 13–16, 2026 – with a theme of Anatomy is for Everyone. A small local organising team has been formed, and will soon be seeking volunteers to help with many aspects of this Congress. This promises to be an exciting event and opportunity to showcase anatomy across Australia and New Zealand, so please spread the word to your colleagues, whether local or international and register your interest now!

We welcome any feedback or suggestions in relation to all things ANZACA, so please get in touch at any time.

Kā mihi,  
Steph

# Meet the Council 2025

## PRESIDENT

### Professor Stephanie Woodley



Dr Stephanie Woodley is a Professor at the University of Otago, based in the Department of Anatomy. Coming from a physiotherapy background, Steph really enjoys teaching clinical anatomy to physiotherapy, science students and practicing, mentoring postgraduate research students and contributing to continuing education opportunities for health professionals. Her research focuses on the musculoskeletal system, with a particular interest in the hip and pelvic regions, imaging and clinical assessment, as well as anatomical education. Steph is a section editor (Pelvic Girdle and Lower Limb) of Gray's Anatomy: The Anatomical Basis of Clinical Practice and has recently been appointed one of the secretaries for the International Federation of the Associations of Anatomists (IFAA).

## VICE PRESIDENT



Dr. Awais Saleem Babri is a accomplished clinician, academic, and researcher in biomedical sciences, specializing in anatomy and clinical education. Currently at the University of Queensland's School of Biomedical Sciences, he excels in course coordination, curriculum redesign, and innovative teaching, including virtual reality (VR) integration in anatomy education. Holding a PhD in Anatomy and a Graduate Certificate in Clinical Education, Dr. Saleem has received multiple teaching awards, such as the UQ Citations Award and UQMS Best Teacher Award for Pre-Clinical Years. He is actively involved in professional organizations like ANZACA and ANZAHPE. His research focuses on VR in medical education, surgical training with sEMG, and student-centered learning, and he has presented globally and secured numerous research grants.

## TREASURER NEW ZEALAND:

### Dr Natasha Flack



Dr Natasha Flack is a Lecturer at the University of Otago, based in the Department of Anatomy and teaches gross anatomy to science, physiotherapy and physical education students at all levels of tertiary education. Natasha's primary research interest is in the musculoskeletal anatomy of the lower limb, and aims to provide scientific, anatomical evidence for improving clinical treatments, procedures and outcomes by incorporating a range of techniques such as imaging (MRI, ultrasound etc), dissection and histology into her research approaches.

In her anatomical sciences education research Natasha is focused on student's perceptions of learning anatomy and in particular the role that using cadaveric tissue plays in the success of learning anatomy. Natasha is currently involved in studies that look at science students' perceptions of using cadaveric tissue, and what support systems are in place, and/or are needed to ensure the success of their learning. She is also interested in the link between motivation, attendance and learning, and identifying particular threshold concepts that may be associated with learning advanced anatomical knowledge. Natasha has been an elected Council member for ANZACA since 2018, and the NZ Treasurer since 2020.

## TREASURER AUSTRALIA:

### Associate Professor Erik Wibowo



Dr Erik Wibowo is the Australian Treasurer for the ANZACA. He is an Associate Professor in anatomy in the School of Medical Sciences at the University of Sydney. Some of his research interests are focused on anatomy education and also student wellbeing. His active projects include investigating students' visual attention to anatomical variation, profiles of students who use anatomy museum resources, and insomnia symptoms among medical students.

## SECRETARY:

### Associate Professor Aaron McDonald



Dr Aaron McDonald is an Associate Professor at La Trobe University, based in the Department of Microbiology, Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology. He has taught Human Anatomy to University students for over 20 years. His research began by investigating skeletal system development and disease, but has shifted to educational research encompassing assessment, online learning and digital technologies. Additionally, he is involved in dissection-based research into the topography of anatomical structures. Aaron is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and has won multiple teaching awards including an Australian Award for University Teaching citation.

## IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:

### Associate Professor Quentin Fogg



Quentin is an Associate Professor in Clinical Anatomy at The University of Melbourne, Australia. He earned a degree in Anatomy, followed by a PhD in Clinical Anatomy, from The University of Adelaide. He has more than 25 years of experience teaching head-to-toe anatomy in Australia, North America and the UK. In recognition of excellence in Clinical Anatomy education and research, he was elected to Full Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow in 2013. He specialises in advanced anatomy education and research for active clinicians. His work aims to enhance our understanding of detailed anatomy, especially in the limbs, and to apply that to clinical practice. He is a co-founder of the Melbourne Academy of Surgical Anatomy, an examiner for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and a frequent collaborator with surgical specialties and related industry. He was previously President of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Clinical Anatomists (2021-2024) and is the co-chair of the forthcoming 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists (IFAA) to be held in Melbourne in August, 2026.



# Meet the Council 2025

## COUNCIL MEMBER

### Associate Professor Krisztina Valter

A/Prof Krisztina Valter MD, PhD, GradCertHE, SFHEA is the discipline lead of Human Anatomy and Chair of the Medical Sciences Theme in the graduate-entry medical program (MChD) in the School of Medicine and Psychology at the Australian National University. She has been teaching anatomy and neuroscience to undergraduate and medical students for over 20 years. She has co-designed and co-convenes the Exquisite Corpse transdisciplinary course that combines techniques and the knowledge of visual arts and the anatomy of the human body. She received a number of educational awards, including a Citation for Excellence in Teaching from the Office of Learning and Teaching. She has a great interest in educational research and has been publishing in this field. Dr Valter graduated at the Semmelweis Medical University, in Budapest, Hungary, subsequently became an ophthalmic specialist and a Fellow of the Hungarian Ophthalmologist Society. She is a senior researcher in the John Curtin School of Medical Research, ANU. Her vision research focuses on non-invasive treatments for retinal degenerative diseases.

Image taken by Tracy Nearnby

## COUNCIL MEMBER:

### Associate Professor Junhua Xiao

Dr Junhua Xiao (MBBS, PhD, FHEA) is an Associate Professor of Digital Anatomy in the School of Health Sciences, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia. After completing her medical training, she undertook PhD research in neuroscience at the University of Melbourne. Junhua has extensive experience in the design and implementation of systemic anatomy, regional anatomy and neuroanatomy curricula in medicine, allied health and biomedical sciences, with a particular interest in human anatomy teaching and research integrating digital technologies and neuroimaging. Junhua serves on the Editorial Boards of Biochemistry and Cell Biology, BMC Medical Education. She has led large-scale multidisciplinary research projects funded through national and international funding agencies. In 2021, Junhua established the Digital Anatomy Network as the Founding Director. At Swinburne, she serves as the Deputy Department Chair of Biomedical, Health and Exercise Sciences and is the Digital Health Program Lead at the Iverson Health Innovation Research Institute.

## COUNCIL MEMBER:

### Dr Leanne Kenway

Dr Leanne Kenway is a Senior Lecturer of Anatomy and Physiology in the School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences at Griffith University. Her clinical experience as a physiotherapist enables her to provide an authentic context for her undergraduate health students in her large foundation year Anatomy and Physiology course. Bringing real-world examples to the classroom helps students consolidate knowledge and make relevant connections between the anatomical sciences and clinical populations. She has published in the field of behavioural Neuroscience and the use of digital software applications to supplement anatomy teaching to undergraduate allied health students and has been awarded for developing 3D digital cadavers to enhance student learning, online engagement and success. She is currently exploring the use of a translanguaging pedagogical approach to anatomy learning to foster the superpowers of multilingual learners and is passionate about helping students develop skills for lifelong learning (and a love of anatomy)! Leanne is excited to be an elected ANZACA Council member for 2025-2026.

## COUNCIL MEMBER:

### Dr Heath McGowan

Dr Heath McGowan is a Senior Lecturer of Human Anatomy in the Department of Microbiology, Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology at La Trobe University. Heath has been teaching Anatomy for 15 years. Initially researching bone resorptive diseases, his research has now evolved to be focused on the implementation and analysis of digital anatomical resources. Heath has won a number of awards for his teaching and research, including a 2021 Australian Award for University Teaching citation.

## SOCIAL MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE:

### Dr Saeed Shokri

Dr. Shokri has an education professional with a Ph.D. focused in Anatomical Sciences from Tehran University of Medical Sciences. Then, he took an internship in Prof. Robert John Aitken's lab at the University of Newcastle, Australia (2009). During his stay in his lab, he studied signal transduction cascades activated by insulin in the male germline, and he gained a good knowledge of Human Sperm Biology. The data currently were published in the Molecular and Cellular Endocrinology. Dr. Shokri also moved to Lund University-Sweden in 2015 and started his job as a post-doctoral researcher with an intense focus on male infertility. Dr. Shokri, with a deeper understanding of the importance of medical education, has been a professional and experienced lecturer in Anatomical Sciences, including human anatomy, histology, embryology, and cell biology, since 2003. He has worked as a lecturer at the School of Rural Health (Dubbo/Orange) at the University of Sydney Since 2021. He has been promoted to senior lecturer (Education focused) since January 2023. He started his new role at the School of Medical Sciences (SoMS).

## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

### Kajaal Prasad

Kajaal is a Dissection Scientist at Nepean Hospital's Anatomical Pathology department and a PhD candidate at Western Sydney University, where she focuses on developing 3D printed breast specimens for dissection training. She holds a Bachelor of Medical Science in Anatomy & Physiology, a Master of Research, and is an anatomical pathology trainee with the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) Faculty of Science. With experience across both private and public healthcare sectors, Kajaal specialises in dissection training, supervision, and competency assessment for technicians and pathology trainees. She mentors research projects utilising 3D printed models in breast cancer research. Passionate about enhancing educational resources and improving knowledge retention in anatomical pathology, Kajaal also collaborates with Western Sydney University to engage students and promote dissection as a viable career pathway.

## COUNCIL MEMBER (NEWSLETTER EDITOR):

### Dr Manisha Dayal

Manisha is a Senior Lecturer at Western Sydney University. She is human anatomist and forensic anthropologist with more than 20 years of teaching and research experience. Her teaching philosophy is focussed on student engagement, especially as seen in her experience using Flipped classrooms. Manisha's primary research interest is in forensic anthropology standards; anatomical variation and its consequences in surgery; and 3D printed technology in learning. She is currently involved in looking to improve anatomical knowledge retention through hands on 3D printed models for health science students as well as pathology trainees.



# ANZACA Conference 2024



The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual ANZACA conference was held in the RSL in Dubbo, 3-5 December 2024. A wonderful group of anatomists from all over rural NSW had been working very hard across the year to put the conference together: Dr James Wickham (CSU Orange), Dr Monique Pointon (CSU Dubbo), Dr Natalia Bilton (CSU Port Macquarie), and A/Prof Annemiek Beverdam (USYD SRH Dubbo), with the amazing support of ANZACA Council members A/Prof Krisztina Valter (ANU), Dr Manisha Dayal (WSU), Professor Stephanie Woodley (Otago), A/Prof Erik Wibowo (USYD), Dr Saeed Shokri (USYD), Dr Saleem Babri (UQ) and A/Prof Quentin Fogg (UniMelb).

Overall, 74 delegates attended the conference mostly from Australia and NZ but also from the UK and USA, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Korea, and India. It was a true international anatomy feast!

The conference theme was Inclusive Anatomy, and there was a strong focus on anatomy in rural areas of Australia with sessions dedicated to Rural Education and Indigenous health care, education and research. Other sessions included Online Education Resources, Gamification, Educational Research, Anatomy visualization, Educational research and Clinical Anatomy Research. There were also two rapid fire sessions to give all poster presenters a chance to show their work to all conference attendees.

Uncle Lewis Burns opened the conference by Welcoming us all to the Country of the Wiradjuri People. Dubbo Mayor Josh Black welcomed us to the town of Dubbo, and conference host and Deputy Head of School A/Prof Randall Greenberg, the Conference Chair A/Prof Annemiek Beverdam (USYD SRH Dubbo), and the ANZACA President A/Prof Quentin Fogg (UniMelb) welcomed the conference delegates to the conference.

Keynote speakers were the amazing Dr Samuel Webster of Swansea University in the UK. He delivered a workshop where he told us about his journey setting up an effective YouTube channel for anatomical sciences education, and covered the revolution of digital technology in anatomy education. He also delivered the opening keynote: a teaching toolbox. Our second keynote speaker was Professor Mark Arnold, the Chief Medical Officer of the Western NSW Local Health District who stressed the importance of anatomy education of healthcare in rural and in metropolitan areas. Dr Claudia Diaz of CSU Albury-Wodonga delivered a fun, hands-on workshop on body painting as a method to teach anatomy. In her keynote, Claudia spoke about innovative education approaches in rural Australia.

On the first day of the conference, there were also workshops by Dr James Wickham (CSU Orange) on the use of plastinated specimens in anatomy education, by Dr Natalia Bilton (CSU PMQ) and Dr Monique Pointon (CSU Dubbo) on how to teach anatomy in a rural context, and by Professor Michelle Lazarus (Monash) on the influence of cultural hegemony, uncertainty tolerance, and cultural literacy on sustainable diversity, equity and inclusion.

# ANZACA Conference 2024- contin.

We were very honoured to have a lecture delivered by A/Prof Jason Organ, the Editor in Chief of Anatomical Sciences Education, who outlined how the peer review process works at the journal. A very helpful session for all of us aspiring authors in this prestigious journal! We also had a feature session by Dr Clare Aland of UQ who spoke about ethical issues relating to the use of histology slide collections, and she presented a framework to inform best practices in their curation and use in education.

Besides the scientific sessions, there was also a great social program. Dr Russell Young delivered two very wholesome yoga sessions, and we were massively inspired by Claudia Diaz' fantastic exhibition of body paint art. There was a great welcome cocktail evening on an outside balcony of the Dubbo RSL overlooking Dubbo on a balmy summer evening where colleagues from far and wide had a good opportunity to reconnect. The conference was concluded by a wonderful conference dinner at the Dubbo zoo, where, as on cue a group of kangaroos with joeys appeared on the terrace, to the enormous delight of our international guests. A guided zoo tour happened for some fresh-faced delegates on the morning after the conference dinner where they had the opportunity to get close and personal with the wildlife and to feed the giraffes. Delegates and the larger ANZACA community remained connected via the ANZACA WhatsApp group, which has been a super-fun conference feature, which remained active and chatty for weeks after everyone had left Dubbo.

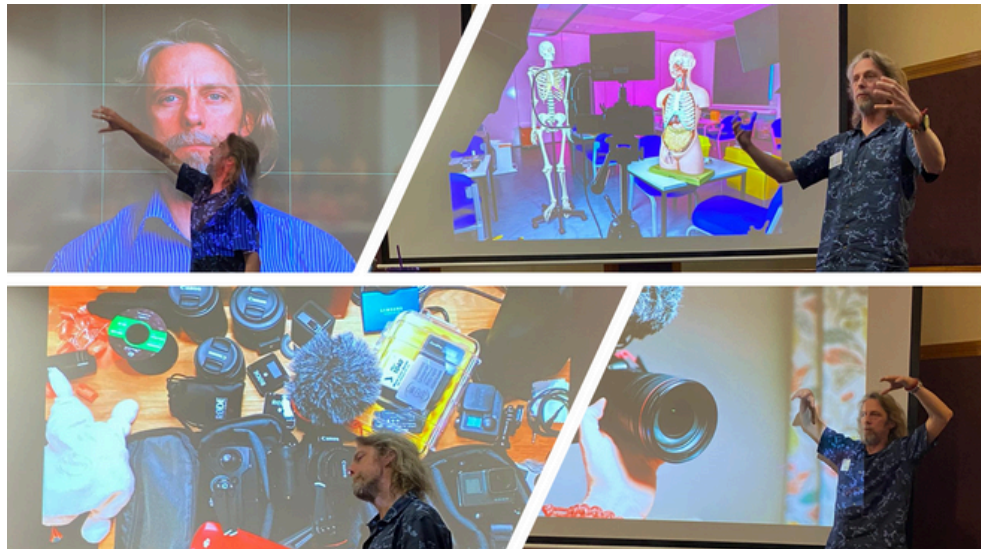
The conference has been a great success and could not have happened without our wonderful sponsors The University of Sydney School of Rural Health Dubbo, Elsevier, Western Sydney University School of Science, Primal Pictures, Zeiss, Wolters Kluwer, Anatomedia, APE Medical and Dubbo City Council. And also a huge shout out to our amazing student helpers who were truly the oil in the wheels of the conference: Jason d'Apice (CSU Dubbo), the USYD SRH Year 1 medical students Andre McDuling, Daniel Weber, Cate King, Sofia Rundbach, Carolyn Lundie, Maddy Chisholm, and CSU Albury-Wodonga student Laura McKenna.

Thank you all for coming and making this very first rural ANZACA conference such a great success. We look forward to seeing everyone again soon and at the next ANZACA conference in 2025!

## **A/Prof Annemiek Beverdam and the Organising Team**



# International Keynote Speaker: Dr Samuel Webster



I teach anatomy at Swansea University in the UK. I also make anatomy videos for my students to add to their learning, which has been particularly useful with the successes of our courses leading to ever larger student cohorts, and I share these videos and vlogs on YouTube. When I talked myself into making these videos I was under the impression that only students would watch them, and that my anatomy peers and colleagues would find them too boring to ever watch. With that fear removed I felt able to make a video every week on a topic that I was either interested in or that students needed a little help with. Eight years later I was invited by my international anatomy peers to the 2024 ANZACA conference in Dubbo to talk about how I make anatomy videos and how they fit into my teaching alongside the many other tools anatomists use. Living in the original South Wales I would never turn down an opportunity to visit the New South Wales, but I was a little wrong about teachers not wanting to watch my videos. Some anxiety has returned. It is much easier to record a video when you don't imagine the people on the other side of the camera that might be scrutinizing what you say.

The technology available to us continually changes and over the last 15 years online video has become accessible to educators and learner alike. It is now very easy to create and share video, and anatomists wanted me to talk about my experiences. I can talk all day about the structure of a video, the hidden story telling tricks, personality, lights, exposure, microphones, cameras, lenses, editing, animation, camera tracking, the fear of uploading, coping with comments, avoiding the numbers pushed at you by giant corporations, and workflow, but I only had an hour and a half. Clearly, by the number of questions I had, many other teachers are also keen to produce videos to help students and the public learn about anatomy and their bodies. For everything I said, getting started and keeping going are the two hardest things to do when sharing teaching videos online. When those things happen, everything else can follow. We talk about students learning most effectively by doing, and we are no different.



# International Keynote Speaker: Dr Samuel Webster

At ANZACA I met some like-minded spirits, others for whom creation is part of their own life satisfaction in step with student education. Like many anatomy conferences an important reason for meeting is to compare experiences and find that we are all in similar positions, with similar difficulties, and trying similar solutions. Sometimes just sharing helps your problems feel less impossible, and if you're really lucky you will come across someone that has a solution for you to try.

There are not enough anatomy teachers in the world and anatomy is buried in the foundations of all health care professions. The world has an ageing population and healthcare demands are ever increasing. Older (or maybe I should just say "more experienced") anatomy teachers feel the importance of bringing younger anatomy enthusiasts into the fold. Teaching anatomy can be one arrow in your quiver, and one section on your curriculum vitae, underneath research or clinical work. Experience and enthusiasm for teaching can be strong selling points when looking at job applications. The world will always need anatomy teachers. ANZACA and other anatomy associations are placed to link you up and integrate you with others that can support and advise you, and remind you that your challenges are not yours alone.

This has been my first visit to Australia. We have talked about visiting for a long time, with friends to see and cliffs to climb in Tasmania, and mountains and long distance walks to contemplate in New Zealand. We have done none of those things on our first visit but the world feels a little smaller now. Taking the train from Sydney to Orange to visit James Wickham's anatomy lab we were amused to feel that the landscape after the Blue Mountains felt very like we were gliding through south and mid Wales if you didn't look too closely at the trees. Likewise slipping into Australian culture, lingo and the friendly nature of the people here has been unconscious.

I vlog because I used to blog. Technology moved and we moved with it. I vlog to make the world feel smaller. To see other people living their lives can help make those imagined walls between us start to become a little more transparent. As a teacher I need students to feel that it is easy to ask me questions because they will learn faster and learn more. As a teacher I need to be able to spend time with other teachers, whether they live in the northern or southern hemispheres. People know so much more than I do, and the more I study the more I see that I know nothing. Teachers are forever students, and as we encourage students to support one another in their journeys we must do the same in ours.

Thank you for inviting me to speak at the ANZACA conference. I had a lot of fun, I felt supported, I learnt a lot, I got to talk a lot about things that I like talking about and I think we all know each other a little better as a result.

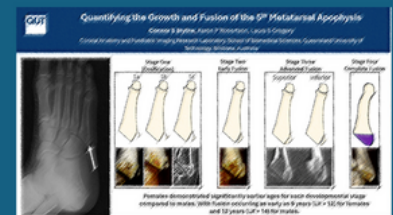
Dr Samuel Webster

# ANZACA 2024 Conference Awards



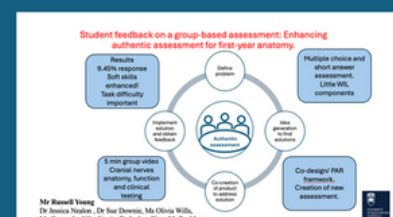
Best Clinical  
Anatomy Research  
Oral Presentation:  
**Jerin Mathew**

Best Clinical Anatomy  
Research Poster  
Presentation:  
**Connor Blythe**



Best Education  
Research Oral  
Presentation:  
**Christina Byun**

Best Education  
Research Poster  
Presentation:  
**Russell Young**



# ANZACA Conference

## Student scholarship winners 2024

“ANZACA 2024 was my first in-person conference, and I can confidently say that in-person is far more rewarding and enjoyable than online! During the second rapid-fire poster session, I presented my work on syphilis and gonorrhoea in the gold mining world of Otago, New Zealand. Having an engaged audience that was nodding along and asking questions after the fact showed me that people have a genuine interest in my research.

The experience of sharing my findings and having people know about my research is an amazing experience that I have taken away from this conference.”

Kirsten Rutten



“The ANZACA Conference was my first conference experience in Australia, and it was an incredibly valuable opportunity for learning and professional growth. Throughout the event, I gained important insights into the latest research in anatomy and had the chance to engage with experts in the field. One of the highlights of my participation was serving as a panel member in a session, which allowed me to contribute to discussions, share my perspectives, and learn from other researchers' experiences. This opportunity helped me develop my ability to engage in academic discussions and express my ideas with confidence.”

Roeya Eshaghimoghaddam

“It was interesting having to experience a place that was not your average traditional city. Dubbo was my first experience in a rural city. The atmosphere felt very friendly both in the conference and outside. The presenters at the conference were also all very passionate and enthusiastic about their research. This enthusiasm wasn't limited for their work but the work of other colleague presenters. I experienced this during my own poster presentation where I got the chance to express my research and findings to others. The highlight of the ANZACA2024 conference was meeting incredible anatomists from across Australia and abroad, and forging new friendships that I might not have otherwise made.”

Ali Msayer





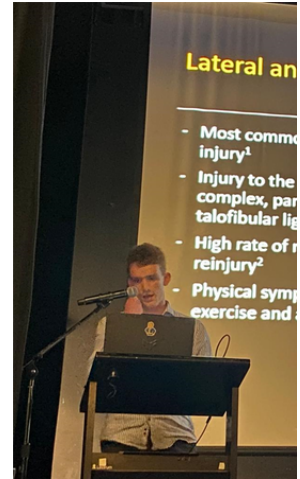
# ANZACA Conference

## Student scholarship winners 2024

“The conference was a valuable experience which exposed me to different topics of research and gave me many more good contacts. It was great to see a new part of Australia and meet other students from the Sydney Medical School in Dubbo. I especially enjoyed the workshops and Keynote speakers.

Giving my presentation on the Anatomy of Fibularis Longus and Brevis: Dissection and Digitisation Study increased my confidence with presenting to new people, and receiving questions made me consider the research from a new perspective.”

Patrick Topp



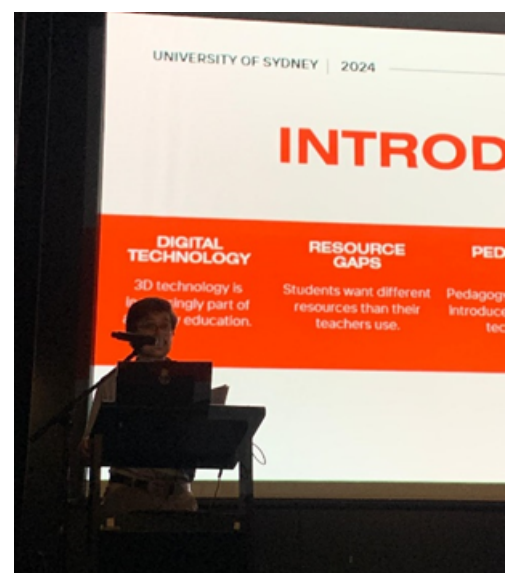
“The Australian and New Zealand Association of Clinical Anatomists (ANZACA) conference 2024 in Dubbo, NSW, focused on "Inclusive Anatomy". And the annual meeting was very unique.

On Wednesday, December 4th, I am honored and privileged to discuss my research on plastination at this exceptional conference, which fosters a pleasant and collegial atmosphere. This event will enhance visibility within the anatomy and scientific community.”

Ahmed Elsir Mokhtar Abd Elmagid

“It was fantastic to meet future colleagues in a familiar environment, where I study in Dubbo. I enjoyed the insightful presentations looking towards the future of anatomy teaching, and the new contacts that I made.”

Jan Edward Morgiewicz



# Student representative report



As ANZACA's Student Representative, I organised a Student Night during the 2024 Dubbo Conference. The event, held at "Down the Lane," was a relaxed evening with food, drinks, and great company, bringing together students from the association.

We had some insightful conversations about our shared passion for clinical anatomy and discussed the challenges us students face in different parts of Australia and New Zealand. We also brainstormed ideas on how to overcome these barriers and how ANZACA can support its student members.

With my background as a Dissection Scientist in Anatomical Pathology, we touched on ways to improve educational experiences, such as potentially organising anatomical dissection education sessions within a clinical space, to make learning more accessible to everyone. This was highlighted by two students who visited Nepean Hospital's Anatomical Pathology Department over the Christmas break, gaining hands-on experience, and furthering their practical knowledge in the field.

Overall, it was a great opportunity for networking and connecting with fellow students and peers in the field.

Kajaal Prasad  
ANZACA Student Representative

# Navigating the Path to a Compelling Manuscript: Insights from an Academic Journal Editor-in-Chief

**Jason M. Organ, PhD, FAAA**

**Indiana University School of Medicine**

**Editor-in-Chief, Anatomical Sciences Education ([asejournal.com](http://asejournal.com))**

Writing and submitting a manuscript on your research can be a daunting task, but with the right guidance, it becomes a manageable and rewarding process. At the 2024 ANZACA conference in Dubbo, I was honored to speak about peer review at Anatomical Sciences Education, with the goal of unveiling the process. I've summarized the key points of the presentation below, hoping to offer insights into crafting a compelling manuscript and navigating the submission process.

## Understanding Journal Guidelines

One of the first steps in manuscript preparation is familiarizing yourself with the journal's guidelines and submission standards. This knowledge helps tailor your manuscript to meet the journal's expectations, increasing the chances of acceptance. My presentation emphasized the importance of checking the scope of the journal to ensure it is appropriate for your research topic. Submitting to a journal that aligns with your research area increases the likelihood of your manuscript being reviewed by experts in your field, thereby enhancing your chances of publication. Additionally, carefully review and adhere to the journal's formatting and submission requirements, including specific guidelines for manuscript structure, citation style, and any additional materials required.

## Initial Submission

Preparing for the initial submission involves several critical steps. Consider reaching out to the journal editor to inquire about the suitability of your manuscript before submitting, as this can save time and effort if the editor indicates that your manuscript may not be a good fit. Prepare all required manuscript files, including the main document, figures, and supplementary information, ensuring that all files are correctly formatted and labeled according to the journal's guidelines. All figures should be of high quality and resolution to meet the journal's specifications, as clear and well-labeled figures can significantly enhance the presentation of your data and findings. Craft a concise cover letter highlighting the significance and novelty of your research. A well-written cover letter can capture the editor's interest and provide a compelling reason for why your manuscript should be considered for publication.



# Navigating the Path to a Compelling Manuscript: Insights from an Academic Journal Editor-in-Chief- continued

## Cover Letter Best Practices

A well-crafted cover letter can make a significant difference in the submission process. Address the letter to the journal and/or editor by name, avoiding gendered terms, to show attention to detail and respect for the editor's role. Briefly pitch your paper to the editor, summarizing your research question, methods, key findings, and the significance of your results. This summary should be concise yet informative, providing a clear overview of your manuscript. Specify that all authors have approved the submitted version, the paper isn't under current consideration elsewhere, and include the pre-print server DOI if applicable. This information assures the editor of the manuscript's originality and compliance with ethical standards. Suggest potential reviewers with email addresses and institutional affiliations. Recommending reviewers who are experts in your field can expedite the review process and ensure that your manuscript is evaluated by knowledgeable peers. Importantly, these reviewers should not be your former mentors or mentees, and they should not be anyone you have collaborated with in the previous 3-4 years.

## The Editorial Process

Once your paper has been submitted, it will be checked for completeness by the Editorial Office and then reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief. When I am reviewing manuscripts as Editor-in-Chief, I am looking for two specific things: is the paper suitable for the journal, i.e., does it fit within the scope and does it appear to be rigorous in its presentation? And are all the ethical approvals (or exemptions) in place for research that includes human subjects like students and body donors? If your manuscript makes it through this step, the Editor-in-Chief will assign it to an associate (or handling) editor. The process then moves toward selecting reviewers. Editors consider author preferences, their own knowledge, manuscript citations, and reviewer locators to select appropriate reviewers, ensuring that the manuscript is reviewed by individuals with relevant expertise. Editors manage conflicting reviews, uninformative reviews, and write decision letters summarizing the review and making editorial decisions. Understanding this process can help authors anticipate potential outcomes and prepare for revisions.

# Navigating the Path to a Compelling Manuscript: Insights from an Academic Journal Editor-in-Chief- continued

## Responding to Reviewers' Concerns

Once your manuscript has received the requisite number of reviews as determined by the associate/handling editor, a decision will be made by that editor on your manuscript: accept, reject, or an invitation to revise and resubmit. Most decisions at this stage are invitations to revise and resubmit after addressing the concerns of the reviewers. When resubmitting a revised manuscript, it's crucial to address reviewers' comments systematically and thoughtfully. Always remain respectful and polite towards reviewers, even when you disagree with their suggestions. Constructive feedback should be viewed as an opportunity for growth and improvement. Systematically explain all changes made to the document in your response letter. Providing a detailed account of revisions demonstrates your commitment to improving the manuscript. Take responsibility for any misunderstandings and clarify your points. Clear communication can resolve ambiguities and strengthen your manuscript. If you disagree with a reviewer's suggestion, handle it professionally. Evaluate the scientific soundness of the request to determine if it is valid and feasible. If the suggestion is not applicable, provide a reasoned explanation. Include thorough explanations and justifications for your position, supported by relevant evidence, to show that you have carefully considered the reviewer's feedback. If necessary, discuss your concerns with the handling editor and seek a mutually acceptable resolution. Editors can mediate disagreements and provide guidance on how to address contentious issues.

Hopefully, by following the advice above, you will see more success in publishing your research in the academic literature. Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions: [jorgan@iu.edu](mailto:jorgan@iu.edu).

# 22nd Annual ANZACA conference 2025

A promotional graphic for the 22nd Annual ANZACA conference 2025. The background is a blue-tinted image of a human ribcage. Overlaid on this are several red rectangular boxes with white text. The top right corner features the ANZACA logo, which consists of a green caduceus icon and the text 'ANZACA'. The main text 'Save the date' is in a large, bold, white font within a red box. Below this, '4th-5th' is in a smaller white font within a red box, followed by 'December, 2025' in a large, bold, white font within a red box. To the right of this, '12pm-4pm AEDT' is in a white font within a red box. At the bottom, 'ANZACA Virtual Conference 2025' is in a white font within a red box. In the bottom right corner, there are social media icons for X and Twitter, followed by the hashtag '#ANZACA2025' in a white font within a red box.

**Save the date**

**4th-5th**

**December, 2025**

**12pm-4pm AEDT**

**ANZACA Virtual Conference 2025**

**ANZACA**

**#ANZACA2025**

Conference committee

Heath McGowan [h.mcgowan@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:h.mcgowan@latrobe.edu.au)

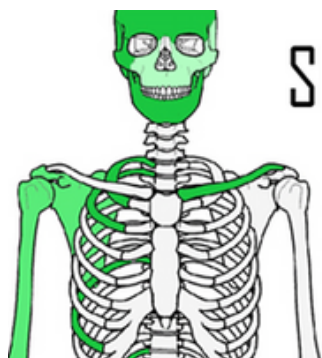
Junhua Xiao [jxiao@swin.edu.au](mailto:jxiao@swin.edu.au)

Natasha Flack [natasha.flack@otago.ac.nz](mailto:natasha.flack@otago.ac.nz) and

Stephanie Woodley, [stephanie.woodley@otago.ac.nz](mailto:stephanie.woodley@otago.ac.nz)



## Member Contributions



### Skelet-o-matic 3.0

A Python Shiny app for auto-filled, digital, homunculi images.

CN Stephan & SS Healy, 2025

Skelet-o-matic draws on modified homunculi from the former JPAC-CIL 3401 Forms and Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994) Standards: For Data Collection from Human Skeletal Remains.

Ever wished you didn't have to hand colour skeletal inventory charts for cases/tracking/inventory?

Ever wished for faster, neater, skeletal homunculi images at a mouse click?

Ever wanted digital homunculi for direct .jpg image insert into reports?

**Now you can!**

**Go digital with Skelet-o-matic 3.0!**

The HuCS-ID Lab (@ UQ) became tired of tedious by-hand drawing on skeletal charts for cases, so Carl and Sean developed a digital, auto-fill, homunculus capability to do the job. We have made

Skelet-o-matic 3.0 freely available at [craniofacialidentification.com](https://craniofacialidentification.com), so that everyone in the skeletal domain can enjoy its advantages!

The program runs from a single user-friendly python shiny (.exe) file. Simply click the bones that are present for their preservation state, and Skelet-o-matic does the hard work for you! You can select .png, .jpg or .tiff for image export.

Watch a 1min video demo [here](#). Terms of use, including citations to be given, can be found here.

Subadult capabilities will be forthcoming soon.

## Member Awards

2024 Te Whatu Kairangi Awards the  
Aotearoa Tertiary Educator Awards



**Dr Joseph Aziz**

Te Whatu Kairangi Award

Category winner:  
Innovation in learning, teaching,  
and curriculum

# UPCOMING CONFERENCES



**IFAA2026**  
**Melbourne, Australia**  
**13th – 16th August 2026**

  **ANZACA**  
 AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND  
 ASSOCIATION OF CLINICAL ANATOMISTS



[clinical-anatomy.org](http://clinical-anatomy.org) **American Association of Clinical Anatomists**  
**2025 annual meeting**  
**JUNE 16–19**  
 Hyatt Regency Bellevue on Seattle's Eastside | Bellevue, WA



Join us at the Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre for the 2025 Annual ANZAHPE Conference!

**ANZAHPE**  
 Australian & New Zealand  
 Association for Health  
 Professional Educators

**ANZAHPE CONFERENCE 2025**  
 PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
 30 JUNE to 3 JULY 2025

[www.anzahpe.org](http://www.anzahpe.org)  
 0478 313 123  
[executive@anzahpe.org](mailto:executive@anzahpe.org)



# UPCOMING CONFERENCES- cont...



**HERDSA**

**Shaping Education**  
Past, Present, Future  
#HERDSA2025

Annual Conference | 7-10 July 2025  
Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre  
Australia



**11<sup>th</sup> APICA 2025**

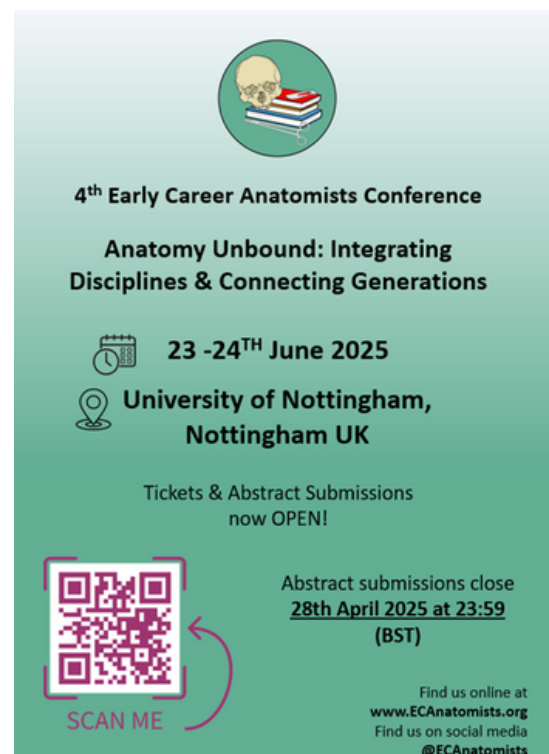
**11<sup>th</sup> ASIA PACIFIC**  
**INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ANATOMISTS**  
**39<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**  
**OF THE CHINESE SOCIETY FOR ANATOMICAL SCIENCES (CSAS)**

GUANGZHOU, CHINA AUGUST 8-11, 2025



**ISMS 2025**  
XXIX International Symposium  
on Morphological Sciences  
—  
23–26 July, Lisbon, Portugal  
NOVA Medical School

FIND OUT MORE AND REGISTER AT: [www.isms2025.org](http://www.isms2025.org)  
[isms2025@leading.pt](mailto:isms2025@leading.pt)



**4<sup>th</sup> Early Career Anatomists Conference**

**Anatomy Unbound: Integrating  
Disciplines & Connecting Generations**

**23 -24<sup>TH</sup> June 2025**

**University of Nottingham,  
Nottingham UK**

Tickets & Abstract Submissions  
now OPEN!

Abstract submissions close  
**28th April 2025 at 23:59  
(BST)**

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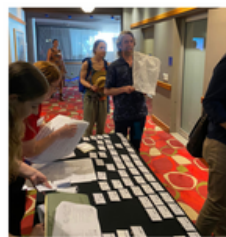
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