

Your Chance to have a Say in the Future of your Society

This document explains the proposed changes to ASM's Constitution that will be voted on at the ASM Annual General Meeting in Hobart. If you will be at the conference, please come to the AGM to participate in the discussion and cast your vote.

If you're not coming to Hobart, please complete the proxy form herewith. You can return the completed form as an email attachment to: ASM <admin@theasm.com.au>

Motion 1:

That Clause 9(ii) of the ASM Constitution be amended to read:

'(ii) has satisfactorily completed two years of postgraduate work to advance the discipline of microbiology.'

What this change will do:

This changes the current text as highlighted:

'(ii) has satisfactorily completed two years of postgraduate ~~work full-time employment as a practicing microbiologist; is eligible to apply to become a Member~~ to advance the discipline of microbiology.'

At its meeting in July 2016, ASM National Council agreed that the current wording is too narrow for some individuals who are currently working in the field of microbiology, and therefore may discourage them for applying for membership.

Council believes that these changes will make it easier for individuals who, for example, work on the biochemistry, molecular biology and genomics of microbes (but do not regard themselves as professional microbiologists) to join the society to our mutual benefit.

How this change benefits ASM members:

The ability to make it easier for application to Membership of ASM enables the Society to potentially grow its numbers amongst those already working within the discipline, yet are restricted from doing so by the current wording, or interpretation of the wording.

ASM members will benefit by increased membership which provides greater networking opportunities for members and will help to minimise the need for membership subscription increases.

Motion 2:

That Clause 14.1 of the ASM Constitution be amended to read:

'14.1 An application for membership as a Member of the Society shall be proposed by a Fellow or Member of the Society.

The proposer should personally know the applicant, but this requirement may be waived by the Council in its discretion from time to time. '

What this change will do:

This changes the current text as highlighted:

'An application for membership as a Member or a Senior Associate Member of the Society shall be:

~~(i) proposed by a Fellow or Member of the Society, and~~

~~(ii) seconded by a Fellow or Member of the Society.~~

The proposer ~~and seconder~~ should personally know the applicant, but this requirement may be waived by the Council in its discretion from time to time.'

At its meeting in July 2106, ASM National Council agreed that the requirement for **two** Members or Fellows to sign an application for membership be reduced to **one**, i.e., to drop the requirement for a seconder.

Also, its meeting in December the NEQB resolved that applications for any category of membership be made online, and not in writing.

ASM National Council believes that this change will make it easier for individuals who work in remote areas to join the Society.

How this change benefits ASM members:

The ability to facilitate application for membership of ASM enables the Society to potentially grow its numbers amongst those already working within the discipline, yet are restricted from doing so by the current wording.

Motion 3:

That Clause 14.2 of the ASM Constitution be amended to read:

'14.2 An application for membership of the Society whether as a Member or otherwise shall be made in the form determined by the Council and be accompanied by the fees prescribed as payable by the Council.'

What this change will do:

This changes the current text as highlighted:

'14.2 An application for membership of the Society whether as a Member or otherwise shall be made ~~in writing to the Secretary~~ in the form determined by the Council and be accompanied by the fees prescribed as payable by the Council.'

At its meeting in December the National Examinations & Qualifications Board (NEQB) resolved that applications for any category of membership should be made online.

How this change benefits ASM members:

ASM National Council believes that this change will make it easier for individuals who work in remote areas to join the society. This allows the Society to streamline the process for membership application from hard copy to electronic, and for easy online payment.

Motion 4:

That Clause 30 of the ASM Constitution be deleted:

'30. DIVISIONS OF THE SOCIETY. The Council may establish as many Divisions of the Society as is deemed appropriate to represent the scientific interests of the Society's membership, provided it is satisfied that there will be sufficient Members, Fellows and/or Honorary Life Members comprising the membership of each Division as will enable it to carry out its functions. There shall be no residential qualifications for membership of a Division. The Special Interest Groups (SIG) within the Society shall report on their activities to the assigned Division Chair who will represent them on NSAC. The Chair of each Division will be responsible for oversight of national activities in that Division's area of interest assisted by the Chair Elect or Immediate-past Chair. They will also be responsible for coordinating the scientific content of the Annual Scientific Meeting. Each Division shall conform to such rules and have such powers, functions and duties as are determined from time to time by the Council in the By-Laws.'

All associated clauses shall be amended accordingly.

What this change will do:

This changes the current text as highlighted:

~~*'30. DIVISIONS OF THE SOCIETY. The Council may establish as many Divisions of the Society as is deemed appropriate to represent the scientific interests of the Society's membership, provided it is satisfied that there will be sufficient Members, Fellows and/or Honorary Life Members comprising the membership of each Division as will enable it to carry out its functions. There shall be no residential qualifications for membership of a Division. The Special Interest Groups (SIG) within the Society shall report on their activities to the assigned Division Chair who will represent them on NSAC. The Chair of each Division will be responsible for oversight of national activities in that Division's area of interest assisted by the Chair Elect or Immediate-past Chair. They will also be responsible for coordinating the scientific content of the Annual Scientific Meeting. Each Division shall conform to such rules and have such powers, functions and duties as are determined from time to time by the Council in the By-Laws.'*~~

~~Table of Contents, and clauses 37.5 shall be amended accordingly, as well as the renumbering of clauses subsequent to clause 30.~~

Motion 4 (continued)

The Divisions of the Society were originally conceived to ensure appropriate representation of our members' fields of interest in the scientific program of the Annual Scientific Meeting and to provide a balanced structure for the composition of the National Scientific Advisory Committee (NSAC).

While this arrangement worked well when it was first introduced, it no longer serves its original purpose, mainly due to changes in the nature and scope of microbiology during the past 20 years. As the Divisions have remained unchanged during this period, they no longer reflect ASM members' current interests as revealed in various surveys.

As a result of this, it has become increasingly uncertain how the roles of the Divisional Chairs relate to those of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) and the Scientific Program Committee (SPC) of the Annual Scientific Meeting, as well as to the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and NSAC.

Although we could reassign new fields of microbiology to the existing Divisions, this would enshrine the current inflexibility of this model. Furthermore, we are keen to promote scientific interactions that bridge the traditional Divisions and maximise opportunities for learning and collaboration from our meetings. Accordingly, we are proposing to abolish the Divisions and to replace them with 'Themes'.

Themes will operate in a similar fashion to Divisions, but will be more flexible. For example, the LOC/SPC, any SIG, or individual member will be able to propose a theme or themes for inclusion in a future Annual Scientific Meeting. A short written proposal to support the request would include such information as why it is needed, how many sessions it would require, and suggestions for a Theme Leader and invited speakers. Some proposals would ideally draw broadly across the current Divisions.

These proposals will then be considered by NSAC and the LOC/SPC, who will nominate Theme Leaders with whom they will collaborate to put scientific sessions together. The way this works in practice could be tweaked as needed because we do not plan to write Themes into the constitution, although they will comprise a key component of our Conference Guidelines. To ensure that we do not lose the expertise of our Divisional Chairs, we will be appointing Scientific Advisors, who will become members of NSAC. Scientific Advisors may also be Theme Leaders.

Motion 4 (continued)

How this change benefits ASM members:

ASM National Council believes that this change will streamline the organisational processes of the society.

It will provide opportunity for greater flexibility in the organisation and programming of our National Scientific Meeting.

Although Divisional Chairs were originally charged only with ensuring appropriate representation of their sub-discipline(s) at the Annual Scientific Meeting, more recently they have been providing advice to the Executive on various aspects of governance. The replacement of Divisions by potentially ephemeral Themes and the consequent substitution of Divisional Chairs with Scientific Advisors, will result in a realignment of this provision of expertise to the Executive. National Council aims to resolve this latter aspect in a manner that maintains access to the best advice whilst still absorbing these proposed changes. In that respect, the existing clauses 35.5 and 37.2 of the ASM Constitution enables Council to do this very effectively.

Motion 5:

That Clause 10 of the ASM Constitution be deleted:

'10. SENIOR ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Any person:

(i) who has graduated with a diploma or equivalent in microbiology; and

(ii) has at least five years or equivalent employment post-qualification; shall be eligible to apply to become a Senior Associate Member.'

All associated clauses shall be amended accordingly.

What this change will do:

This changes the current text as highlighted:

~~*'10. SENIOR ASSOCIATE MEMBER*~~

~~*Any person:*~~

~~*(i) who has graduated with a diploma or equivalent in microbiology; and*~~

~~*(ii) has at least five years or equivalent employment post-qualification; shall be eligible to apply to become a Senior Associate Member.'*~~

Table of Contents, clauses 6.1, 6.3, 14.1 and 51 shall be amended accordingly, as well as the renumbering of clauses subsequent to Clause 10.

The category of Senior Associate Member was introduced to allow senior people who did not meet the criteria for MASM, in terms of completing an academic qualification in microbiology (at bachelor's degree or post-graduate level) acceptable to National Council to join ASM as professional Members.

Senior Associates represented less than 1% of our total membership. All have since been invited (and accepted) to change to MASM (automatically), or to apply for FASM (by formal assessment), as appropriate. We currently have no members in this Senior Associate category.

How this change benefits ASM members:

ASM National Council believes that this change will help streamline the membership categories for the society. Moreover, if Motion 6 (below), which, if adopted will give Associate Members the opportunity to vote, the need for the Senior Associate category of membership will be redundant.

Motion 6:

That Clause 14.4 of the ASM Constitution be amended:

'14.4 A Student or Sustaining member may receive notices of all general meetings of the Society and be heard, but shall not be entitled to vote nor eligible to hold office on the Council. This Clause shall prevail to the extent of any inconsistency in this Constitution.'

The associated definition of 'Voting Member' in clause 51 shall be amended accordingly:

' 'Voting Member' means any Member who is a Member, Fellow, Honorary Life Member or an Associate Member.'

What this change will do:

This changes the current text as highlighted:

'14.4 A ~~n Associate~~ Student or Sustaining member may receive notices of all general meetings of the Society and be heard, but shall not be entitled to vote nor be eligible to hold office on the Council. This Clause shall prevail to the extent of any inconsistency in this Constitution.'

' 'Voting Member' means any Member who is a Member, Fellow, Honorary Life Member or an ~~Senior~~ Associate Member.'

(This latter change includes an assumption that Motion 5 has been passed. If Motion 5 has not been passed, this would read: ' 'Voting Member' means any Member who is a Member, Fellow, Honorary Life Member, ~~Senior Associate~~ or an ~~Senior~~ Associate Member.')

How this change benefits ASM members:

ASM National Council believes that this change will greater democratise the organisational processes of the society.

At present the Associates are excluded from the voting process. Most current Associate members are eligible for professional membership, but have not availed themselves of the opportunity to take this up. In the absence of conversion of membership status, Associate members will now be able to fully participate in the Society's functions and operations as voters.

Motion 7:

That Clause 32.1 of the ASM Constitution be amended:

'32.1 The Council of the Society shall consist of the following officers and delegates all of whom shall be Fellows, Members or Honorary Life Members:...'

What this change will do:

This changes the current text as highlighted:

*'The Council of the Society shall consist of the following officers and delegates all of whom shall be **Fellows, Members or Honorary Life** ~~Voting~~ Members.'*

At present Voting Members consists of Fellows, Members and Honorary Life Members. Senior Associate Members are also Voting Members, but this latter category is proposed to be removed under the earlier Motion 5. If Motion 6 is adopted, Associate Members will become eligible to be elected to ASM National Council. As this is not Council's intent, we are proposing to delete the word "voting from this clause. Council believes that efforts to widen the voting base of the Society should not change the eligibility to stand for the Society's highest offices.

How this change benefits ASM members:

ASM National Council believes that this change will maintain the organisational structures of the society, whilst enabling the Society to broaden its voting base through Motion 6.

Associates who wish to participate in organisational roles of the Society will have the opportunity to do so after membership conversion to Member or Fellow status.

The Australian Society for Microbiology



bringing Microbiologists together

**Annual General Meeting
Form of appointment of proxy**

I _____ of _____

Being a **Member/Fellow/Honorary Life Member/Senior Associate Member** of The Australian Society for Microbiology Incorporated hereby appoint the presiding Chair,
or _____ as my proxy to vote for me on Tuesday 4 July at 12 noon in the Concert Hall, Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart, Tasmania, and at any adjournment thereof

Signed _____

This _____ day of _____ 2017

This form is to be used for each resolution as follows:

That the reports (Agenda Items 5 to 8) be accepted	For/Against/Abstain*
That the Annual Accounts of the Society be accepted	For/Against/Abstain*
That the auditor is reappointed	For/Against/Abstain*
Motions to amend the ASM Constitution: Motion 1. That Clause 9(ii) of the ASM Constitution be amended to read: '(ii) has satisfactorily completed two years of postgraduate work to advance the discipline of microbiology.'	For/Against/Abstain*
Motion 2. That Clause 14.1 of the ASM Constitution be amended to read: '14.1 An application for membership as a Member of the Society shall be proposed by a Fellow or Member of the Society. The proposer should personally know the applicant, but this requirement may be waived by the Council in its discretion from time to time.'	For/Against/Abstain*
Motion 3. That That Clause 14.2 of the ASM Constitution be amended to read: '14.2 An application for membership of the Society, whether as a Member or otherwise, shall be made in the form determined by the Council and be accompanied by the fees prescribed as payable by the Council.'	For/Against/Abstain*

<p>Motion 4. That Clause 30 of the ASM Constitution be deleted:</p> <p>'30. DIVISIONS OF THE SOCIETY. The Council may establish as many Divisions of the Society as is deemed appropriate to represent the scientific interests of the Society's membership, provided it is satisfied that there will be sufficient Members, Fellows and/or Honorary Life Members comprising the membership of each Division as will enable it to carry out its functions. There shall be no residential qualifications for membership of a Division. The Special Interest Groups (SIG) within the Society shall report on their activities to the assigned Division Chair who will represent them on NSAC. The Chair of each Division will be responsible for oversight of national activities in that Division's area of interest assisted by the Chair Elect or Immediate-past Chair. They will also be responsible for coordinating the scientific content of the Annual Scientific Meeting. Each Division shall conform to such rules and have such powers, functions and duties as are determined from time to time by the Council in the By-Laws.'</p> <p>All associated clauses shall be amended accordingly.</p>	<p>For/Against/Abstain*</p>
<p>Motion 5. That Clause 10 of the ASM Constitution be deleted:</p> <p>'10. SENIOR ASSOCIATE MEMBER</p> <p>Any person:</p> <p>(i) who has graduated with a diploma or equivalent in microbiology; and</p> <p>(ii) has at least five years or equivalent employment post-qualification; shall be eligible to apply to become a Senior Associate Member.'</p> <p>All associated clauses shall be amended accordingly.</p>	<p>For/Against/Abstain*</p>
<p>Motion 6. That Clause 14.4 of the ASM Constitution be amended:</p> <p>'14.4 A Student or Sustaining member may receive notices of all general meetings of the Society and be heard, but shall not be entitled to vote nor eligible to hold office on the Council. This Clause shall prevail to the extent of any inconsistency in this Constitution.'</p> <p>The associated definition of 'Voting Member' in clause 51 shall be amended accordingly:</p> <p>' 'Voting Member' means any Member who is a Member, Fellow, Honorary Life Member or Associate Member.'</p>	<p>For/Against/Abstain*</p>
<p>Motion 7. That Clause 32.1 of the ASM Constitution be amended:</p> <p>'32.1 The Council of the Society shall consist of the following officers and delegates all of whom shall be Fellows, Members or Honorary Life Members '</p>	<p>For/Against/Abstain*</p>

Notes:

* strike out whichever is not desired

For more information on these motions, please refer to accompanying document in this email.

Clause 29.1 of the Constitution states:

Each Voting Member is entitled to appoint another Voting Member as proxy by notice given to the Secretary no later than 24 hours before the time of the meeting for which the proxy is appointed.