

**President's Report**  
**AGM of the Australasian Speech Science and Technology Association,**  
**10th December 2025 – electronic vote only**

I hope you have all had an enjoyable and productive 2025. As we reach the end of the year, please join me in taking a moment to celebrate our collective achievements. Congratulations to those of you who have had success in publications, presentations, grants and career progression. Thank you for your hard work in the effort to advance speech science and technology. Congratulations to our student members who continue to progress through their research degrees, and to their mentors and supervisors who provide critical support along the way. Thank you to members involved in teaching. I acknowledge the considerable investment of time and energy required to navigate student engagement, particularly with the new generation of post COVID tertiary students, while at the same time dealing with scholarly integrity in the age of AI. Your efforts are very appreciated.

This year we were deeply saddened by the loss of our dear friend and colleague **Sallyanne Palethorpe** who passed away in late July. We send our condolences to Sallyanne's husband Nick, her children John and Hugh, and their families. Sallyanne was a brilliant and generous colleague and friend, and the engine behind so many important phonetics and cognitive science projects and publications. Sallyanne mentored and supported countless students and researchers over more than 40 years. Sallyanne never sought the limelight but worked tirelessly behind the scenes throughout her career to allow others to shine. She was resolutely committed to data integrity, ensuring that every one of her analyses could be absolutely trusted through her meticulous hands-on approach to data checking and statistical processing. Her legacy is evident in every person she worked with and every challenge she met. We will miss her.

Please join me in congratulating **Marjia Tabain** who was elected as a Fellow to the Australian Academy of Humanities in 2025. This is a very well deserved honour for Marija.

ASSTA continues to support members through our awards and grant schemes. The **New Researcher Awards Scheme** is presented to the best ECR/student paper submitted to SST with a cash prize of \$750 and a conference dinner ticket. In 2024 **Elise Tobin** was the recipient of the New Researcher Award. The best SST Student Paper Award went to **Tim Shea**. Congratulations Elise and Tim. I'd also like to congratulate Olga Maxwell and the team from Melbourne for delivering a highly successful SST last year.

The ASSTA **Conference Travel Awards** of \$500 have been created to support ECR and student members to present peer-reviewed papers at overseas conferences. The three major conferences that ASSTA has chosen for funding are ICASSP, INTERSPEECH and ICPhS. ASSTA will also consider other conferences subject to funding availability and dependent on submission and conference quality, with a preference for full paper review. Congratulations to **Clara Zhang** and **Itay Ben-Dom** who both received Conference Travel Award for INTERSPEECH, Rotterdam.

ASSTA also supports carers through the **Carer Support Scheme** (for attendance at national and international conferences) and provides support for events through the **Research Event Awards** of up to \$5000, available to enhance new research collaborations, seminars/workshops or groundwork meetings. ASSTA's **Special Initiative Awards** are available to support ASSTA members' applications to nationally competitive research grants. Please encourage colleagues and students to join ASSTA to take advantage of the various support programs available. ASSTA is very pleased to welcome **Appen** back to ASSTA as a corporate member.

In 2026 ASSTA will be hosting **INTER\_SPEECH** at the International Convention Centre in Sydney from 28<sup>th</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> October. INTER\_SPEECH is the premiere speech communication science and technology conference in the world, attracting around 2000 delegates over 5 days. Several satellite workshops and a Scientific and Industrial Exhibition will enrich the conference content. Our

theme is *Speaking Together* reflecting Australasia's rich linguistic history and that of our broader region while also highlighting the need to address inequalities associated with speech communication. INTERSPEECH in 2026 will be a major event for ASSTA. Please get in touch if you would like to be involved or if you have associations with industry that would benefit from, and be of benefit to, INTERSPEECH. Follow Interspeech 2026 on LinkedIn, BlueSky and/or RedNote for updates.

Our previous ASSTA ECR representative **Hannah White** has been awarded a Humboldt Fellowship to conduct research at IPS Munich with Professor Jonathan Harrington. This is a great honour for Hannah and we wish her well with her project. I thank Hannah for stepping in to replace Lousie Ratko on the ECR/PG network at short notice last year. Our new ECR representative announced at the 2024 AGM is **Tünde Szalay**. Thank you Tünde for so enthusiastically and knowledgeably supporting our ECR and student members. The network provides valuable mentoring and peer support and I encourage ECR/PG members to get involved.

I'd like to thank the ASSTA Executive (**Sasha Calhoun, Debbie Loakes, Olga Maxwell, Michael Proctor** and **Tünde Szalay**) for their continued dedication to the ASSTA community. I look forward to working with all members in building a strong, resilient and supportive ASSTA. I am honoured to represent you, and grateful for your kindness and support.

I wish you and your families a very happy and relaxing holiday season.

Felicity Cox  
ASSTA President