
President's Report, Economic Society of Australia Western Australian Branch Activities since 29 August 2018

It is a pleasure to present my second annual report as President of the Economic Society of Australia, Western Australia Branch. Branch activities covering the period 16 August 2017 to 29 August 2018 were covered in my first report last year.

It has again been a very exciting year. I would firstly like to express my sincere thanks to Erin Stone, Vice President and Peter Shardlow, Treasurer who have contributed enormously toward making this a very successful year. Erin has continued as the Branch's representative on Central Council, which has been greatly appreciated. She will report separately on national Central Council activities under item 5 of the AGM agenda. In addition, Peter Shardlow will give the Treasurer's report under agenda item 8. I would also like to thank my fellow Council members for volunteering their time and skills over the past year which in no small way have contributed to making this another successful year. Special thanks also go to the administrative and events sub-committees for their valuable contributions during the year.

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sally McMahon, who has continued in the role of Chair of the Women in Economics Network, Courtney Fitzsimmons as Vice Chair and the Economic Society's Women in Economics sub-committee. Special thanks are also due to Anusha Mahendran who has continued as the WA Young Economists Coordinator and Jill Trinh as the branch's administrator. Sally will present the WEN report under agenda item 9 and Anusha will present the report by the WA Convenor of the Young Economists Network under agenda item 10.

Branch Activities

The first event after the 2018 AGM was the Shann Memorial Lecture on 17 September 2018 by Professor Ken Clements. The Shann Memorial Lecture is jointly sponsored by the University of Western Australia and the WA Branch of the Economic Society of Australia. At this function, Ken was formally presented with the Austin Holmes Award by the WA Branch of the Economic Society of Australia. The title of Ken's presentation was "The Laws of Economics" part of which has since been published as: "Four Laws of Consumption" Economic Record, July 2019.

Following the Shann Memorial Lecture, the Women in Economics Network and the WA Branch held their inaugural 'Policy in the Pub' event at which John Carey, the State Member for Perth and Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier gave a presentation on the linkage of policy and politics. This event, which was well attended, was held on 25 September 2018 at the George Hotel, St Georges Tce Perth. John's background and experience at both local and State levels of Government made him an ideal candidate to open the series and talk on this issue.

The 'Policy in the Pub' series is an informal bi-monthly event providing attendees an opportunity to participate in discussion about topical economic issues. A total of seven 'Policy in the Pub' events have been held to date. All have been well attended and very successful.

On Friday 12 October 2018, the Young Economists Network and the WA Branch held their annual Quiz Night at the Curtin University tavern. The event, featuring Steven Klomp as quiz master and resident DJ, was very successful and well attended. The Curtin University tavern proved to be an excellent venue and will be considered for future events of this type.

The second 'Policy in the Pub' event was held on 11 December 2018 featuring Anne Nolan, former Director General of the Department of Finance (WA). Anne presented on her experience in successfully implementing unpopular and challenging policy positions and the interplay between policy and politics. The event was held at the Belgian Beer Café, Corner King and Murray Street, Perth, which proved to be an ideal venue for this type of event. All of the remaining 'Policy in the Pub' events to date have been held at the Belgian Beer Café.

On 19 February 2019, the Women in Economics Network and the WA Branch held their third 'Policy in the Pub' event featuring Daniel Kennedy, Intelligent Process Automation Manager at St John of God Healthcare. Daniel's presentation was on artificial intelligence and the impact of technology in health care. The event followed directly after a Special General Meeting of WA Branch members that was called to approve a new constitution.

The fourth 'Policy in the Pub' event was held on 19 March 2019 featuring a joint presentation by Nicky Cusworth, Chair, and Jenness Gardner, CEO of the Economic Regulation Authority on the challenges of being an economic regulator. Both Nicky and Jenness are prominent public sector leaders with extensive experience across State and Commonwealth Government agencies.

The fifth 'Policy in the Pub' event featured a presentation by Noel Richards on 'Highlights of the WA State Budget'. As a Director at Deloitte Access Economics in Perth, Noel leads its work on transport economics, business cases and cost benefit analysis in WA. He also contributes to Deloitte's annual WA budget brief, and led its work on the 2018 Langoulant Review, which assessed fiscal policy under the previous government.

The sixth and last 'Policy in the Pub' event for the reporting year was held on 18 June 2019. The event featured a presentation by Eva Skira AM on her personal observations of her career. Eva has a distinguished career as an economist and finance professional in corporate banking, institutional stockbroking, capital markets and derivatives and has gone on to serve on high profile boards including as current Chairman of Trustees of St John of God Health Care, Board member of the WA Parks Foundation and she was Chair of the Water Corporation of Western Australia over the period 2012-2017.

WA Economics Forum 2019

The WA Branch's annual Economics Forum, was again held at the Curtin University School of Business, 78 Murray Street, Perth on 23 July 2019. This year the theme of the Forum was 'Economics and Public Policy' and featured the following presentations:

Economics; its Role in Shaping Public Policy,
Professor Alan Fenna, Faculty of Business and Law, Curtin University;

Western Australia, State of Play,
Ryan Buckland, Senior Consultant at ACIL Allen Consulting;

National and International Prospects,
Aaron Walker, Senior Economist, Reserve Bank of Australia;

Foreign Direct Investment, the Pitfalls, Risks, and how to Mitigate the Risks,
Professor Colin Roberts, Adjunct Professor, Curtin Faculty of Science & Engineering; and

Economics and Public Policy in the Energy Sector,
Antonia Cornwell Economist, Policy, Commercial Business Unit, Synergy.

The Forum was facilitated by Rebecca White, Senior Policy Analyst, Department of Treasury WA.

The forum also included a panel session featuring:

Andrew Dolling, Director, Economic Policy, Department of Treasury WA;
Annette Perrin, Director, Creational Consulting Pty Ltd; and
Rebecca Cassells, Principal Research Fellow, Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre and Chair ACT Women in Economics Network.

The panel session was chaired by Dr Silvia Salazar, Research Fellow, Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre.

There were around 30 attendees with very positive and complimentary feedback. Many thanks are again extended to the Curtin University Graduate School of Business for use of its facilities.

Meetings of the WA Branch Council

The WA Branch Council met 5 times since the last AGM on 29 August 2018. Meetings were held at the UWA Business School on 21 August 2018, 4 December 2018, 12 February 2019, 28 May 2019 and 6 August 2019.

The WA Branch Council typically considers finances, Central Council matters, updates on the activities of the Women in Economics Network and the Young Economists Network. In addition, a major part of the WA Branch Council's time is devoted to planning future events. In the time since the last AGM, particular effort has been directed toward establishing an organising committee for the Australian Conference of Economists (ACE2020) which will be held in Perth on 8 to 10 July 2020. This sub-committee expended quite a bit of time, with assistance from the Perth Convention Bureau, in tendering for and on 26 June 2019, appointing Arinex Pty Ltd as the professional conference organiser.

The conference organising committee has also made good progress in securing keynote speakers. To date, acceptances have been received from Professor Paul Frijters of the London School of Economics and Professor Alison Booth of the Australian National University. The organising committee was also thrilled to have the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AC accept the role of Patron of ACE2020. Kerry was the first female Governor of Western Australia and is currently the Chancellor of Edith Cowan University.

Arrangements have also been progressed to have the University of Western Australia host ACE2020. These arrangements include having access to two lecture theatres and four breakout rooms which should provide ample opportunities for both keynote presentations and concurrent sessions.

Constitution of the WA Branch of the ESA

The WA Branch was required to lodge a revised compliant constitution with the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (Consumer Protection) in WA by 30 June 2019. Erin Stone, Vice President, WA Branch, prepared a revised constitution for review and comment by WA Branch members who were invited to review the proposed constitution and provide comments by Friday 26 October 2018. A special general meeting of the WA Branch membership was called on 19 February 2019 at which the new constitution was approved by members. The new constitution was then submitted to Consumer Protection and approved effective from 15 March 2019. A copy of the new constitution is on the WA Branch website.

The special general meeting also approved increasing membership fees in line with inflation, introduced fees for hard copy journals and approved the introduction of automatic membership renewal.

Collaboration

The WA Branch has continued to build and maintain good collaborative relationships with other like bodies such as the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre (BCEC), the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy (JCIPP), University of Western Australia (UWA), the Economic Teachers Association of WA (ETAWA) and the Australia China Young Professionals Initiative (ACYPI). This collaboration has been particularly successful and considerable effort will be directed toward further enhancing collaboration.

Australian Conference of Economists 2019

The Australian Conference of Economists (ACE2019) was held on 14 to 16 July 2019. Erin Stone attended as WA Branch's representative on Central Council and Anusha Mahendran as the Women in Economics Network representative. Anusha was also invited to attend the Women in Economics Network's national committee meeting as the WA Branch representative.

It is understood that ACE2019 was very successful with around 340 attendees.

The Outlook: Activities for 2019-20

The WA Branch will continue to develop its 'Policy in the Pub' events which have proved very successful. The WA Branch is also looking forward to jointly holding the Shann Memorial Lecture with the University of Western Australia. It is anticipated that the Shann Memorial Lecture will be held in either September or October 2019. In addition, the WA Branch is proposing to hold another Quiz Night in conjunction with the Young Economists Network later in the year.

The most significant event in the coming year will of course be the Australian Conference of Economists (ACE2020) to be held at UWA on 8 to 10 July 2020. Significant progress has been made in relation to ACE2020 which is detailed under 'Meetings of the WA Branch Council' above.

Branch Membership

Total membership on 26 July 2019 was 96 (an increase of 6 from the 90 in July 2018). Events such as the 'Policy in the Pub' and other events organised by the Women in Economics Network have undoubtedly helped to not only maintain but increase membership.

Prize Winners - 2018 Academic Year

The winners of the prizes awarded by the Economic Society of Australia (WA Branch) for the completed 2018 academic year are:

Eliza Banks	<i>Highest Achieving Student in ECON2006 Applied Economics</i>	Curtin University
Narelle Harvey	<i>Best Student in Economics 1</i>	Edith Cowan University
Fong Yee Estella Ho	<i>Joint Winner, Best First Year Student in Economics</i>	Murdoch University
Beth McMullan	<i>Highest Achieving Student in the Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) (Economics)</i>	Curtin University
Benjamin Perks	<i>Joint Winner, Best First Year Student in Economics</i>	Murdoch University

Nicholas Vernon	<i>Winner, Best Student in the Bachelor of Commerce with Honours in Economics</i>	University of Western Australia
Matthew Wilson	<i>Best First Year Student in Economics</i>	University of Notre Dame Australia

On behalf of the Economic Society of Australia, WA Branch, I would therefore like to congratulate all of the prize winners for their academic excellence in 2018.

I am delighted that we will be joined at the dinner this evening by prize winning students Narelle Harvey, Fong Yee Estella Ho, Benjamin Perks and Matthew Wilson together with their guests. We will post the prizes to the other winners in the coming days.

Council Members 2017/18

Executive

Peter Kolf (President)
 Erin Stone (Vice President)
 Peter Shardlow (Treasurer)
 Abu Siddique (Secretary)

Members

Ishita Chatterjee
 David Christmas
 Courtney Fitzsimmons
 Margaret Giles
 Jasmine Kaur
 Anusha Mahendran
 Astghik Mavisakalyan
 Paul McCarthy
 Michael McLure
 Sally McMahan
 Margaret Nowak
 Rachel Ong
 John Roberts
 Grace Rosario
 Silvia Salazar
 Rahul Salim
 Chris Shulha
 Steven Stepanian
 Yashar Tarverdi
 Jill Trinh
 Malcolm Tull
 Duc Vo
 Alexander Williams
 Yixiao Zhou

K Peter Kolf
 14 August 2019