

ASTC President's Report 2023-2024

Another year as ASTC President is over. Like last year, this was another challenging year, but for different reasons.

We started the year without a Secretary, arguably the most important role on the Committee. A supreme thank you to Julia Ponder who stepped up and took on the role in addition to her Treasurer responsibilities.

Through the year, we had a couple of regular committee members drop out for personal reasons. While their circumstances were understandable, it put an extra burden on the remaining Committee members.

Personally, I had some overseas family issues to deal with in the 7 weeks leading up to the Annual Conference. Much of the organisational tasks for the Conference fell to Jason Xiros and Sarah Stubbs. I'm in awe of the mammoth amount of work they put in. The overwhelming success of the Conference is in no small part due to the work they did.

All that being said, I'd like to highlight some of this year's successes.

International Journal of Technical Communication (IJTC)

This initiative has literally been brewing for the past 2 years and it finally came to fruition this year. In partnership with our sister organisations ISTC in the UK, and TechCommNZ, we have an online newsletter accessible by all of our respective members. This is an amazing resource, full of articles of interest to Technical Communicators. Check it out at <https://www.ijtc.net/>.

Members' Meetings

Janet Taylor continued to run the Members' Meetings for this year and did a stellar job. She sourced the speakers each month and chaired each of the meetings. These meetings are an invaluable source of information where we hear from speakers about the things we're interested in as Technical Communicators.

ISTC Communicator

As a benefit to our members, we're continuing to provide copies of the "Communicator", the ISTC's quarterly newsletter. Each newsletter is available for members through the ASTC website.

Annual Conference

I've talked about it a bit already, but for those of you who attended this year's Conference (42 in-person and 10 remote), I think you'll agree it was one of the best Conferences yet!

A particular highlight for me was David Whitbread's very sobering presentation at the beginning of Day 2 about our impact on the environment as Technical Communicators. And talk about finishing the Conference on a high note! How about Kate Burrige's presentation on the evolution of "slanguage". Only a real drop-kick wouldn't have enjoyed her presentation! Ripper! Bonza!

After last year's significant financial loss, we had a very hard look at this year's income and expenses. We negotiated with the Hotel and got a better per person price and a reduced AV price. We also made the hard decision to increase our attendance price across the board. Unfortunately, we didn't quite get enough attendees to cover our expenses, so we'll make another loss this year, but nowhere near the size of last year.

Thank you's

Massive thanks to the 2023-2024 Committee, including:

- Jason Xiros, Vice President. As he was last year, Jason was incredibly helpful and supportive, especially for his insightful comments and suggestions into just about everything.
- Julia Ponder, Treasurer/Secretary. Thank you Julia for keeping such a keen eye on our finances, always reminding us and asking "Can we really afford that?"
- Sarah Stubbs, General Committee Member. I really think the Conference might not have happened, and certainly wouldn't have been the success it was had it not been for Sarah. She was involved in literally everything!
- Colin Sheppard and Angela Tohl were also General Committee Members at the beginning of the year, but had to drop out because of other commitments. I thank them for the assistance they provided while they were on the team.

Conclusion

Again, this year was another learning experience, although different from the last. I feel building in confidence year-on-year, and I look forward to the things we can achieve (whoever is on the Executive Committee) and the value we can provide to our ASTC members in 2024-2025. Thank you.

Grant Noble
6 November, 2024