

# AARE Research and Development Coordinator report July-November 2022

## Associate Professor Anna Sullivan

In July 2021, I was co-opted to the position of Research development Coordinator and Chair of the Research Policy and Advocacy Standing Committee. In this role, I am responsible for working closely with the President to oversee the Association's education research policy and advocacy activities.

### Draft Position Description

I drafted a Position Description for this role which will be presented for consideration to the AARE Executive Meeting, December 2021.

The Research Development Co-ordinator on Executive has been co-opted as the Chair of the Policy and Advocacy Standing Committee as communicated at the Special General Meeting in May this year.

The Research Development Co-ordinator and Chair is responsible for working closely with the President and the Communications Co-ordinator to oversee the Association's policy and advocacy activities.

The role of the Research Development Co-ordinator includes:

- maintaining an overview of educational research in Australia,
- advancing national recognition of excellence in educational research,
- advocating on behalf of educational research,
- co-operating with other organisations on matters concerned with educational research, and
- promoting co-operation among educational researchers nationally and internationally.

Ideally, the member filling the position should:

- be an experienced researcher who can speak and act with authority and has the confidence of the education research community,
- be politically aware and have good negotiation skills.

In the first two years, the role will involve:

1. Developing a strategy for recognising and promoting excellence in educational research.
2. Advocating for education research in collaboration with key governance bodies and other professional associations.
3. Collaborating with existing research fund organisations for benefit of the members.
4. Establishing a Standing Committee to oversee this work.

The role will build on the recommendations presented to the Association from a recent AARE Working Party and the motions that passed at a Special General Meeting, May 2021. A meeting was held with the working party in October.

### Research and Research Advocacy Standing Committee

The Research and Research Advocacy Standing Committee will oversee the work of the Research and Research Advocacy Executive Officer. The Standing Committee will include five members: Convenor, Research and Research Advocacy Executive Officer; President; AARE Executive member (by EoI); International member (by invitation from the Convenor); Ordinary member (by EoI). The term of membership is one year with eligibility for re-appointment.

This committee will oversee a program of work undertaken by established targeted *ad hoc* working groups that will focus on specific issues/agendas related to advancing national recognition of excellence in educational research, and advocating on behalf of educational research. The Standing Committee will report to the AARE Executive Committee via the Research and Research Advocacy Executive Officer.

The Standing Committee will be established as soon as possible following endorsement of the Position Description and plan at the Executive meeting, December 2021.

## 1. EMT

The Executive Management team (EMT) requested the presence of the Research Development Co-ordinator at the fortnightly meetings of the EMT to become well versed in the operations of the Association and build the new advocacy role. The EMT (6.1e) 'may establish Standing Committees as required from time to time to facilitate the conduct of its work'. The EMT under its powers and duties may appoint such committees 'as it deems desirable to carry out particular tasks designed to make a substantive contribution to educational research'. The working Party that informed the setting up of the Advocacy role and aforementioned Standing committee was established under clause (6.1j) of the Constitution.

## 2. ARC Funding for Education

ARC Funding in the Field of Education could be improved. The working group established the main issues and outlined a plan of action.

Working Group Members:

- Anna Sullivan, UniSA
- Allyson Holbrook, President
- Phil Roberts, Canberra Uni
- Julianne Moss, Deakin Uni
- Peter Goodyear, Sydney Uni
- Annette Woods, QUT

The main issues identified include:

- Low funding
- Low numbers of applications
- How we assess applications – formative feedback is damaging
- Appointments to the College
- Appointments of Assessors

The initial plan of action includes the following:

- Examine ARC funding in the Field of Education across all of schemes. Build on previous analysis and update the report.

- Map the funding for Education especially since the changes in FoR codes.
- Arrange an initial meeting with ARC Executive Director responsible for Education ongoing relationship with the ARC.
- Arrange event/s with ARC Executive Director for AARE members.
- Arrange a series of events for members on issues related to preparing and assessing ARC grant applications 2022-23.
- Draw on the expertise of the most successfully ARC funded researchers and universities/research centres to showcase their strategies.
- Collaborate with cADRE and ACDE.
- Consider strategies to ensure CoE and Assessors are experienced Education researchers.
- Discuss at the 2021 Education Research in Australia Summit.

### 3. Build a collaborative relationship with AERO

The Australian Education Research Organisation was established in 2021 as ‘Australia’s national education evidence body, working towards excellent and equitable outcomes for all children and young people’ (Tehan, 2020). It has received \$50 million over four years from the Commonwealth and state/territory governments. AERO’s role is to generate high-quality evidence, make high-quality evidence accessible and enhance the use of evidence in Australian education. In September, the Education Ministers approved AERO’s Strategic Plan and Research Agenda, which set out its high-level directions and priority areas for work.

A working group has been established to build an understanding of AERO’s strategic agenda and liaise with AERO on behalf of members. The Working Group Members are:

- Anna Sullivan
- Allyson Holbrook
- Michele Simons

The Working Group met with AERO on a few occasions.

On 22 October 2021, AARE hosted a seminar followed by a members’ discussion: ‘Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) and its relevance to AARE and members’. Zid Mancenido, Senior Manager, Research and Evaluation, presented AERO’s Strategic Plan and Research Agenda.

Panel members: Professor Allyson Holbrook, President; Adjunct Professor Marie Brennan, Life Member; and Associate Professor Glenn Savage, Member.

The seminar was recorded and is available on the website for members

### 4. Collaborating with cADRE

AARE is committed to an ongoing collaborative relationship with cADRE to advance national recognition of excellence in educational research, and advocate on behalf of educational research. The Working Group Members are:

- Anna Sullivan
- Allyson Holbrook

Meetings have been held with Catherine Manathunga and Elke Stracke to map out ways the two organisations might collaborate. We are currently organising a jointly hosted summit.

#### **5. 2021 Education Research in Australia Summit**

In collaboration with cADRE, AARE is arranging a national two-day summit to be held June, 2022. The summit will bring together senior education researchers, Associate Deans of Research in Education, education research centre directors and representatives from key organisations. The purpose of the summit will be to explore responses to existing and emerging challenges in relation to Education Research in Australia. It will focus on ways in which excellence in educational research can be advanced to better inform policy and practice.

#### **6. Collaboration with other key Organisations**

I have begun meeting with other organisations such as the Australian Council f