

ASAA Executive and Council Position Descriptions 2026

These position descriptions are consistent with the ASAA Constitution, which sets out specific legal obligations for some councillors.

Table of Contents

ASAA Executive and Council Position Descriptions 2026	1
Role of the President	2
Role of the Vice President.....	3
Role of the Treasurer.....	4
Role of the Secretary	5
Role of the Publications Officer	7
Role of the Regional Councillors	9
Role of the Immediate Past President.....	10
Role of the Postgraduate Representative(s)	11
Role of the Education/Teachers' Representative	12
Role of the Library Representative.....	13
Role of the General Councillor (Women's Forum)	14
Role of the ECR Representative	15
Role of the General Councillor (Conference).....	16
Role of the Digital Officer (non-voting Council member)	18

Role of the President

Prepared by Ed Aspinall & Kate McGregor, 2021, updated by Melissa Crouch & David Hundt, 2024

Key tasks of the President:

- Ensure regular ASAA activities are on track
 - Support Executive Committee and Council
 - Biennial Conference
 - Prize and Grant schemes
 - Post-Doctoral Writing Grant
 - Remind committee members of upcoming events and issues in their portfolio
- Leadership role as the public face of the ASAA
- Chair of Executive Committee, Council, and AGM
- Establish and/or chair committees, and lead the allocation of ASAA funds for prizes, awards, and grants, in according with the ASAA's guidelines (see below).
 - John Legge Prize for best thesis in Asian Studies (annual) - led by President
 - ASAA Event Funding Scheme (biennial) - led by President
 - ASAA Postdoctoral Fellowship (biennial) - led by President
 - Tony Reid Prize (biennial) - led by President
 - Honorary Life Membership (ad hoc) – led by President
 - Postgraduate Conference Awards (biennial) - led by VP
 - Early Career and Mid-Career Book Prizes (biennial) - led by VP
 - Wang Gungwu Prize for best article in *Asian Studies Review* (annual) - led by VP
- Oversee Asian Currents Editor, including newsletter and website maintenance and updates
- Ensure the Executive, as needed,
 - Reviews any contracts in which ASAA is a party, prior to signing (e.g. *ASR* publication contract, book series contracts)
 - Appoints and pays salaries of contractors, in line with industry standards
 - Submits Auditors report and Annual report to ACNC
 - Fills Council positions that become vacant during the term of a Council
 - Appoints the *ASR* Editor and the Publications Officer
 - Reviews membership categories, joint membership arrangements, and strategies to maintain and increase membership from time to time
 - Amends the Constitution
- Work with Secretary to organise call for nominations for new councillors and election process (if needed)
- Policy Advocacy and Strategic planning
- Represent the ASAA to peak bodies (e.g. government, National Library of Australia)
- Submissions to relevant government enquires
- Invite and launch Special Initiatives as required
- References - especially people nominate for honours such as OA
- Every 10-20 years, organise or delegate to a group of scholars a review of the field of Asian Studies, in line with other previous reports by ASAA
- Publish a short end of Council term report in Asian Currents (biennial)
- Provide a handover to the incoming President, and to assume role of Immediate Past President on the Council

Role of the Vice President

Prepared by Kate McGregor, Jan 2021, updated by David Hundt, 2024

Key tasks of the Vice President:

- Support the President with all tasks including strategic planning
- Stand in for the president when not available to chair meetings or other matters
- Assist with and attend ASAA biennial conference, in coordination with president and other ASAA council members
- Liaise between the ASAA Executive and Council for the ASAA biennial conferences
- Oversee the Wang Gungwu prize for the best article in *ASR* including selection of committee and liaising with *ASR* editor and Wang Gungwu
- Oversee Postgraduate Conference Awards (biennial)
- Oversee Early Career and Mid-Career Book Prizes (biennial)
- Serve on other prize committees and grant committees as needed, and assist with identification of other suitable committee members (see guidelines below)
- Develop and assist the President with other special initiatives as required (e.g. postgraduate mentoring scheme, special workshops, special blog series of Asian Currents, development of new prizes)
- Contribute to written public submissions and campaigns that support the goals of ASAA, in collaboration with other ASAA councillors (e.g. invited submissions on new Asia-related initiatives)
- Provide a handover to the incoming Vice President

Role of the Treasurer

Prepared by Elisabeth Kramer, Feb 2021, updated by David Hundt, 2024

The ASAA Treasurer is responsible for the oversight and execution of ASAA's day-to-day financial business, regular financial reporting, and annual audits, according to section 34 of the ASAA Constitution.

Key tasks include:

- Organise ASAA's annual financial audit and provide this to the Secretary as the basis for ASAA's reporting obligations to ACNC due before the end of each year
- Oversee the ASAA budget for the 2-year Council term
- Oversee ASAA bank accounts and facilitate nomination of at least one other current Executive Member on the accounts
- Facilitate ASAA payments to external recipients (including for prizes and grants awarded, website costs, and publication costs)
- Facilitate payments to the ASAA
- Provide regular reports, updates, and advice to the Executive and Council about membership numbers and ASAA finances, particularly revenue from memberships, *ASR*, and the book series
- Liaise with members on issues related to membership payments
- Monitor the Treasurer's email account and respond to relevant inquiries
- Oversee updates to the website related to membership
- Liaise with sub-national committees to organise distribution of joint membership fees
- Maintain a list of current ASAA members (updated monthly)
- Organise reimbursement of Executive and Council members (pre-approved by President) for costs related to attending meetings or other authorised events
- Oversee management of the ASAA ANU Endowment Fund, including Tony Reid prize funding. Maintain connections with relevant person overseeing Endowment Fund at the ANU
- Provide a handover to the incoming Treasurer

Role of the Secretary

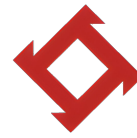
Prepared by Melissa Crouch 2024, updated by David Hundt 2024

This description is consistent with the secretary's legal obligations under the ASAA Constitution, particularly in regards to record keeping (s 33, 41) and the nomination/election process (s 27).

Key tasks of the Secretary:

- Act as the contact person for Consumer Affairs (Victoria) and Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC)
- *As a priority*, ensure that the ASAA report to ACNC is filed between July and December every year, based upon the Auditor's report
- *As a priority*, ensure that the ASAA profile in ACNC is updated every time a new councillor is added to the Council
- Organise meetings for ASAA Council and ASAA Executive (e.g. Zoom), in consultation with the President
- Organise meeting agendas and minutes
- Organise the annual general meeting (AGM) in accordance with the Constitution; ensure members are notified of date well in advance
- Coordinate with person who oversees the website to ensure AGM, Executive, and Council minutes are uploaded to the ASAA members' site
- Assist with communications to members via the members' email list (work with person who currently oversees this)
- Organising the nomination and election process for ASAA Councillors every 2 years (around September/October)
- Register any amendments to the ASAA Constitution with Consumer Affairs, as required
- Respond to website inquiries that come via the ASAA inquiry form
- Assist with and attend ASAA biennial conference, in coordination with President and other ASAA Council members
- Serve on prize committees and grant committees as needed, and assist with identification of other suitable committee members
- Keep a record of the make-up of all prize committees and other funding schemes, and share this with President and Vice President
- Assist the President and Vice-President with other special initiatives as required (e.g. online webinars, special workshops, special blog series of Asian Currents)
- Contribute to written public submissions and campaigns that support the goals of ASAA, in collaboration with other ASAA Councillors (e.g. campaign in response to the cuts to the NLA Asia Studies collections)
- Every two years, prepare the nomination and election process for Council, according to the ASAA Constitution
- Provide a handover to the incoming Secretary
- The outgoing Secretary needs to change the name and contact details of the incoming secretary so that they receive automatic reminds from Consumer Affairs (Victoria) to submit an annual statement. <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/mycav>

The secretary needs to maintain a database of essential documents, according to the ASAA Constitution requirements, including:



- Councillors' details, for ACNC reporting purposes.
- Constitution
- Certificate of incorporation
- ABN Advice Letter
- Past Executive and Council meeting minutes
- Past AGM minutes
- Past AGM auditor's reports
- All contracts and other legal documents signed on behalf of ASAA

Role of the Publications Officer

Prepared by Georgina Drew, Feb 2021, updated by David Hundt, 2024

The Publications Officer's primary job is to liaise between the Association and the four book series produced by the ASSA (<http://asaa.asn.au/book-series/>).

Key tasks of the Publications Officer:

- soliciting updates and reports from the editors in order to ensure that the series are running smoothly
- report to the Executive and Council on the series
- When changes to editors and book press changes are required, overseeing replacement editors in consultation with the Executive
- When publication contracts expire, it is the Publication Officer's responsibility to review and negotiate the new contract, in consultation with the Executive
- Attend Executive and Council meetings
- Coordinate book release events and book series promotional opportunities via the ASAA newsletter and at the ASAA conference
- Provide a handover to the incoming Publications Officer

Role of the Editor-in-Chief of *Asian Studies Review*

Prepared by David Hundt, 2024

The position of the Editor-in-Chief of *ASR* is determined through consultation between the Council and Executive.

The ASAA grants a high degree of autonomy to the EIC, who nonetheless is a full and active member of both the Executive and Council.

Key responsibilities include:

- The appointment and management of an Editorial Board consisting of thematic and regional specialists
- Liaising with the ASAA and the Publisher (Taylor & Francis) about operational matters relating to the journal
- Liaising with other stakeholders, including authors
- Making all reasonable efforts to promote *ASR* as an outstanding outlet for Asian Studies in Australia, the region, and the world
- Regular reporting to the Executive and Council on the management of the journal, including any adverse aspects that may affect the interests of the journal and the Association
- Attend and participate in the Biennial Conference, including e.g. by organising sessions about academic publishing
- Any other duties, as directed by the President
- Arranging an orderly handover of duties to the incoming EIC

Role of the Regional Councillors

Prepared by Kate McGregor, Jan 2021, updated David Hundt, August 2026

The ASAA Council includes representatives from the following countries and sub-regions: China, South, West and Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Japan and Korea.

Key tasks of the Regional Councillors:

- Attend all Council meetings and where possible represent the ASAA at relevant regional events
- Act as a liaison between the ASAA and relevant sub-regional associations, e.g. by conveying news about events and activities and providing relevant updates for ASAA bulletins.
- Actively support postgraduate researchers who are working in the relevant region or country and support efforts by the ASAA Postgraduate Representatives to reach these researchers
- Support the sub-regional associations to organise events at the biennial ASAA conference
- Assist with matters relating to joint memberships with regional councils (e.g. promotion of joint membership), as required
- Provide annual reports at Council meetings on the sub-regional associations and key activities, membership etc.
- Advocate on behalf of members on issues related to study of the relevant region and providing advice to the Council on related matters
- Serving on ad hoc ASAA committees related to promotion and preservation of the field, prizes, and other initiatives
- Provide a handover to the incoming Regional Councillor

Role of the Immediate Past President

Prepared by David Hundt, 2024

The Immediate Past President assumes a position on the Council upon completion of their term as President.

Key responsibilities include:

- Attending and contributing to Council meetings
- Attending and participating in the Biennial conference
- Assisting with ASAA prize and grant assessment schemes by advising on the make-up of assessment panels
- Offering advice and input to the Executive and Council, e.g. in relation to strategic matters

Role of the Postgraduate Representative(s)

Prepared by Kate McGregor, Jan 2021, updated David Hundt, 2024

Key tasks of the Postgraduate Representative/s:

- Attend all Council meetings and where possible represent the ASAA at relevant events
- Act as a liaison between the ASAA and postgraduates, especially by sharing news and concerns with the Council and Executive and providing relevant content and updates for ASAA bulletins.
- Ensure that postgraduates are included the ASAA's activities in a variety of ways. This can take the form of representation on the Council, where the Rep contributes to meetings to learn about how Council decisions may affect postgrads and to inform the Council of postgraduate perspectives.
- Boost and support postgraduate membership of the ASAA.
- Actively supporting postgraduate members
- Supporting the ASAA to organise the postgraduate events at the Biennial conference and postgraduate events in between these conferences.
- Provide annual reports at Council meetings on postgraduate developments and activities.
- Lobbying on behalf of postgraduate members on issues related to postgraduate level study of Asia and providing advice to the Council on related matters
- Provide a handover to the incoming Postgraduate Representative/s

Role of the Education/Teachers' Representative

Prepared by Nisha Thapliyal, March 2022, updated David Hundt, 2024

Key tasks of the Teachers' Representative:

- Build capacity in linkages between academics researching Asia and teachers teaching about Asia as part of Australia's Asian Century initiatives
- Facilitate closer cooperation between researchers, language teachers, and community language schools
- Facilitate closer cooperation between researchers and area studies Asia educators and related associations, e.g. Asia Education Foundation
- Monitor and inform the ASAA about Australian government agency initiatives to support Asian Studies in schools and universities including ACARA, AITSIS as well as state DOEs etc.
- Work with the relevant regional councillors to support and promote the study of Asian languages in Australia councillor (e.g. Southeast Asia Councillor on Indonesian language; Japan & Korea Councillor on Japanese and Korean language studies)
- Attend ASAA Council meetings
- Assist with and attend ASAA Biennial Conference, in coordination with the President and other ASAA Council members
- Serve on prize committees and grant committees as needed, and assist with identification of other suitable committee members
- Assist the President and Vice-President with other special initiatives as required (e.g., online webinars, special workshops, special blog series of Asian Currents)
- Contribute to written public submissions and campaigns that support the goals of ASAA, in collaboration with other ASAA Councillors
- Provide a handover to the incoming Teachers' Representative

We welcome new suggestions and ideas for this role, such as how ASAA can support language teachers at Australian universities and potentially attract more language teachers as members.

Note: the term 'teacher' may be construed broadly and could include both lecturers of Asian languages at Australian universities (short-term contract, casual, or full time); teachers of short- or long-term exchange programs in Asia (e.g. ACICIS), as well as teachers of Asian languages and language studies at primary/secondary schools across Australia

Role of the Library Representative

Prepared by Rheny Pulungan, June 2022

Key tasks of the Library Representative:

- Attend all council meetings and where possible represent the ASAA at relevant events
- Build capacity in linkages between academics researching Asia and librarians responsible for Asian collections
- Act as a liaison between the ASAA and Librarians, e.g. by sharing news and concerns with the Council and Executive and providing relevant content and updates for ASAA bulletins.
- Facilitate closer cooperation between researchers, librarians, and libraries which hold Asian collections
- Facilitate closer cooperation between researchers and Asian Studies librarian associations, such as ALRA (Asian Library Resources of Australia).
- Monitor and inform ASAA about changes and initiatives related to Asian Studies collections in libraries across Australia and around the globe.
- Work with the Postgraduate Representative to support and promote the study of Asian languages and the use of Asian collections in Australian universities.
- Assist with and attend ASAA Biennial Conference, in coordination with the President and other ASAA Council members
- Assist the President and Vice-President with other special initiatives as required (e.g. online webinars, workshops, reports)
- Contribute to written public submissions and campaigns that support the goals of ASAA, in collaboration with other ASAA Councillors
- Provide a handover to the incoming Library Representative

Role of the General Councillor (Women's Forum)

Prepared by Melissa Crouch, 2022, and updated 2024

The role of the General Councillor (Women's Forum) is to:

- Provide a link between the Council and the Women's Forum
- Ensure the Council provides a supportive space for women and LGBTIQ researchers and their work
- Further the aims of the Women's Forum to raise the profile of women doing research on Asia in Australia, as well as promoting research about women and gender in Asia
- This may include moderating an email list, hosting meetings during the Biennial ASAA conference and assisting the editor of the Women in Asia book series to promote the series
- Organise for a university to host the Women's Forum conference biannually (ideally in odd-numbered years)
- Attend ASAA Council meetings
- Lead the Women's Forum meeting at the ASAA Biennial Conference
- Share news relevant to the Women's Forum through the ASAA email list and Women's Forum Facebook page
- Serve on ad hoc ASAA committees related to promotion and preservation of the field, prizes, and other initiatives
- Provide a handover to the incoming Women's Councillor

Role of the General Councillor (Early Career Representative)

Prepared by David Hundt, 2024

This is a new position that was proposed and created in 2024 in recognition of the significance of ECR scholars to the life of the ASAA and its future.

Key responsibilities of the ECR Representative are:

- To act as an intermediary between the ASAA and other bodies and/or forums where matters relating to ECR scholars in Asian Studies are discussed
- To take part in events that the ASAA organises which cater to ECRs and promote their interests
- To have input to the coordination of ECR-focused initiatives, e.g. in matching would be mentors and mentees
- To promote the engagement of ECR scholars as fully as possible in the life of the Association, e.g., by alerting them about ASAA events (such as the Biennial Conference and the Women in Asia Conference), opportunities to publish (e.g. in Asian Studies Review and Asia Currents), and grants and prizes (especially the ECR Prize and the John Legge Prize)
- Other duties, as suggested by the Executive and Council
- To arrange a handover to the incoming ECR Representative

Role of the General Councillor (Conference)

The Conference Councillor is appointed to Council after the determination of the host of the next Biennial Conference.

Key responsibilities include:

- Attending and participating in Council meetings and providing updates about progress on the Conference
- Hosting the ASAA Biennial Conference and leading a Conference Organising Committee.
- Liaising with the Executive and Council, as required, e.g. in relation to the distribution of postgraduate bursaries (see below).
- Managing the Conference budget and ensuring the event enhances the reputation of the ASAA
- See also 'Responsibilities of the Host Institution' (below)
- Providing a detailed report on the Conference to the Executive after the event has been completed.

About the ASAA Conference

The biennial conference is a flagship event of the ASAA that has been running since 1976 and has built up a strong reputation. In the past, Australian Prime Ministers have even attended the event. In recent years, conference attendance has ranged from several hundred to over 1,000 participants (2015, 2018). During Covid-19 in 2022, the hybrid event hosted by Monash University attracted 600 participants (270 in person). In 2024, approximately 300 people attended the event at Curtin University in Perth (with about 80 online).

Benefits to hosting the ASAA Conference

There are many benefits to hosting an ASAA conference, including:

- Placing your university on the international map for its Asian studies programs and research;
- Bringing Asian studies academics together to collaborate on an interdisciplinary event and build momentum and connections among the academic community
- Bringing onto campus an interdisciplinary group of academics from across Australia, around the region and the world, and connect them with your academics and students.
- Using the event to generate student interest and build momentum and enrolments in your Asian studies programs and language programs, for example, by facilitating student volunteering opportunities during the conference;
- Attracting the attention, and providing an opportunity for engagement with, wider public interested in Asia, from government to business, civil society and the media.

Responsibilities of the host institution

The Councillor and the Organising Committee will have primary carriage and responsibility for the conference. The main expectations of hosting the ASAA conference are that the host institution will be able to:

- assemble an organising committee of academics from across your university
- provide administrative support for the organisation of the event
- issue the call for abstracts and manage the registration process
- organise suitable rooms/venue available for the duration of the conference
- organise student volunteers to assist at the conference

- make space for an early career event the day prior to the conference, which the postgraduate representatives from ASAA will organise

While Monash 2022 was a fully hybrid format, and Curtin 2024 was partly hybrid (one day), we appreciate that not all universities may have the facilities to enable this. The Councillor will be in touch with the Council about whether the event will be an in-person only or hybrid event.

The Councillor can seek advice from past host organisers. The call for abstracts would usually be issued around August/September, closing before the end of the year. Early bird registrations are usually at the start of the year.

Postgraduate bursaries

One way that the ASAA supports the conference is through the award of postgraduate bursaries to cover relevant expenses related to participation in the conference. These postgraduate bursaries have been an important enabler and boost to the careers of postgraduate studies in Asian studies. Given that many postgraduate students have had limited opportunities to attend conferences during Covid-19, we anticipate strong interest from students across Australia. The ASAA Council selects the bursary winners and then pays the funds to the host institution to organise the payment of accommodation, registration and the dinner.

Budget

The Conference is an event seeks to cover its costs. If any profits are made, these are split between ASAA and the host institution. While the host institution is expected to take responsibility for budgeting, former host organisers are available to provide advice on how they managed this. In the past, conference organisers have worked to secure financial or in-kind (e.g. administrative support) contributions from a range of related faculties and schools across the host institution, as well as from a range of external partners (embassies, research institutes, state government, business etc).

Role of the Digital Officer (non-voting Council member)

Prepared by Natasha Naidu, May 2023, and updated August 2024

Key responsibilities of the Digital Officer include:

Asian Currents Editorship:

- Working with ASAA President on ideas for Asian Currents' series etc
- Updating the publication guidelines
- Soliciting submissions to Asian Currents
- Reviewing submissions
- Communicating decisions to accept or reject Asian Currents pieces, providing feedback (at discretion)
- Editing submissions for clarity / readability, word length, factual accuracy and accuracy in referencing
- Using feature images with correct creative commons license, ensuring all images supplied by authors have the correct creative commons license
- Publishing new pieces to the Asian Currents website

Website Management:

- Updating and adding text to webpages
- Creating new webpages, organizing the website
- Identifying bugs and issues on website, workshopping solutions
- Liaising with treasurer and website developer on digital issues
- Creating new forms for grant and prize applications
- Assisting in facilitating the Reid Prize (every 2 years)
- Uploading relevant items to Latest News
- Uploading new posts to Asian Currents

Monthly Newsletter:

- Soliciting newsletter items from council members
- Collating items, drafting and scheduling monthly newsletter through MailChimp

Social Media Management:

- Managing the ASAA's social media presence on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn
- Promoting ASAA prizes and events via social media channels
- General activity, support of ASAA member publications and events

Administrative Assistance:

- Designing, drafting and scheduling email communications with members through MailChimp
- Organising call for nominations for council members (every 2 years)
- Setting up online election platform (if needed, every 2 years)
- Writing a short annual report

Asian Studies Review Assistant Editorship:

- Identifying and contacting potential *ASR* authors for contribution to Asian Currents
- Facilitating submission of Asian Currents posts

- Editing submissions for clarity / readability, word length, factual accuracy and accuracy in referencing
- Liaising with Taylor & Francis for Open Access requests
- Publishing new posts to Asian Currents
- Managing the *ASR* Twitter (X) account, including e.g., advertising new posts

Upon completion of their term, the outgoing Digital Officer should also arrange for a handover to the incoming Digital Officer.

Guidelines for Councillors in the organisation of Prize and Grant sub-committees:

- Check prize/grant rules are up to date, set deadlines
- Ask Asian Currents editor to update ASAA website prize/grant page and advertise in newsletter and social media
- Identify and approach committee members, and ensure that the chair is an experienced ASAA member or senior academic. Prior winners will usually be invited to be a member of the next committee
- Inform committee of their role, providing sample criteria if requested
- Once the deadline closes, check applicants meet the eligibility criteria
- Decisions of the subcommittee should be either unanimous or by a majority
- Subcommittees should generally follow past practice in terms of whether honourable mentions and joint winners can be recognized, and discuss this with the councillor overseeing the committee
- Communicate the outcome of the committee to the ASAA President
- The President to inform the winners by email, providing written letter as required
- Asian Currents editor to announce winners in newsletter, on website and social media