



## 2005 annual report of the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in tertiary Education

### The year in focus

2005 has been a busy and eventful year with considerable expansion of executive committee activities as well as the first international visiting scholarship sponsored by the society. We are fortunate to have Professor Allison Littlejohn from Dundee University fulfilling that role at various events around New Zealand, Australia and Hong Kong, and as a keynote speaker at the 2005 annual conference. Other 'firsts' are the ascilite New Researcher Grant introduced this year, conversion of the Conference Handbook to a Wiki and the beginnings of an initiative to compile all ascilite policies and procedures in that format, and a fourth edition of AJET.

Consultations with project staff from the Carrick Institute and with representatives from the UK Association of Learning Technology (ALT) took place during 2005 as part of a strategy aimed at broadening the scope and influence of the society within regional institutions, government and higher education circles. The Executive Committee now includes members based in Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand and Australia, so our geographical reach is also expanding. Maintaining continuity and effective communication while managing the increasing workload associated with the range of services now offered to members presents something of a challenge, and a proposal to increase the society's permanent staff is on the agenda for discussion.

I fully appreciate the value of all voluntary and paid contributions, and extend sincere thanks to the current executive committee members and secretariat for their most worthy inputs to the smooth running of the society. I also thank the 2005 Conference Committee at Queensland University of Technology for undertaking the significant task of hosting this key annual event, and for introducing innovative session formats and events in keeping with the theme "Balance, Fidelity and Mobility".

Finally, I am pleased to welcome recently retired president Helen Carter back as a delegate at the conference after 11 years on the executive, and to recognize her long and exceptional service to the society through the award of an ascilite Fellowship.

Cathy Gunn, President

### Membership and services

Membership numbers continue to grow. There are 153 new members since last year bringing the current total to 587 as of 29th November, an overall increase of around 10% over the year. Enquiries about corporate, group and individual status membership rates raise the question of whether we should increase the range of membership options currently offered. An expanded role for the secretariat could include recruitment of new individual, institutional and corporate group members.

### Finances

The financial position of the society remains healthy, and was boosted by a profit of \$45,047 from the 2004 conference in Perth WA. Questions from members and ongoing discussion within the executive address the matter of how best to use this strong financial position to the advantage of our members. Increased services to members resulted in an operating loss of \$3252 in the 2004 – 2005 financial year, with accumulated funds now totalling \$148,022. The prospect of relocating and redefining the secretariat role is under discussion, as a higher profile permanent staff could provide better continuity and present a proactive and professional public interface for the society. An outline proposal will be tabled at the 2005 AGM.

### Electronic Information System

Trials of voice over IP software for executive meetings during 2005 have not been entirely successful so we continue to use the virtual conferencing system. Discussions are underway to resolve the matter, and to review the rules of operation for the ascilite-general mailing list as this currently does not accept messages in html format or file attachments. Any approved changes will be announced on the members' mailing list.

### Affiliations

A researcher hired to assist with establishment of the Carrick Institute was invited to the ascilite executive meeting in March to discuss stakeholder interests and beneficial working relationships. Discussion of the Memorandum of Understanding with the UK Association of Learning Technology is ongoing, and a closer working relationship will be fostered to allow experience of running an organization of this nature to be shared. A member of the ascilite executive has been invited to join the ALT Research Committee (ALT-R) and member rates for conference registrations will continue to be offered under a reciprocal agreement. Other topics for discussion with ALT include journal distribution, exchange visits and organizational structure.

## Executive portfolios

The list of executive activities continues to grow. Features of 2005 include:

- The ascilite Awards are in the second year with an international judging panel;
- The Community Mentoring Programme is running for a third successful year;
- Initiatives involving the Campus Representatives Network continue to grow;
- Conversion of the Conference Handbook to a Wiki and plans to compile policies and procedures in this format;
- An Electronic Newsletter published three times a year;
- A new ascilite research agenda was featured in the September 2005 newsletter;
- An ascilite New Researcher Grant was offered for the first time;
- Four editions of AJET were published in 2005 and the quality of papers remains high;
- An ascilite Visiting Scholarship brought Professor Allison Littlejohn to New Zealand, Australia and Hong Kong;
- Plans are underway for an ascilite Strategic Planning meeting in early 2006.

## Conferences

The society appreciates the hard work done by the 2005 Conference Committee to bring this key annual event to Brisbane, and for the creative approach they have introduced. Next year's conference will be hosted by a team from Sydney University lead by Peter Goodyear, and two expressions of interest have been received for 2007 from institutions in Singapore and Victoria.

## NextEd Grant

The 2004 NextEd Grant awarded to Meg O'Reilly, Dr Sue Bennett and Dr Mike Keppell for their project entitled "Innovations in Online Assessment – Case Studies" will sadly be the last as the company has chosen to withdraw from the partnership. The society is grateful for their support over the years. A new sponsor will be sought so a grant for experienced researchers can continue to be offered.

## About ascilite

ascilite is a society for those involved in higher education, especially computer facilitated learning and educational interactive multimedia. It provides a forum to stimulate discussion of relevant issues in the educational use of technology as well as promoting research, development and evaluation. ascilite also promotes cooperation and liaison with other groups and organizations with complimentary aims.

Enquiries about membership may be directed to the ascilite Secretariat, c/- CEDIR, University of Wollongong, Wollongong 2522, NSW. Email [info@ascilite.org.au](mailto:info@ascilite.org.au) or phone +612 4221 4895

### communication

- The annual report provides a summary of executive and administrative activities and a financial summary for the calendar year.
- The **Australasian Journal of Educational Technology** publishes high quality refereed articles in three or four editions a year. It is free to financial members of ascilite, and is also available on the web at [www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/](http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/).
- The **ascilite newsletter** is published electronically three times a year and provides discussion on more topical issues (<http://www.ascilite.org.au/newsletter/>).
- ascilite maintains a number of **listservers**. A general list is moderated and provides information about the society's activities, as well as alerting members to current conferences, positions vacant and similar ([ascilite-general@vcs.ascilite.org.au](mailto:ascilite-general@vcs.ascilite.org.au)).

### executive committee

#### president

Cathy Gunn, University of Auckland

#### vice-president

Geraldine Lefoe, University of Wollongong

#### committee

Bob Corderoy, University of Wollongong  
Mike Keppell, Hong Kong Institute of Education  
Joe Luca, Edith Cowan University  
Meg O'Reilly, Southern Cross University  
Jeremy Williams, Universitas 21 Global  
Linda Pannan  
**seconded**  
Allan Christie, NetSpot Pty Limited

#### secretariat

Robyn Debbes  
University of Wollongong

#### treasurer

Craig Zimitat  
Griffith University

Further information about the Society is available from the ascilite web site: [www.ascilite.org.au](http://www.ascilite.org.au)