

- [From the president](#)
- [2015 Conference report](#)
- [2016 Conference](#)
- [WCCES update](#)
- [Upcoming conferences](#)
- [Newsletters for 2016](#)

[View this email in your browser](#)



OCIES newsletter no. 1, 2016

From the president Warm oceanic greetings to all

I am delighted to be writing to you via our first newsletter for 2016, and the first since 2014. The decision to reinstate regular newsletters to our members and friends was prompted by feedback provided by many of you through the 2015 conference evaluation and responses to the survey, sent out by Matthew Thomas in February this year, seeking your views on various OCIES issues/activities. Analyses of both are provided later in this newsletter

Backtracking to the very successful and enjoyable conference held last November at the University of the South Pacific's Emalus Campus in Vanuatu, we're pleased to inform you that we have presented the campus library with a number of titles, as a gesture of our appreciation of the wonderful hospitality they extended to us. The titles were selected on the advice of the USP librarian and largely comprised of dictionaries and volumes about writing essays, conducting research etc. I would like also to reiterate the thanks conveyed at the AGM to the outgoing President and Vice President, Tom Griffiths and Ritesh Shah, for their hard work and high level of commitment to our Society during 2014 and 2015. Thanks are also extended to all who supported me in taking on the President's role, and Matthew Thomas who came in as Secretary to replace Alex McCormick who moved into the Vice President position. Our other extremely effective executive members - Rebecca Spratt as Treasurer, Helen Benzie as Communications Officer and Zane Ma Rhea as IEJCP editor - have provided the continuity required to undertake what has been a rather busy programme since. Working alongside this executive team has been always positive and productive.

Notable achievements already in 2016, many of which were subject to discussion at the AGM, have been the 'OCIES Fellowships and Networks Program' developed by Alex; the investigation undertaken by Rebecca into OCIES's current legal and tax status and clarification of our ABN registration; Helen's drafting of a comprehensive OCIES Communications Plan, and Zane's leadership in the publication of IEJCP Vol 15, No 1 and her carefully developed and scheduled plan for further 2016 issues. And, Matthew, who took on the Secretary role only a week or two after arriving in the region from the US, has really hit the ground running! Not only did he initiate the survey mentioned above, he has kept on top of all our bits of documentation, and also sent out updates on activities and events to all members, the latest being to inform you about the 2016 conference to be held 24-26 November at Sydney University, which he, Alex and past-president Nigel Bagnall have agreed to convene. It is shaping up very well indeed and you will be kept well and truly informed via the website and newsletters. In a future newsletter this year, we also hope to provide initial details as to the 2017 conference which we hope to hold in a Pacific location.

Another aspect of OCIES executive committee activity has been regular interactions with the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES). Because of some apparent confusion during our last AGM about what WCCES is, OCIES's connection to it, and the reported tensions within the organisation currently, we decided to include a brief section titled 'WCCES Update' in each newsletter (see below). Our most pressing concern with WCCES in the last week or two was the recent discovery that the documentation provided early in 2015 about our change of name, from ANZCIES to OCIES, had not been incorporated into their records. Our Exec members had done everything required, the World Council had not. Having now received very helpful responses from the WCCES webmaster and the Historian, we are hopeful that what needs to happen in order for our Society to be properly named is now underway. With regard to WCCES, we are aware of quite a number of OCIES members who plan on attending the conference in Beijing, 22-26 August, and request that you contact either me e.coxon@auckland.ac.nz or Alex alexandra.mccormick@sydney.edu.au so we have a complete list of who will be there ahead of organising an opportunity for a social gathering of as many OCIES members as can make it.

Being aware of how much information is to be included in this newsletter, I intended keeping this message brief, but ...

Very best wishes
Eve

2015 Conference report

The 43rd conference of the regional CIE society, the first under the new name of OCIES, was held at the University of the South Pacific's (USP) Emalus Campus in Vanuatu from 3-6 November, 2015.

Given that one of the key motivations for the change of name was the members' wish for a name more representative of the region within which our society exists, and more inclusive of educationists from the many countries within Oceania, it was seen as important that the first conference under the new name also be the first held in a country other than Australia or New Zealand. The decision to pursue the possibility of holding it in Vanuatu was arrived at early in 2015. While the advent of the devastating Cyclone Pam that struck Vanuatu in March created some delays in planning, the potential for the conference to contribute to post-cyclone recovery further affirmed the choice of Port Vila.

Also significant was the decision for the conference to be convened by a joint team from Vanuatu, New Zealand and Australia. The success of the conference demonstrates the value of establishing and building on strong relationships across the region.

The conference's theme and subthemes were developed with the intention of guiding the reinvigoration of CIE in Oceania. They reflected the convening committee's broad objectives:

- to revitalise our society by encompassing the diversity of issues, interests, perspectives and contexts represented in Oceania,
- to widen participation in and add depth to debates and dialogue about how CIE can contribute to education in the post-2015 era at global, regional and national levels.

Overall, the conference was very successful in achieving these objectives; see key details below.

Preparation

Organisation had a later than desirable start due to delays in finalising the name change (from ANZCIES to OCIES), and in securing OCIES executive approval to proceed and to facilitate the establishment of a Conference page on the new OCIES website. The advent of Cyclone Pam also contributed to a later than normal start, as there was uncertainty as to the capacity of USP/Port Vila to host. The conference website pages were set up in late June and the call for papers went out early July.

Given that University of Auckland (UoA) was leading arrangements from a distance, two visits to Port Vila were necessary to make all the arrangements. Regular updates were provided via the website and a gmail account



established for support of the conference.

The unique nature of the conference arrangements, involving a partnership of three different institutions in three different countries as well as support from Vanuatu local education institutions and development partners, is noteworthy insofar as it signified the new era of OCIES as a more regional, inclusive society.

Participation and Programme

Overall, there were 100 registered attendees (understood to be the largest attendance at our regional CIE society's annual conference to date) of which 82 were fee paying. Our attendees represented institutions and organization from 11 different countries in total. Over 30% of attendees were from Pacific Island and other developing countries, and almost 25% were post-graduate students.

The three-day programme involved presentations delivered by a total of 76 people - mainly through parallel paper sessions but including keynotes, the invited language symposium, panel discussions, workshops and the closing plenary session; about 10 of the 76 presented in more than one format. The largest number of presenters (29) were based in Pacific Island countries (Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands, PNG) representing various campuses of the University of the South Pacific, Solomon Islands National University, Ministries of Education, and a range of regional agencies and non-government organisations. The next most numerous grouping (25) comprised presenters based in Australia from a range of universities (Sydney, QUT, UNE, Melbourne, RMIT, Victoria Melbourne, Monash, South Australia, Wollongong, Sunshine Coast, Charles Sturt) and ACER. NZ presenters (18) came from five universities (Auckland, Canterbury, Victoria Wellington, AUT and Unitec). Both the Australian and NZ presenter groups included diverse ethnicities, with presentations addressing research in diverse locations. Although only a small number of presenters were based in institutions beyond Oceania, a reasonable proportion of papers (about 25%) presented research undertaken beyond Oceania; in Indonesia (x2), Maldives, Singapore/Malaysia, Nepal, Canada, Timor Leste (x3), Laos, Thailand (x2), China, USA.

The keynote addresses were presented by Associate Professor Kabini Sanga (Victoria University of Wellington), Dr Christine Fox (formerly of University of Wollongong) and Dr Seu'ula Johansson-Fua (University of the South Pacific). The programme also included an invited panel speaking on issues of Language in Vanuatu and a closing plenary session with invited speakers.

The conference was preceded by a workshop organised by the Vanuatu Ministry of Education and Training and the Australian/New Zealand supported Vanuatu Education Sector Programme, focused on issues of literacy and language.

Sponsorship and Scholarships

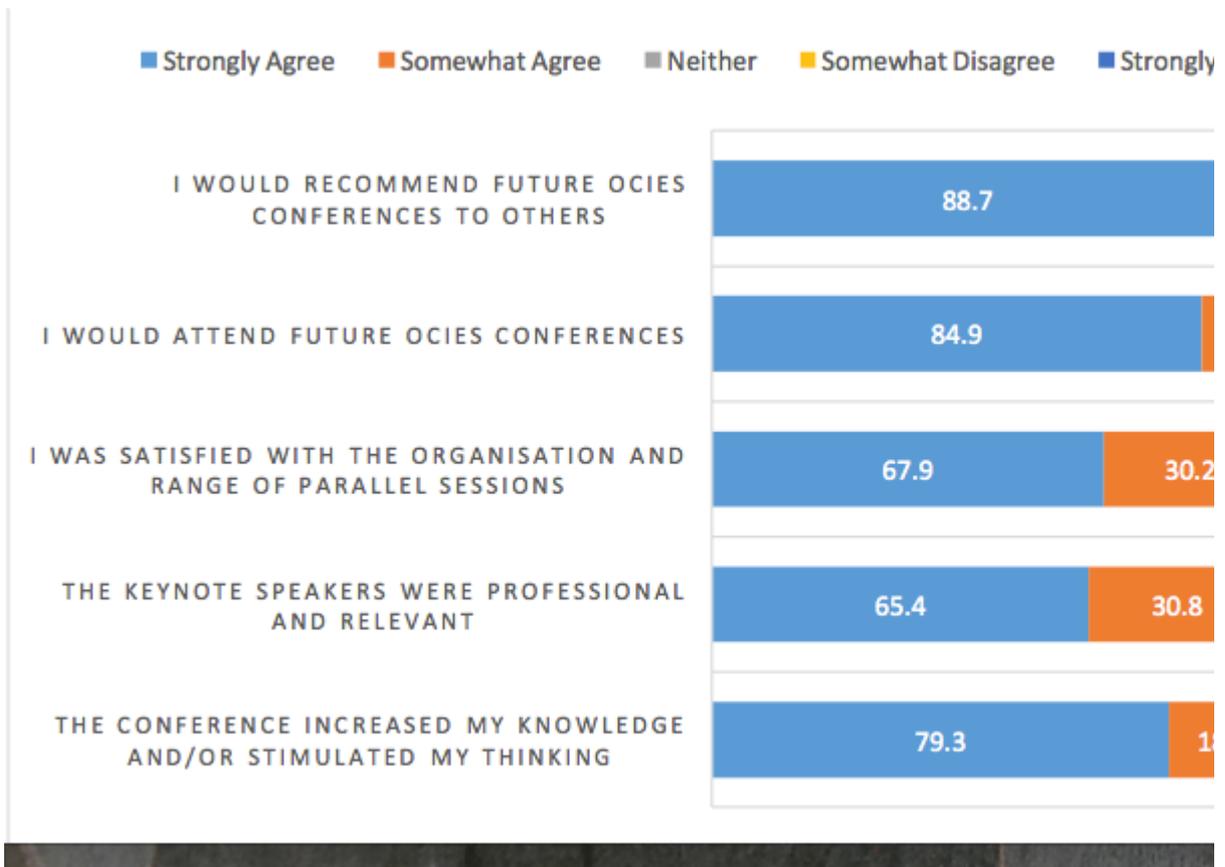
The Research Unit for Pacific and International Education (RUPIE) of UOA provided \$3500 sponsorship towards convening of the conference – funds were used to cover some management costs and some of the travel costs involved in organisational visits between Auckland and Vila. Six scholarships of \$500 plus registration fee were provided by the OCIES Executive, to emerging scholars selected through a competitive process. The Conference Convening team also provided 10 scholarships to Vanuatu-based educators from the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education, Vanuatu Institute of Technology, and the Vanuatu Ministry of Education.

Income and Expenditure

The Conference was planned with the objective of breaking even, but a small surplus of \$615 was achieved. A total of \$27,000 revenue was collected which comfortably covered the various costs involved. Management costs were kept to a minimum; other than the \$1,000 Eventbrite processing fee all management work was done voluntarily or with RUPIE support. Major costs were travel and accommodation for keynotes, and additional costs of scoping visits due to convening the conference from a distance. Most conference expenditure fed directly into the local economy thus assisting with post-cyclone recovery.

Participant Feedback

A simple survey was sent out to all registered participants shortly after the conference. 53 people responded. Almost all respondents agreed with positive statements about the conference content, organisations, and indicated they would attend future conferences and recommend it to others. These results are shown in the chart below.



Just one respondent strongly disagreed with these statements and responded negatively to the other questions. Because no contact details were provided we have been unable to follow-up and seek to address this person's concerns.

The aspects of the conference that people most valued, from highest to lowest were:

1. Exposure to different perspectives or new research
2. Networking and informal interactions
3. The keynote speakers
4. The parallel sessions
5. The location
6. Presenting my research and getting feedback
7. The affordability of the Conference
8. Attending the OCIES AGM

We also asked open questions about what sessions interested participants the most and why and suggestions to improve future conference programmes. Sessions on language issues and literacy (9 respondents), the Keynote speakers (10 respondents) and sessions on Pacific education were the most popular (8 respondents). Several respondents (5) commented that they enjoyed the sessions with a strong research base the most and a further 8 respondents provided general comments to the effect that all sessions were useful and interesting. One respondent noted that some sessions did not have a very strong research base.

Of note from the suggestions for improving future conferences were several comments about increasing the outreach and promotion of OCIES, ensuring the outcomes of conferences are shared more widely and promoting the conferences more to enable more diverse participation. Several comments were made about needing to increase regular communication particularly to Pacific institutions and academics, and to find ways to include more 'novice' researchers and students. One respondent commented on the lack of representation of research

from the Asia region and the need to ensure we communicate that OCIES does not exclude Asia. Several respondents commented on the value of having the conference in a Pacific location and the desire for this to continue. Other suggestions made were for more 'practical' sessions, inclusion of other media such as video/documentary, dedicated sessions for students, and opportunities for interaction with USP students or 'field trips' when in country.

Eve Coxon & Rebecca Spratt,

On behalf of OCIES 2015 Conference Organising Committee February 2016

2016 Conference

**Exploring equity gaps in education:
Toward unity, not uniformity**

44th Annual Conference of the
Oceania Comparative and International Education Society (OCIES)
University of Sydney, 24-26 November 2016

You will notice that we have managed to significantly lower the registration fees and provide more scholarships . For more details see the [Conference tab](#) on the website

OCIES fellowships and networks program.

OCIES has long promoted important exchanges of ideas and work between educators, researchers and education policy actors. It has served to bring together our contributions and develop our roles within the wider field of comparative and international education, and in doing so to link these with the World Congress of Comparative and International Education Societies. An aim of the OCIES Fellowships and Networks program is to make this role more proactive by providing the institutional and financial support to members to extend and increase the frequency of these endeavors. Individual researchers and/or groups of researchers will be facilitated to undertake collaborations or networking initiatives between institutions and OCIES members, thereby deepening these exchanges and relationships. The funding from the scheme is sourced from conference and membership fee surplus, and could be up to Aus\$5000. The number of fellowships and/or network support grants awarded each year will vary according to funds available and the quality of applications received.

Application Requirements

- The Chief Investigator must submit a written proposal, of no more than two pages, that includes:
- Names of all participants, positions and institutions
- Program aims, proposed activities and full budget items. These could include, for example, a seminar, Master class and/or guest lectures or presentations
- Potential benefits to OCIES, potential for lasting impacts for the institutions involved and the advancement of the CIE field more broadly

Proposals should be submitted to the OCIES Secretary: matthew.thomas@sydney.edu.au by 10 June 2016 to be reviewed by the incumbent OCIES executive committee. Funds must be used within the year of approval, by 30 June 2017, and a brief summary report submitted on completion.

Successful applicants must be OCIES members and register for the Journal as authors and reviewers.

WCCES update

The World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) was established in 1970 as an umbrella organisation for four societies, with two broad goals: to advance education for international understanding in the interests of peace, intercultural co-operation, mutual respect among peoples and observance of human rights; and to improve education systems so that the right of all to education may be more fully realized. WCCES is affiliated with UNESCO as an NGO. WCCES has now grown to include 47 constituent societies.

One of the key activities WCCES undertakes to advance its goals is the organisation of the World Congress of Comparative Education Societies, usually every three years. The 16th World Congress, 'Dialectics in Education: Comparative Perspectives' is to be held in Beijing this year, from 22-26 August.

OCIES (previously known as ANZCIES) has been a member society since 1983 when it became WCCES's second regional society. Since then our Society has made notable contributions to WCCES. Our contribution is evident in the extent to which prominent ANZCIES members, past and current, have been elected to key WCCES positions, such as President (Anne Hickling-Hudson, 2001-4) and Secretary-General (Christine Fox, 2005-2012). This contribution has continued with the appointment of OCIES member, Brian Denman, as current Secretary-General.

As a constituent member, OCIES is represented on the WCCES Executive Committee by its President who from time to time is consulted and/or asked for input on various issues and activities. So far in 2016, WCCES has called on OCIES and other member societies for input on three matters:

- First, to vote in the election of Member-at-Large for the recently re-established WCCES Bureau. Our Executive Committee (EC) members agreed we should support N'Dri Assie-Lumumba, Professor of Africana Studies at Cornell University and the then President of CIES, who was duly elected.
- Secondly, for OCIES's support of a letter penned by WCCES President, Carlos Torres, in response to a request by a number of member societies, urging the Turkish government to respect the academic freedom and democratic rights to protest of the "Academics for Peace". After discussion with the EC, the OCIES President added her signature to the letter.
- Thirdly, the completion of a survey on OCIES activities in 2015, to be included in the Annual Historical Report of the WCCES alongside information from each constituent society of the World Council.

The key event for which member societies', including OCIES, input will be required this year, will be associated with the Beijing Conference when voting for election of key officers (e.g President, Treasurer, Secretary-General) will be held. Another key event held during the World Congress and open to all members of constituent societies is the Assembly called to discuss WCCES affairs. The Assembly has a consultative and advisory role and is presided over by the President.

Those OCIES members who attended the AGM held during our 2015 conference in Vanuatu will likely recall some discussion about current tensions within WCCES, arising from the change and renewal process the organization has undergone over the past 2-3 years. From the documentation distributed and/or posted during the months since, and information gleaned from informal discussion with those who are closer to the centre of things than current OCIES EC members, it appears that the challenges arising from attempts to make WCCES a more 'global' and inclusive organisation are being addressed appropriately.

Eve Coxon, OCIES President

Recent publications by members

Benzie, H (2015). Reflecting on feedback in a peer-led writing group. In C. Guerin, P Bartholomew & C Nygaard (eds), *Learning to research: Researching to learn*, Libri Publishing, Faringdon, Oxfordshire.

Benzie, H (2015). Third space strategists: International students negotiating the transition from Pathway program to postgraduate coursework degree. *International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, 14(3), pp. 17-31.

Dr Alexandra McCormick edited a special issue of the journal:

McCormick, A (2016). Editorial. Changing context in comparative and international education: Geopolitical shifts and research in Australia. *International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, 15(1), pp. 1-4.

Member profile

We don't have a member profile for you this time but please consider featuring yourself in the next issue of the newsletter. One way of sharing some interesting information about yourself is to write briefly under the following sentence starters:

I am... (insert your position and workplace)

The main focus of my work is...

I'm interested in...

As an OCIES member I...

I am reading...

I am passionate about...

Next I want to...

I am proud of...

What people may not know is...

Please send your contribution with a photo to OCIES communications officer helen.benzie@unisa.edu.au

Deadline for next issue: **23 June 2016**

Journal update

The next issue of the journal will be a general edition currently being prepared for June. The OCIES Conference Proceedings edition will be out in September and the a final general edition in December.

To read more visit the [Journal site](#).

Join or renew your membership

Has your membership lapsed? Would you like to join OCIES? Please see details on the [website](#).

Upcoming conferences

3-5 May British Council
Going Global 2016 Cape Town International Convention Centre, Cape Town, South Africa
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/going-global>

21-24 May International Institute of Education (IIE) 2016
Disneyland Resort Hotel

Anaheim, CA

<http://www.iienet2.org/Annual2/default.aspx>

22-24 May International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education Forum
Fiji

<http://www.inqaahe.org>

29 May – 3 Jun NAFSA 2016

Building Capacity for Global Learning Denver, Colorado

http://www.nafsa.org/Attend_Events/Annual_Conference/

14-17 Jun XIV Annual Int'l Conference of the Bulgarian Comparative Education Society
Education Provision to Every One: Comparing Perspectives from Around the World Sofia, Bulgaria

<http://bc-es-conference.org>

27-30 Jun Canada International Conference on Education
University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

<http://www.ciceducation.org>

4-7 Jul HERDSA 2016

The Shape of Higher Education The Esplanade Hotel Fremantle

Fremantle, Western Australia

<http://herdsa2016.org>

6 – 8 Jul 24th National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference
No Frills

Central Queensland University

Rockhampton, Queensland

[Link](#)

11-15 Jul State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) Annual Meeting
Royal Sonesta Harbor Court Baltimore

Baltimore, Maryland

<http://www.sheeo.org/calendar/events/2016-sheeo-annual-meeting—baltimore-maryland>

22-26 Aug XVI World Congress of Comparative Education Societies *Dialectics of Education: Comparative Perspectives*

Beijing Normal University Beijing, China

<http://www.wcces2016.org>

22-24 Aug International Education Association of South Africa
Global Conference

Kruger National Park, South Africa

<http://www.ieasa.studysa.org>

31 Aug – 3 Sep 38th Annual EAIR Forum Birmingham 2016

Only Connect: Collaboration, cooperation and capacity building through HE partnerships Birmingham City

University, Birmingham, UK

<http://www.eairweb.org/forum2016/>

12-14 Sep British Association of International and Comparative Education (BAICE)

Achieving and Sustaining Quality Learning

University of Nottingham

Nottingham, UK

<http://baice.ac.uk/2015/2016-baice-conference-at-nottingham/>

13 – 15 Sep British Educational Research Association (BERA)
University of Leeds
Leeds, UK

<https://www.bera.ac.uk/beraconference-2016>

13 – 16 Sep EAIE 2015
Imagine... ACC Liverpool, Liverpool Waterfront
Liverpool, UK

<http://www.eaie.org/home/conference/liverpool.html>

18-21 Oct AIEC Australian International Education Conference
Connectivity – at the heart of international education
Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre
Melbourne, VIC Australia

<https://www.ieaa.org.au/what-we-do/australian-international-education-conference>

25-28 Oct Educause Annual Conference 2016
The best thinking in higher education IT
Anaheim Convention Center
Anaheim, CA, USA

<http://www.educause.edu/annual-conference>

14-17 Nov IAU 2016 International Conference
Higher Education: a catalyst for innovative and sustainable societies Bangkok, Thailand

<http://www.iau-aiu.net/content/general-conferences-0>

16-18 Nov Sociedad Española de Educación Comparada
Ciudadan ía Mindial y Educación para de Desarrollo. Una Mirada internacional Seville, Spain

<http://www.seec.com.es>

29 Nov – 3 Dec AARE 2016
Melbourne, VIC Australia

<http://www.aare.edu.au>

Newsletters for 2016

We are planning to produce two more newsletters in 2016:

No. 2 in July (deadline for contributions **23 June**) and No. 3, a pre-conference edition in October (deadline for contributions **23 September**).

Please consider sharing your news with the OCIES community.

Send contributions to helen.benzie@unisa.edu.au
