

Minutes of NgoRS Board Meeting (July 2026)

Date: 14th July 2026

Time: 2 pm CDT, 3 pm EDT, 8 pm BST, 5 am AEST, 7 am NZST

Location: online (zoom)

Chair: Jennifer Edwards (President)

Board Members Present (in alphabetical order):

Alison Criss (Treasurer)
Jennifer Edwards (President)
Rachel Exley (Secretary)
Joanna Hicks (President elect)
Evgeny Semchenko (At-large Member)
Julie Stoudenmire (At-large Member)
Anastasia Unitt (Trainee member)
Nathan Weyand (Past-Secretary)

Absent Board Members (in alphabetical order):

Caroline Genco (Past President)
Odile Harrison (At-large Member)
Trevor Moraes (At-large Member)
Kate Seib (At-Large Board Member)
Hank Seifert (Ex Officio Member)
Crista Wadsworth (Director of Communications)

1. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Current balance is \$26851.77. A deduction of approximately \$3500 (bill from the IPNC organizer) is pending.

2. IPNC

a) **Crocheted diplococci.** Nathan reported a total of approx. 50 crocheted diplococci have been made. More will be made if possible. How to use these at IPNC was discussed. It was agreed these will be given to travel award winners and handed out as prizes at the social event. Any spares could be given out by board members to recognise good poster presentations- when is TBD. They should be limited to one per person. Jenn expressed thanks to Nathan's daughter for making these.

b) Trainee lunch update.

Registration: Ev reported that so far 10 people have registered. The full contingent of 9-10 PIs have signed up. A total of 150 attendees have so far registered for the IPNC of which 50 are Early career; therefore, more attendees are expected. Jenn will include a deadline of 31st August for sign up in next edition of The Voice. Ev suggested to keep registration open if recruitment is low and can remind/advertise at the conference. Ev confirmed that all presenters have been notified. Jenn requested list of presenters to include in the next edition of the voice.

ACTIONS

- Ev to send list to Jenn to cross check against membership to ascertain max. expected numbers
- Ev to send list of presenters to Jenn, to include member presentations in The Voice
- Jenn to include deadline of 31st August for sign up in next edition of The Voice
- Jenn to ask Crista to send reminder email about trainee lunch

Ribbons and plushies: It was agreed that ribbons would be given to trivia winners (not Quokka plushies).

c) Swag update

Lip balm and sunscreen: Jenn reported issues with import of these items due to numbers and costs exceeding personal items allowances. Options include sourcing locally. Ev will explore options for procuring branded sunscreen locally. JE will send the information about the product and TIFF files of the images.

ACTIONS

- Jenn to send the information to Ev about the product and TIFF files of the images.
- Ev to explore options for sunscreen locally.

Badge Ribbons: votes for logo vs Quokka for badge ribbons were tied.

d) Membership meeting.

Jenn will contact Chris Dayson to confirm use of the Auditorium on Monday evening for the membership meeting. Ev reported that this is in the program already.

Items to discuss/share with membership: Jenn proposed: a review of the year, travel award, new board members. Alison suggested advertising the 2027 meeting, and Ana suggested advertising the seminar series.

ACTIONS

- Jenn to contact Chris Dayson to confirm use of the Auditorium on Monday evening

e) Board dinner.

Jenn confirmed this is reserved at Vasse Tavern for 12 at 7:30-7:40. The kitchen closes at 8pm but they will serve dinner.

f) Communication app for members.

Messaging apps for members to keep in touch at IPNC was discussed. Ev reported that, once registered, attendees will have access to a portal that will include a text messaging function.

g) Group Photo

Jenn requested that a specific date/time be decided for the photo (TBD). Options include morning or after the dinner. Nathan suggested encouraging members to take photos with the crocheted gonococci for the website.

3) ECR PAPER AWARD – SEPT. 15

Due to the next deadline falling during IPNC, the board agreed to push this back to October 15th.

4) MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL OPENED JULY 1

Jenn reported that membership renewals are significantly down compared to last year (1/3 of normal). To date 29 trainees and 23 prof. members have signed up. This may be due to website problems. Jenn requested members renew, and remind group members to do so.

ACTIONS

- All members to remind group members to renew

5) SEMINAR SERIES

Ana reported that the speaker for August 26th is secured. The October seminar speakers are in New Zealand, so this seminar will be run by AUS member (Holly Floyd) and on NZ time zone. Emma

Walker has agreed to speak in 2027. Jenn will continue to advertise this series in the Voice. Currently there is no speaker for December. Jenn suggested a break over the holiday season. Ana will contact two further people who may be available, but otherwise it was agreed there would be a break in December.

6) 2027 NGORSC

Jenn reported this would take place in the fall of 2027 and that the President-elect is usually the chair. Joanna agreed to chair. Jenn has all the files from the past meetings, so everything is well established. These can be shared in due course.

7) OTHER ITEMS

a) Lifetime Achievement Award.

A request was made from IPNC organisers for the society to organise a Lifetime Achievement Award for the *Neisseria* community. Jenn/Alison reported that discussion with other board members had taken place and it was decided that this was difficult to define/decide, was something for the wider community and would not be actionable for IPNC in September. This could be taken forward by the IPNC committee should they decide to do so. The Board will discuss the idea of a gonococcus-specific Lifetime Achievement Award at a future date.

b) Honorary recognition of Dr. Apicella (Alison)

AC suggested a “lost figures” presentation at the start of the IPNC to recognise those we have lost. Jenn suggested to table the discussion until more members are present. Ev informed that there will be an *in memorium* on the first day of the conference at the end of the session on Sunday and that Charlene will be writing a piece. Jenn offered to send information/obituaries.

Following discussions with board members prior to the meeting, Jenn/Alison proposed that the society could organise something to recognise lost members to honour their memories through the science they championed, for example named travel awards. Jenn requested that all board members give some thought to ways we can respectfully honour them through the society.

ACTIONS

- Jenn to contact Charlene
- All members to think of ideas for honouring lost figures.

c) Holiday “gift/bonus” for members (i.e., like last year’s cookbook)

A cookbook was shared with members last year as a holiday gift. Jenn asked for ideas for this year. She suggested online baby pictures and ‘guess which board member’. This was generally well received. Jenn invited other ideas to be shared with her before October.

ACTIONS

- All members send ideas for holiday gift/bonus to Jenn before October.

Respectfully submitted,

R.Exley, NgoRS Secretary.