The year got off to a cracking start with the launch of Scientists in Residence in July 2013 and the further development of our biggest undertaking since the Centre opened - the Science Media Exchange (Scimex.org).

The Scimex web portal is to be an engagement tool for scientists and journalists, a place where time poor journalists can pick up everything they need for a science story, make contact with media savvy experts, find multimedia, events and expert reaction to breaking news. It will also be a place where scientists can pitch story ideas and interact directly with the media. We’re very excited about this new initiative and believe it will be a game changer for the science media landscape in the region.

Our other major project, Scientists in Residence, involves placing individual scientists within newsrooms to work alongside journalists for up to two weeks with the aim of creating new collaborative science content and building ongoing relationships. In 2013-14, 11 scientists were placed into a diverse array of media outlets including The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald, APN regional papers in Queensland, The Adelaide Advertiser, The Courier Mail, the Ballarat Courier and ABC Radio/TV in Hobart. We are very grateful to Inspiring Australia for their support of both Scientists in Residence and Scimex.

These two major projects have been done whilst maintaining our traditional role of disseminating evidence-based information and informing debate. Some of the key issues handled by the AusSMC in 2013-14 include drug and alcohol abuse, climate change, sexually transmitted diseases, mental health and genetically modified foods. The Centre reacted to 96 controversial research articles and breaking news stories, held 34 national news briefings, took 2,580 inquiries from journalists, floated approximately 1,800 new science stories to the media and contributed to 16,271 news stories in 2013-14.

We end the year with a vote of thanks to the many organisations that support the AusSMC and make this important work possible. We also appreciate the efforts of AusSMC staff and Board members who have given more than 100% to the Centre throughout the year.
BY THE NUMBERS

- Over 3,760 Australian experts on the SMC database
- 551 new experts joined up in 2013-14
- 1,152 journalists registered with the SMC
- 233 new journalist registrations
- Over 2,580 enquiries received from the media
- Approx. 1,800 stories floated to the media via Heads-up
- 34 media briefings presented to journalists
  Involving 82 experts
- 16,271 media clips tracked to SMC output (excluding Heads-up)
- 96 sets of expert comments distributed to journalists
  Involving 304 experts
- 45,087 visits to smc.org.au
- 2,490 visits to Science Media Savvy site
- 3,046 Twitter followers (as of 30 June 2014)
- 535 Facebook likes
- 34 media briefings presented to journalists
  Involving 82 experts

551 new experts joined up in 2013-14
233 new journalist registrations
Over 2,580 enquiries received from the media
Approx. 1,800 stories floated to the media via Heads-up
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3,046 Twitter followers (as of 30 June 2014)
535 Facebook likes
LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

SCIENCE MEDIA SAVVY

In December 2013 we launched the most recent module for our scientist training website, Science Media Savvy (sciencemedia.savvy.org). The module entitled ‘Contentious science’ covered areas including ‘what makes science contentious?’, ‘difficult media moments’, and interviews with high profile journalists and scientists recalling their experiences with divisive issues. The module was made available to supporters of the centre, and now makes up one of three complete modules on the site alongside ‘using social media’ and ‘dealing with the media’.

SCIJOURNO

Development of a journalist training module, as part of the Federal Government’s Inspiring Australia initiative, was completed in October 2013. The open-access website called SciJourno was a collaborative project between the University of Queensland, Econnect Communications and the AusSMC, with advice from the University of Western Australia.

The site is designed to help journalists learn how to find the best scientific experts, what to ask, and how to best communicate what they find out, including through social media. It is hoped that SciJourno will be used by working journalists as well as post- and undergraduate journalism students and lecturers/teachers of journalism courses.

The topics covered range from what makes a reliable scientific source, through to working with big numbers and data, and what to do when science gets politicised. The six units include videos, practical exercises, tips/tools, links and resource lists. The AusSMC launched the site with an online briefing for working journalists on “Getting your head around...numbers and stats”. The site can be viewed at www.scijourno.com.au.
Support for the Centre continued to grow as we gained four new sponsors with AIA Insurance, Orica, Flinders University and the Federal Government’s Inspiring Australia initiative all coming on board. Our Science-Media Collaboration also expanded with the National Computational Infrastructure (NCI), Southern Cross University, the ARC Centre for Excellence in Plant Cell Walls, NICTA and the CRC for Contamination Assessment and Remediation of the Environment (CRC CARE) joining as affiliates. As part of the Science-Media Collaboration we held an online briefing in October involving Wiley and Elsevier, giving media officers the chance to understand journal embargoes and how best to work with them.

SCIENTISTS IN RESIDENCE

The Scientists in Residence program, funded by the Federal Government’s Inspiring Australia initiative, really took off this year with 11 scientists placed into newsrooms around the country. The aim of the program is to encourage new collaborative content that is created by scientists working together with journalists. Scientists learn about the media and establish ongoing relationships with the media outlet. Newsrooms learn more about an important area of science and gain an appreciation for scientific expertise in a news context. Another seven to ten scientists will be placed in the coming year, after which further support for the program will be sought from a variety of sources.

“Please accept my thanks... for including The Courier in the Scientist in Residence program. The Courier late last month published a special report with the assistance of Federation University’s Elizabeth Temple which added significant depth and understanding to the issue of methamphetamine use in the Ballarat region ... I believe partnering with Dr Temple through the Scientist in Residence program was of benefit to our newsroom and, in turn, our readers.”

Andrew Eales, editor, Ballarat Courier

“I learnt a lot - it was certainly challenging to work to a strict deadline and to try to fit a lot of info into a short word length (and without any jargon), but it was really interesting and enjoyable. There are some plans for future input from me in relation to the ice issue, which should be good. So, thank you for your roles in setting all of this up – it was certainly worth stepping out of my comfort zone to do something so different.”

Dr Liz Temple, Federation University Australia
MEDIA TRAINING

AusSMC media training introduces scientists at various stages of their careers to the mind-set and workings of modern media operations, including advice and exercises on making their own science more attractive for reporters, preparing for media interviews, working with institutional media teams and avoiding potential media pitfalls. Members of the media team provided media training for scientists at the inaugural South Australian Coastal Conference organised by the University of Adelaide, as well as The Australian Institute for Policy and Science, the Mental Health Cooperative Research Centre, The Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), and two workshops for the Bureau of Meteorology.

SCIMEX

The Science Media Exchange (Scimex) is a new tool for journalists and scientists that aims to increase the level of engagement between the two, often disparate groups and ultimately increase the quantity of science research in the mainstream media. Institutions from Australia and New Zealand will be able to upload their research news, story ideas, multimedia, events and expertise to the site for the media.

The project is a major initiative for the Centre and has involved running surveys to find out what journalists and scientists need, redesigning the Centre’s own databases and working intensively with the web development team, Squiz. The portal is being developed in collaboration with the New Zealand Science Media Centre and so there has been a lot of discussion between the two centres and internal restructuring to make the collaboration possible.

During 2013-14 the main focus has been on the initial scoping exercises, the creation of a new SMC database and the build of the portal, in preparation for a launch in late 2014. One key area is how scientific journals will interact with the site and how much of their content will be included within the portal. The AusSMC has been in contact with some of the biggest journal publishers worldwide, explaining the Scimex concept and developing collaboration agreements.
MEDIA SNAPSHOT

We organised 34 media briefings and sent out 96 sets of expert comments throughout the year. Below is a small collection of the stories we launched or contributed to.

Australia’s role in DIY DNA - May 2014

The AusSMC worked with Macquarie University to help announce their role in a new international project to create the world’s first synthetic yeast. To launch the Australian arm of the project, the AusSMC ran an embargoed briefing involving scientists from the US, UK and Australia to describe the project and its purpose. The launch retrieved 223 media hits including The Australian, Herald Sun, AAP, The Guardian and the Sydney Morning Herald.

Launch of Antarctic sea ice report - March 2014

The Antarctic Climate & Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre asked us to help launch their Position Analysis on Antarctic sea ice and climate change in 2014. To coincide with an official launch in Hobart we held a news briefing for journalists where experts, including the report lead author, were able to present the latest science. The briefing successfully generated 473 media hits, half from overseas, including the Sydney Morning Herald, Radio National, Yahoo!7 and the New Zealand Herald.

Technology and kids' brains? - October 2013

As the video game industry continues to grow and kids spend more and more hours immersed in screens and technology from television to iPhones, questions were being asked on the impact on kids' brains. Ahead of the Australian Council on Children and the Media conference, the AusSMC worked with Macquarie University to host a background briefing, where three experts looked into issues from violent video games to phone applications for young children. The briefing generated 679 media hits including ABC PM, The Advertiser and The Age.

Australia’s science literacy falls - July 2013

A national survey conducted by the Australian Academy of Science found that the science literacy of young Australian adults had fallen in the last three years, including the knowledge of whether humans lived with dinosaurs and how long it takes for the earth to revolve around the sun. The AusSMC worked with the Academy to help launch the survey results with an online briefing featuring the Academy’s Secretary for Science Policy. Coverage was generated widely with 342 hits across TV, radio, print and online, including ABC News 24, Channel 10’s The Project and the New York Times.
GM farmer wins court case - May 2014

The Western Australian Supreme Court in May dismissed claims by an organic farmer for damages over contamination from his neighbour’s genetically-modified canola crop. We collected comments from agricultural experts and bioethicists and distributed them to journalists within the hour on the ruling. The comments were used in over 20 articles including ABC News 24, The Australian, Agence France Presse, Choice and Yahoo!

Complementary medicine review - April 2014

The National Health and Medical Research Institute asked us to be involved in the release of their review into complementary medicine. We collected comments from independent experts and sent them to journalists under embargo to alert journalists to the report’s release. The expert reaction generated 370 media hits including Today Tonight Adelaide, Sydney Morning Herald, The Daily Mail UK, West Australian and ABC News.

Hazelwood coal fire - February 2014

In February a fire broke out in the Hazelwood coal mine in the Victorian town of Morwell, with ash and smoke blanketing the town. We collected a number of comments on air quality and mining safety and distributed them to journalists. The comments were used in 74 media stories including The Australian, AAP, West Australian and the Times UK.

Chemical weapons attack in Syria – Aug 2013

In late August, images and footage were released reportedly showing a chemical weapons attack in Damascus, Syria. We collected an independent comment about the potential chemical used from an Australian expert and distributed it to journalists. The comments were used widely and generated 140 media hits including ABC News 24, The Project Channel 10, COSMOS, Perth Now, The Conversation and ABC Perth.
LIST OF MEDIA BRIEFINGS AND EXPERT REACTIONS

The following is a full list of the media briefings (blue) and expert reactions the Science Media Centre organised over the past year. The title in brackets shows the scientific journal the study was published in. Collectively they generated over 16,271 media hits in Australia and overseas.

JUNE 2014
- Potential breast cancer blood test (Genome Medicine)
- Republication of Séralini GM maize study (Environmental Sciences Europe)
- Schizophrenics’ genes mean they’re more likely to smoke pot (Molecular Psychiatry)
- Great Barrier Reef and its resilience to climate change (Nature Communications)
- Beating breast cancer: the harms and benefits of screening (BMJ)
- Superfoods to fight the flu?
- Science’s impact on productivity – The Australian Council of Learned Academies report

MAY 2014
- GM farmer wins landmark court case in Western Australia
- Man-made life – announcing Australia’s role in DIY DNA
- Friends of the Earth report on nanotechnology and food
- Paedophiles’ brains prefer children’s faces (Biology Letters)
- Federal Budget 2014-15
- Why climate change is drying out Australia while Antarctica bucks the warming trend
- World Health Organization report on air quality and health
- National Commission of Audit’s recommendations for scientific research
- Total diet study
- UNESCO draft decision on Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Status

APRIL 2014
- Making embryonic stem cells to treat diabetes (Nature)
- Government releases white paper on Direct Action
- IPCC Working Group 3 – Adaptation and mitigation
- Cyclone Ita
- Tamiflu turnaround (The Cochrane Library)
- NHMRC releases review into complementary medicine
- Is your unhealthy lifestyle giving you asthma
- From mice to men – getting your head around clinical trials
- Tsunami generated in Chile after 8.2 magnitude earthquake
- Still no clear evidence for health benefits of vitamin D (BMJ)

MARCH 2014
- Climate impacts, adaptation & vulnerability: release of IPCC WG2 Summ for Policymakers
- People power – do it yourself climate modelling – Launch of Weather@Home Aus and NZ
- Scientists detect echoes of the Big Bang
- The impact of electronic media on kids (JAMA Pediatrics)
- Why is there more ice in Antarctica? Launch of Antarctic sea ice report
- Saturated fat not the bad guy
- Diabetes a stroke risk for women (The Lancet)
- UK comments: Atkins style diets shorten lifespans
- State of the Climate 2014

FEB 2014
- Hazelwood coal fire health impacts
- UK Comments: Western diet link to Alzheimer’s (PNAS)
- Health impacts of wind farms - release of NHMRC draft information paper
- Food packaging chemicals a health risk? (Jour of Epidemiology and Community Health)
- Predicting depression in boys (PNAS)
- Chemicals need better rules to prevent ‘epidemic’ of brain disorders (Lancet Neurology)
- Climate extremes – here comes ‘global weirding’
- GM canola court case begins in WA
- Bushfires
- Recent slowdown in warming explained by new study (Nature Climate Change)
Yoghurt may cut risk of type-2 diabetes by almost a third (Diabetologia)
WMO - 2013 among ten hottest years on record
Scombroid fish poisoning
UK Comments: New killer bird flu strain emerges
Launch of the World Cancer Report

Abbot Point dumping of dredge spoil approved
To make stem cells and a working heart, just add acid (Nature)
Let’s talk about sex – getting the message out to teen girls
NOAA releases annual temperature data
Bushfires - are we getting better at surviving?
South-east Australia smoulders
Hottest year on record

Drunk and disorderly – The harms of alcohol
Australia tops world cancer charts
Cutting breast cancer risk in post-menopausal women (The Lancet)
The 10 weirdest science stories of 2013
Top 10 science stories 2013
Saving our skin – the hidden costs of skin health
Probiotics a potential treatment for autism? (Cell)

Indian Ocean links to extreme weather in SE Australia (Nature Geoscience)
UK Comments: The death of Fred Sanger
Still on the rise – release of the Global Carbon Budget for 2013
Chemical exposure linked to preterm birth risk (JAMA Pediatrics)
Launch of the Global Diabetes Atlas
WMO Provisional Statement on the Status of the Global Climate 2013
Typhoon Haiyan
Saving the ozone layer ‘paused’ global warming (Nature Geoscience)
WMO releases annual global gas emissions update

SARS may have originated in bats (Nature)
Getting your head around – Numbers and stats
Watching cochlear implants in action and updating an Aussie innovation
Chemical hazard found at the University of Technology Sydney
Shocking chlamydia levels in teens as young as 12 and other STIs on the rise
WHO declares air pollution to be cancer causing
NSW bushfires
Earthquake near Solomon Islands
The state of Australia’s sexual health: HIV progress report
One in 2000 Brits carrying human form of ‘mad cow disease’ proteins (BMJ)
Earthquake in the Philippines
Rethinking the urban water cycle: Is it time Australia adopted toilet to tap recycling?
Vegie-chemical protects against radiation (PNAS)
Future of El Niño clearer than ever before (Nature)
Antarctic research derailed by US shutdown
Earthquake near Sydney
IPCC – What hasn’t been reported and why the models generated such confidence
Designer baby patent leaves scientists feeling uneasy (Genetics in Medicine)
What is technology doing to kids’ brains?

IPCC Report – Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis
IPCC release the latest news on climate change – IPCC AR5 WG1 Report release
IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) - the process behind the report
Jaw dropping fossil discovery (Nature)
Tony Abbott’s new cabinet may not include a Science Minister
Did the IPCC get it wrong?
Chemical contamination – threatening our next generation
Stem cells re-set inside mice (Nature)
Coalition to reprioritise away from “futile research”
The major political parties’ broadband policies
How does political polling work?

Scientists grow ‘brain-like’ organ using human stem cells (Nature)
Why global warming has ‘paused’ (Nature)
Global impact of mental disorders and illicit drug use (The Lancet)
Screening test for ovarian cancer developed (Cancer)
Alleged chemical weapons attack in Syria
Ocean acidification disturbing sea creatures (Nature Climate Change)
The political parties’ climate change policies
UK Comments: Fukushima water leak
Kevin Rudd announces $250m fund for regenerative medicine
UK Comments: Predicting suicide (Molecular Psychiatry)
Earthquake in Wellington, New Zealand
NZ Comments: Infant formula and botulism
Antibiotic resistance under the microscope

The end of medical diagnostics and space exploration? Why helium recycling matters
Archaeologist Professor Mike Morwood has died
Is nuclear the answer to Australia’s energy needs?
Australia’s science literacy falls
Ice loss records too short (Nature Geoscience)
Omega fatty acids and allergies in children (PLOS ONE)
UK Comments: Air pollution and lung cancer / heart disease (Lancet)
Growing a human liver (Nature)
IVF and mental retardation (JAMA)

The Advertiser, 4 October 2013
Briefing: What is technology doing to kids’ brains?
The AusSMC went through a number of changes between July 2013 and June 2014. We said goodbye to our Business Relations Manager, Carol Atkinson in July, as well as media officer Lucy Simmonds in September. A number of new faces joined the team with Jordan Rush brought in short-term to help with the development of Scimex and Karen Noble coming on board as Executive Assistant to the CEO. Dr Melanie Bagg also joined us in the newly created position of Business Development and Partnerships Manager in March 2014. Finally, Megan Wright joined as Media Officer in May while Lyndal Byford went on maternity leave.

At June 2014, the AusSMC staff consisted of:

- Dr Susannah Elliott, CEO
- Nigel Kerby – Project Manager
- Marilyn Arnold, Office Manager
- Lyndal Byford, Media Manager [on maternity leave]
- Dr Melanie Bagg, Business Development and Partnerships Manager
- Karen Noble, EA to the CEO
- Dr Joseph Milton, Senior Media Officer
- Annika Dean, Media Officer
- Megan Wright, Media Officer

AusSMC in the media

Along with a number of other media interviews the staff participated in, Susannah and Joe continued their involvement with the Research Filter segment on RN Drive, hosted by Waleed Aly.

AusSMC staff are on air about twice a month, and are a part of a weekly slot where science communicators discuss interesting science stories that have been in the media recently.

The interviews can be found at http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drive.
The AusSMC Board, chaired by Peter Yates AM, meets four times a year. Deputy chairs are Robyn Williams from the ABC and Dr Graham Mitchell, Chief Scientist of Victoria. Board members at 30 June 2014 were:

**Peter Yates AM (Chair)**  
Chair, RiAus and Chair, Faculty of Business and Economics, The University of Melbourne

**Robyn Williams (Deputy Chair)**  
Presenter, The Science Show, ABC

**Dr Graham Mitchell**  
(Deputy Chair)  
Chief Scientist, State Government of Victoria

**Jim Carroll**  
Executive Producer: World News Australia, SBS

**Peter Crewe**  
CEO, AIA Australia

**John Croll**  
CEO, iSenta

**Professor Merlin Crossley**  
Dean of Science, The University of New South Wales

**Professor David Day**  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Flinders University

**Professor Karen Day**  
Dean of Science, University of Melbourne

**Professor Graham Durant**  
Director, Questacon - The National Science and Technology Centre

**Dr Michael Ellies**  
Media consultant

**Gavin Jackman**  
Executive Global Head, Corporate Affairs and Social Responsibility, Orica Limited

**Brad Hatch**  
Manager of Communications, Fairfax Media

**Melvin Mansell**  
State Editorial Director, SA, WA & NT, News Ltd

**Sharon McHale**  
Senior Director Public Affairs, CSL Limited

**Fiona McLeod**  
External Affairs Manager, Australia Pacific LNG

**Oona Nielssen**  
General Manager: Communication, CSIRO

**Professor Mary O’Kane**  
NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer

**Leonie Walsh**  
Lead Scientist for Victoria

**The Hon Jay Weatherill**  
Premier, Government of South Australia

**Dr Paul Willis**  
Director, RiAus

**Dr Alan Finkel AM**  
Chancellor of Monash University  
(National)

**Baroness Professor Susan Greenfield CBE**  
University of Oxford  
(International)
SCIENCE ADVISORY PANEL

SAP members at 30 June 2014 were:

Professor Snow Barlow  
*University of Melbourne*

Professor Alan Finkel AM  
*President, Australian Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering (ATSE)*

Professor Lyn Beazley AO  
*Chief Scientist of Western Australia*

Emeritus Professor Max Brennan AO  
*Former Chief Scientist for South Australia*

Professor Adrienne Clarke AC  
*Chancellor, La Trobe University*

Professor Alan Cooper  
*University of Adelaide*

Professor Bob Williamson AO  
*University of Melbourne*

Dr Geoff Garrett AO  
*Queensland Chief Scientist*

Professor Richard Head  
*Director, Sansom Institute for Health Research*

Professor Robert Hill  
*SA Museum and University of Adelaide*

Professor Marcia Langton AM  
*University of Melbourne*

Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe AO  
*Griffith University*

Professor Marcello Costa  
*Flinders University*

Professor Derek Denton AC  
*University of Melbourne*

Professor Peter Doherty AC  
*University of Melbourne*

Professor Tim Flannery  
*Climate Council*

Professor Michael Holland  
*President, Science and Technology Australia*

Professor Bryan Gaensler  
*University of Toronto*

Professor Patricia Vickers-Rich  
*Monash University*

Professor Caroline McMillen  
*Vice-Chancellor, University of Newcastle*

Emeritus Professor Sir Gustav Nossal AC CBE  
*University of Melbourne*

Professor John Simons  
*President, Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS)*

Professor Michelle Simmons  
*University of New South Wales*

Professor Fiona Stanley AC  
*Patron, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research*

Professor Malcolm Walter  
*University of New South Wales*
SPONSORS AND AFFILIATES
All support is capped at 10% of the AusSMC’s budget to maintain the Centre’s independence. The AusSMC is grateful to the following supporters during 2013-2014.

### Foundation Sponsors
- ABC
- The University of Melbourne
- CSIRO
- CSL
- Government of South Australia
- State Government of Victoria
- Australia Pacific LNG
- AIP
- Flinders University
- iSentia
- RiAus
- Fairfax Media
- Orica
- UNSW Australia

### Sponsors
- The University of Adelaide
- SBS
- Sky News
- ARUP

### Affiliates
- NCI
- Sydney
- Plant Cell Walls
- ECU
- RMIT
- The University of Western Australia
- The University of Queensland
- University of South Australia
- La Trobe University
- University of Wollongong
- Australian Government
- School of Microbiology
- Australian Government
- Department of Defence
- Defence Science and Technology Organisation
- Monash University
- Australian Government
- Department of Defence
- Australian Defence Force
- University of Southern Cross

### Supporters
- IBM
- Microsoft
- O’Loughlins
- PH
- AMTA
- CRM
- CPC
- ACPREG
- THE CONVERSATION
## INCOME

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<td>Briefings</td>
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## EXPENDITURE

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## TOTAL EXPENDITURE

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<td><strong>Surplus/(loss)</strong></td>
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<td>Other comprehensive income</td>
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