

## AuPS News – June 2026



### Mid-Year Report National Secretary A/Prof Renee Ross

I am happy to report that it has been a very busy and productive first half of 2026, and my first 6 months in the National Secretary role. Having first joined Council in 2016, it has been a privilege to continue contributing to the Society in this new capacity. I would like to thank our President Livia Hool for her guidance, and Séverine Lamon for her time, support, and thoughtful handover, which has made the transition into the role much smoother.

The mid-year Council meeting provided an opportunity to take stock of where we are as a Society and to look ahead to the exciting second half of the year.

#### Scientific Meeting: [Brisbane 2026](#)

Planning for the 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting at the University of Queensland is progressing strongly led by our local organising committee chairs, James Cuffè and Adam Hagg. The call for symposia was met with one of the most enthusiastic responses in recent years, resulting in a diverse and well-balanced program with strong representation across physiological disciplines. Importantly, this includes more than ten international speakers, alongside valuable opportunities for our mid-career and early career researchers.

In addition to the symposia, our Invited speaker's and the Michael Roberts Prize lecture, the program includes two 'whole of meeting' sessions focused on

*Advancing Technologies in Physiology Research and Advocacy in Science.* These sessions aim to broaden the scope of the meeting, creating space for discussion beyond traditional research themes and supporting professional development across the membership.

Council has also elected to maintain 2025 registration pricing, recognising current funding constraints while ensuring continued accessibility, particularly for students and ECRs.

#### Strengthening the Society: Systems and Governance

A key focus emerging from Council discussions is the need to modernise our internal systems. Current platforms for website management, membership, and data storage are fragmented and can be difficult to maintain across changing Council roles. Work is now underway to explore integrated solutions, to support our interactions and communication with membership as well as supporting centralised record keeping and improved continuity. While this is largely an internal change, it is an important step in ensuring the long-term sustainability and efficiency of the Society.

#### Membership and Community Engagement

Membership remains stable, with renewal patterns consistent with previous years. However, Council recognised that we are operating in a more competitive environment, with increasing choice for researchers in terms of societies and conferences. Our strengths remain clear with a strong and inclusive annual meeting, an excellent education stream, and continuing support of our student and ECR members.

The challenge for us is visibility. Many of the benefits of AuPS are experienced once you are part of the community, but we need to do more to ensure that potential members are aware of what we offer. The expansion of Special Interest Groups (SIGs), webinar programs, and social media engagement are all important steps in this direction. These initiatives are beginning to provide new entry points into the Society and will be critical for future growth. We encourage members to support this effort by promoting AuPS within their own networks, whether by inviting colleagues and students to attend the annual meeting, sharing opportunities through SIGs and webinars, or engaging with our growing online presence. We also welcome members to reach out to Council with ideas, suggestions, or feedback on how we can continue to strengthen and expand the Society's activities.

### Associations and Partnerships

Our engagement with international societies continues to strengthen, most recently through discussions with the American Physiological Society (APS) and The Physiological Society (UK). These conversations are already translating into opportunities for members with early discussions around exchange initiatives with TPS (UK) and the local delivery of ECR-focused publication workshops by APS in June. We are also pleased to welcome Prof Sue Bodine (APS President) to contribute to our scientific meeting this year, further strengthening this collaboration.

At the Council level, there has been continued focus on the importance of advocacy for our discipline. This is reflected in our engagement with Science & Technology Australia and ongoing national discussions around research investment and policy. Many of the issues being raised resonate strongly with challenges faced by our members, including low funding success rates, increasing administrative burden, and uncertainty around long-term research investment. While these challenges are not unique to Australia, they reinforce the need for coordinated and sustained advocacy and is something that we will explore further at the Scientific meeting this year.

These themes were further reinforced through engagement with the Women in STEMM Leadership Summit, which I attended as a representative of AuPS. A consistent message across these forums' is the importance of representation and pipeline development. If we are to sustain physiology as a discipline, we need to engage at every level, from Science in Schools and University, through to mid-career researchers stepping into leadership roles. Representation matters, not only in terms of diversity but also in ensuring that physiology remains visible, relevant, and valued as a field.

There is a clear connection between these themes and the work of AuPS. Our education initiatives support innovation in teaching, our ECR programs build early career capability, and our international partnerships provide important opportunities for collaboration, networking, and new avenues to support research.

### Looking Ahead

The remainder of 2026 will focus on delivering a high-quality annual meeting, continuing to build our international partnerships, and progressing the systems improvements that will support the Society into the future.

Members are encouraged to engage with upcoming opportunities, including AuPS webinars, the opening of abstract submissions for the [2026 Brisbane](#) meeting, and applications for this year's [awards and prizes](#) in August. As always, the strength of AuPS lies in the active involvement of its members whether through attending the annual meeting, contributing to symposia, engaging with SIGs, or promoting physiology within your own networks.

We look forward to coming together in Brisbane this November to celebrate our Society and the achievements of our members!

## Member Profile: Aldo Meizoso Huesca

University of Queensland



### Winner of the Post-Doctoral Publication Prize

**Congratulations on winning the Post-Doctoral Publication Prize 2025. Can you tell us about your award-winning publication?**

Sure, this work focused on better understanding the mechanisms underpinning the progression of a type of muscular dystrophy called limb girdle muscular dystrophy 2B (LGMD2B). In this condition, some muscles develop a much more severe phenotype than others, why is that? This study aimed to contribute to answering that question from the perspective of calcium handling.

Using a mouse model of LGMD2B, we examined muscles that are severely affected by the disease and compared them with muscles that remain relatively unaffected. To our surprise, we found that, even before disease onset, the muscles that later become severely affected already exhibit a selective dysregulation of calcium handling. In these muscles, the ability to store calcium is compromised due to excessive calcium leak from the main intracellular store, leading to mitochondrial calcium overload and oxidative stress. In contrast, muscles that are less susceptible to the disease do not show these alterations.

Importantly, our findings suggest that these differences are rooted in intrinsic physiological characteristics that are present even in healthy (wild-

type) muscles. Specifically, the muscles that become severely affected in LGMD2B normally receive greater sympathetic input and exhibit stronger adrenergic signalling than relatively unaffected muscles. In the disease context, this inherent difference promotes excessive calcium leak, ultimately driving mitochondrial calcium overload and oxidative stress that contributes to the pathology.

**What is your current role/position?**

I am a postdoctoral research fellow at UQ in Professor Brad Launikonis's laboratory. My research focuses on understanding the downstream signalling pathways associated with disruptions in calcium handling, as well as the energetic consequences of these alterations in skeletal muscle.

**What made you want to follow a career in research, and where do you see yourself heading professionally?**

My interest in research began in high school, when my biology teacher taught us about cellular organelles and gave an overview of many processes that take place within the cell. I remember being surprised by how much happens within such a tiny space and by how fundamental these processes are to life. I was also intrigued by the fact that so much remained to be discovered; that was my first contact with the idea of pursuing research.

I see myself leading my own research program focused on understanding how different energy-expenditure mechanisms in skeletal muscle cells interact to maintain energy homeostasis under both physiological and pathological conditions.

**Outside of work/research, what do you do to relax?**

I am a big soccer fan; I also like to listen to music, I specially enjoy listening and watching live interpretations/performances. In line with this, I play guitar and enjoy playing songs with my partner while she sings. More recently I have developed a keen interest in DIY renovation/work projects. Although those projects are not always relaxing, I am gradually getting better at them and enjoying the process.

## Member Profile: Paula M Miotto

University of Melbourne



**Winner of  
the AK  
McIntyre  
Award**

**Congratulations on winning the AK McIntyre Award 2025. Can you tell us What does this award mean to you?**

I am very proud to be a recipient of the A.K McIntyre award. It means a lot to me to be recognized for my research as an ECR, and to be included alongside an impressive list of previous recipients who I have looked up to since I was a graduate student.

**Could you tell us about your position at University of Melbourne and what research you are currently working on?**

At the time of the award, I was an NHMRC EL1 fellow at the University of Melbourne, and I now lead my own lab as a Canada Research Chair and Assistant Professor at the University of Guelph, Canada.

My research focuses on the role of secreted proteins and extracellular vesicles in regulating metabolic control in healthy, exercise, and diseased states, with particular interest in cross-talk between skeletal muscle, adipose, liver, and the pancreas.

**What is your research background? How did you begin your career in Physiology? What got you interested in the first place?**

I first became interested in physiology as an undergraduate student in Kinesiology. I was inspired by my instructors for the nutrition, exercise physiology, and metabolism related courses. I then went on to study different (but complimentary) areas of research throughout my training. This involved nutrition and bone metabolism (MSc), mitochondrial physiology (PhD), and inter-tissue communication (post-doc). Through these experiences I have developed new technical skillsets and thought processes that have helped guide some of my current research interests.

**Which part of research makes it most enjoyable for you?**

I enjoy how research provides an opportunity to be creative and problem solve. I find that at times the most frustrating projects end up being the most rewarding (e.g., follow the rabbit hole).

**Keep up-to-date with AuPS news and events! Follow us on:**



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**CATEGORIES**



WILDLIFE



SMALL LAB  
 ANIMAL



LARGE  
 ANIMAL



AQUATIC  
 ANIMAL



OPEN



KEY DATES

Entries Close  
 26 July 2026

Shortlist announced  
 14 August 2026

Winner announced  
 28 August 2026



ENTRY  
 REQUIREMENTS

Entries must feature animals in scientific research

Permission for photography and ethical approval of the research must be submitted



PRIZE

\$4,000 AUD prize fund

\$2,000 AUD grand prize for the winning entry



WHO CAN  
 ENTER

Researchers, technicians, welfare staff, photographers, communicators, students and others working with animals in research settings.

Show science through your lens

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## Join Us for the 2026 Physiology Education Webinar Series

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We are excited to promote the Education-focussed series of webinars in 2026, in collaboration with the American Physiological Society's Center for Physiology Education (CPE). Throughout the year, the CPE will have guest speakers discussing hot topics and educational research published in *Advances in Physiology Education*. Due to the time difference between the USA and Australia, the webinars are rebroadcast in Australia on the fourth Thursday at 4 PM (Melbourne time), with a local facilitator to focus the discussion on the Australian context.

[Join from Zoom Workplace app - Zoom](#)

**Meeting ID:** 897 6117 7258; **Passcode:** 167957

UPCOMING WEBINARS – AUSTRALIAN REBROADCAST:

### **Collaborative Learning for Educator Development: Sharing Experiences to Build Competence**

**Speakers:** Suzan Kamel-ElSayed, PhD, and Justin Cobb, PhD

**Date & Time:** July 23 at 4 p.m. AEST.

Join us for an interactive, co-facilitated team-based learning (TBL) session designed for educators at any career stage. Participants will share experiences, collaborate with peers, and develop practical strategies to enhance their teaching competence. This session emphasizes hands-on learning and peer exchange, creating a supportive space for both novice and experienced educators to grow together.

### **Collaborative Approaches to Nurturing a Growth Mindset in Learners and Educators**

**Speaker:** Kay Colthorpe, PhD (University of Queensland)

**Date and Time:** Aug. 27 at 4 p.m. AEST

For more information and enquiries please contact [Prof Kathy Tangalakis](#) or [Dr Suzanne Estaphan](#).

BRISBANE  
29 NOV - 2 DEC 2026



# AuPS SCIENTIFIC MEETING

Hosted by  
University of Queensland,  
St Lucia campus



[www.aups.org.au](http://www.aups.org.au)



IUPS Beacon Symposium 2026

(Co-hosted by NIPS)



# Physiology Ahead: Orchestration of Multiple Systems

Date: Sep 15- 16, 2026

Venue: OCC (Okazaki, Japan)

Call for poster presentation & registration: Will start in April

Web site: In preparation

## *Overseas speakers*

Rui Chang (New Haven)  
Shih-Kuo Chen (Taipei)  
Coco Chu (Beijing)  
Henning Fenselau (Köln)  
Eunha Kim (Seoul)  
Hong-Gyun Lee (Seoul)  
Zhe Zhang (Shanghai)  
Cheng Zhan (*pending*) (Hefei)

## *Domestic speakers*

Teppei Goto (Kyoto)  
Takeshi Hiyama (Yonago)  
Takako Ichiki (Niigata)  
Satoshi Koba (Tottori)  
Kumi Kuroda (Tokyo)  
Kazuhiro Nakamura (Nagoya)  
Takashi Yoshimura (Nagoya)

## *Topics include:*

- Thermoregulation, fever
- Metabolism, obesity, energy homeostasis
- Feeding, other instinctive behaviors
- Brain-endocrine homeostasis, hypothalamic regulation
- Thirst, salt appetite
- Exercise, stress, brain, cardiovascular interactions
- Gut-brain communication, microbiome, enteric neurons
- Neuroimmunology
- Biological clocks, rhythms, sleep
- Parent-infant relationships
- Puberty onset

## *Organizers*

Chair: Kazuhiro Nakamura (Nagoya)  
Vice-chair: Takeshi Hiyama (Yonago)  
Satoshi Koba (Tottori)  
Sec-Gen: Yoshihiro Kubo (NIPS)

Host: International Union of Physiological Sciences (IUPS)

Co-host: National Institute for Physiological Sciences (NIPS), Japan

## AuPS Council

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The University of Western Australia

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This issue of AuPS News was compiled by **Suzanne Estaphan** with many thanks to the generous contributors.

The next issue of AuPS News will be distributed to members in September 2026.  
All contributions for AuPS News should be sent to: [suzanne.estaphan@anu.edu.au](mailto:suzanne.estaphan@anu.edu.au)  
before the end of August.

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