

REPORT TO NZAP COUNCIL, JULY 2021

Professional Development and Conference Committee

Since our last report, the event with Patrick Casement has taken place and despite some technical issues has been reported as being very much appreciated.

Following on from a request from a member, we contacted Dr. Margot Solomon re providing supervision. Margo offered an online introduction to supervision course for 12 people. This was so quickly oversubscribed that Margot has decided to an online course as well as a face-to-face one for Auckland people.

Both these events are in response to suggestions from the membership and clearly fill a need. Any other suggestions have petered out so far, and we hope that more people can come up with ideas. We will send out another request to the membership.

Below I am repeating what I wrote last time as we have had no response from Council and look forward to getting one:

An earlier decision by Council was to hold a Conference every two years.

Before Covid became such a disruptive and unknown factor I had approached Auckland a few times. There had been no response, and we are unsure whether a Conference as we used to have is feasible in the short term.

We are wondering whether the decision to have Conference every two years, based on increasing difficulty securing commitment from Branches to host them, could be revisited. Alternative strategies might include using a professional conference organiser, a central committee with membership drawn from several regions, a permanent conference organising sub-committee, or any combination of these.

Conference design has become rigid over time, with a ritualistic format that has to include a series of mandatory events unconnected with any academic programme – Powhiri and Poroporoaki, DSA ceremony, Te Tohu o te Pihi award ceremony, members' forum, AGM, dinner. The effect is to make it rather daunting to take on the responsibility of running one. Conference design could fruitfully become more flexible, and Council can appoint someone to take responsibility for organising the non-academic events, working with the organisers of the academic programme.

It would be helpful to get Council feedback on this.

When this committee was started, a person on Council was designated to be the link between us and Council, which kept us informed of Council decisions in response to our reports. We suggest that a person at Council is again nominated to be the liaison.

Marian Vlaar
Chair, Professional Development and Conference Committee