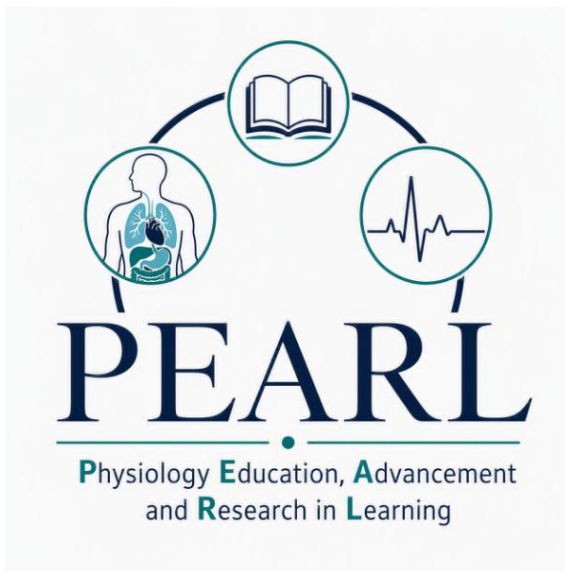


AuPS News – September 2026

Special Interest Group (SIG) Updates

AuPS Education SIG - PEARL



Co-chairs:

Dr Trevor Lewis, UNSW

Dr Suzanne Estaphan, ANU

Since announcing the special interest groups back in December 2025, the education special interest group has met several times and gradually established ways to continue supporting the physiology education community which has been a vibrant and valued part of AuPS with a long history. Earlier in the year we came together to discuss and support applications for symposia at the Brisbane meeting resulting in two exciting education-focused symposia that showcase

innovation, scholarship, and emerging directions in physiology education:

- **Assessment as the Anchor: Using Standardised Frameworks to Shape Physiology Education**, with Prof. Staci Johnson (Southern Wesleyan University, USA), Dr Suzanne Estaphan (ANU), Dr Spencer Roberts (Deakin University), and Prof. Alan Hayes and Prof. Kathy Tangalakis (Victoria University).
- **Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives and knowledges into Physiology: From Principles to Practice**, with A.Prof Angela Ziebell (Deakin University), Dr Natalia Bilton (Charles Sturt University), A.Prof Sarah Etherington (Murdoch University), and Dr Luli Faber (The University of Queensland).

You can find out more about these symposia from the meeting website

<https://www.aups.org.au/Meetings/202611/Education.php>

We warmly encourage everyone with an interest in teaching and learning to attend these sessions. Together, they will feature outstanding presentations from nationally recognised physiology educators, opportunities to engage with current educational research and practice, and the chance to hear from distinguished international colleagues bringing global perspectives to physiology education. Whether you are an experienced educator, an early-career academic, a clinician educator, or a research student interested in education, these sessions promise valuable insights, practical ideas, and stimulating discussion.

To further strengthen connections within our community, we have established a dedicated Microsoft Teams community, and we have decided that we would like to be known as **PEARL – Physiology Education, Advancement and Research in Learning**. PEARL aims to bring together educators, researchers, and practitioners interested in advancing excellence in physiology education through scholarship, innovation, collaboration, and community building.

The group has been promoting the monthly Physiology Education webinar series that is a collaboration with the American Physiological Society's Center for Physiology Education (CPE), helping connect our members with the broader international physiology education community.

Upcoming PEARL Online Workshop

We are also excited to launch a new PEARL online workshop series that will highlight educational innovation, spark discussion, and showcase excellence in physiology teaching and learning. Our first event is a presentation from the **Monash Virtual Physiology Labs (MVPL)** team, on **24 Sep 2026**. The MVPL received the 2025 AAUT Award for a Program that makes innovative and outstanding contributions to student learning.

Participants will have the opportunity to hear directly from the team behind this nationally recognised program, explore the development and implementation of virtual physiology laboratories, and discuss how similar approaches might be adapted within their own educational settings.

PEARL Online Workshop

Date: 24 September 2026

Time: 4:00 pm (AEST)

Join the workshop via Teams:

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/473662550404440?p=26kBkJp8jgiGx4Xa7U>

Meeting ID: 473 662 550 404 440

Passcode: Ms9UR3do

We warmly invite all AuPS members and colleagues interested in physiology education to join us for this exciting event.

Join the Community

We are also planning an informal **PEARL Breakfast** during the Brisbane meeting, providing an opportunity to meet fellow educators, reconnect with colleagues, welcome new members, share ideas, and explore future collaborations in a relaxed and friendly setting.

If you would like to become part of the growing PEARL community, feel free to drop us an email and we will add you to the Teams site.

Suzanne Estaphan (Suzanne.Estaphan@anu.edu.au)

Trevor Lewis (t.lewis@unsw.edu.au)

Member Profile: Dr. Judit Kibedi

University of Queensland



**Winner of
the AuPS
Physiology
Education
Grant**

Congratulations on being awarded the 2025 AuPS Physiology Education Grant! Can you briefly

describe your current research or area of focus, and why it is important?

My scholarship centres on transition and relational pedagogies, exploring how students' relationships and sense of connection shape their learning and development. This informs my work helping students develop capability through learning in biomedical science, with an emphasis on the broader application of those skills and attributes toward wherever they may go as future professionals. How students experience learning is important because it shapes how deeply they connect with that learning and see its relevance for their immediate and future success. Significant transition periods, like entering university or moving through more independent stages of study, can bring new expectations and uncertainty, making the connections students build with their learning, themselves and others important in helping them navigate these changes with confidence.

What are your longer-term goals for your research and/or career?

I am really interested in cultivating a strong cohort experience within broad and generalist programs, similar to the sense of belonging that often exists within professional degrees. Longer term, I want to explore how connection to a cohort and disciplinary community can strengthen students' sense of belonging to biomedical science and their confidence in the value of their education. An important part of this is helping students recognise, through meaningful feedback and reflection, the capabilities they are developing and how these can be applied beyond their immediate studies. The foundational years of physiology learning I work within, offers a valuable setting to nurture this recognition alongside their developing disciplinary knowledge and identity. Ultimately, my goal is to help students see how their education equips them to contribute through biomedical science across many different domains of society.

What motivated you to apply for this grant? How will this funding support or advance your work or goals?

My application for the AuPS Physiology Education Grant was timely, as I felt I had a project that could advance physiology education in ways that align with broader higher education priorities. Artificial intelligence has brought considerable disruption to education, with much of the ensuing research focusing on how this is playing out in context of teaching and learning. I was interested, however, in looking further ahead: whether and how students are thinking about the ways in which their education will translate into an AI-mediated workplace. Students' perspectives are important to capture, as are the realities of how AI is being used in the workplace. By understanding where these perspectives align or diverge, I hope to work toward identifying how education needs to evolve to prepare students to effectively navigate and professional practice as AI reshapes how work is undertaken and the capabilities expected of graduates.

In what ways do you expect this opportunity to contribute to your professional or academic development?

This opportunity would support my development as both a physiology educator and education researcher, particularly as I extend my scholarship from students' experiences of learning toward how that learning prepares them for changing professional contexts. It would allow me to build a stronger evidence base around the capabilities students will need to work effectively alongside AI, and consider what this means for how we teach and support students within physiology and biomedical science. Importantly, I hope to see this work lead to connections with other physiology educators active in the transition and employability spaces, to learn from and grow my thinking further about preparing physiology graduates for current professional pathways. This would strengthen my capacity to translate my scholarship into educational approaches that have relevance across physiology education.

What aspects of your field do you find most exciting or promising at the moment?

We've seen a clear shift in the narrative around AI and education, from a focus on AI-literacy and ethical

practice, to the more fundamental question of what aspects of human learning, capability and connection must be protected and prioritised as AI becomes increasingly embedded. Through the work this Grant is supporting, I'm seeing this perspective emerging amongst students too, who are placing great emphasis on preserving human expertise and judgement as important for navigating AI in their future professions. This also brings renewed relevance to my longstanding interest in feedback. As AI becomes an increasingly accessible source of feedback, ensuring it complements rather than displaces feedback sought from people, experiences and professional communities, will be an important part of preparing students as capable science graduates.

How have mentors, collaborators, or peers influenced your journey so far?

Mentors, collaborators and peers have been incredibly important in shaping who I am as an educator and researcher. So much of my development has come through conversations with people who have challenged my thinking, brought different perspectives, or helped me see possibilities I might not have recognised on my own. Some of my most meaningful work has also grown through collaboration, particularly with people who bring

different disciplinary expertise, experiences and ways of seeing a problem. I think this has really reinforced for me the value of being open to others' perspectives, and of seeking, interpreting and acting on them as part of our own development. It is probably no coincidence that connection, dialogue and feedback have become such strong threads through my own teaching and scholarship.

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



@AuPS
@AuPS-ECR



[@AuPS-physiology](#)



[@AuPHYSIOLSOC](#)

Applications are now open for the 2026 Australian Physiological Society (AuPS) Awards, Prizes and Grants program.

A.K. McIntyre Award

Sponsored by AuPS



The A K McIntyre Prize is named in honour of the Society's first President.

The Prize shall be awarded periodically to members of the Society who are judged to have made significant contributions to Australian physiological science and to AuPS over their pre-doctoral and early post-doctoral years.

Application & Eligibility:

To be considered for this award, nominees must:

- be proposed by two financial members of the Society, who should provide a statement of not more than 500 words summarising the nominee's achievements.
- provide a curriculum vitae and a list of published works, including conference proceedings and citations. Include a specific section that provides details of any contributions to scientific meetings of the Society.
- normally have graduated from their PhD or equivalent doctoral degree by 1st November not more than seven years before the year of application. Where the time exceeds seven years, please include details of relative to opportunity.
- be current financial Ordinary Members of the Society (note: provisional members* are not eligible to apply)

In considering nominations, the judges will take into account the nominee's contributions to scientific meetings of the Society. No individual may be awarded the prize more than once.

The judging committee shall consist of members of the Executive Committee of Council (except that any member with a conflict of interest shall be replaced with another Councillor), together with up to two additional members of Council and/or up to three past McIntyre award winners from outside of Council who shall be appointed for each specific round of nominations.

The Prize:

The Prize consists of a medal and the sum of \$1000.

The winner will be invited to present their work at the Physiological Society of New Zealand meeting in Queenstown in the following year, travel costs will be supported#.

When awarded, the winner will be announced during the conference dinner at the following AuPS meeting, and in the December Newsletter.

Email applications to the AuPS National Secretary

A/Prof Renee Ross: Renee.Ross@utas.edu.au

Closing date:

Applications close 5pm (AEST), 18th September 2026.

Past winners can be viewed in the [archive](#)

#In a reciprocal agreement, The winner of the PSNZ New & Emerging Researcher Award will be invited to present at the AuPS meeting in the following year (Nov/Dec). AuPS will provide the PSNZ winner with complimentary registration including dinner ticket plus reasonable travel expenses up to AUD\$1500 upon provision of receipts for flights and 3 nights' accommodation.

*Provisional membership. Applicants who apply for AuPS membership and pay their subscription fees have the status of provisional member until their application is ratified by a vote of the Society members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in November/December each year. In practical terms, this means anyone who applies for AuPS membership after the 2025 AGM won't be eligible for AuPS grants and awards until 2027. If you would like to be eligible for next year's awards you will need to apply for membership before the AGM this year.

The Michael Roberts Excellence in Physiology Education Award

Sponsored by ADInstruments



The Michael Roberts Excellence in Physiology Education Award is an award bestowed periodically by the Australian Physiological Society in memory of Michael Roberts, who was a lifelong passionate and dedicated advocate of physiology teaching and education.

The award is intended to recognise AuPS members who have demonstrated a sustained performance of excellence in the delivery of physiology education at the tertiary level, and make a contribution to the teaching activities of AuPS.

Application & Eligibility:

The award is open to current ordinary financial members of the Australian Physiological Society who are actively engaged in physiology education (note: provisional members* are not eligible to apply).

Candidates should provide a single page argued case for their nomination. In addition, candidates must provide evidence of achievement and impact which could include any of the following: letters of support from colleagues familiar with the teaching environment, detail of sustained high level teaching evaluation, student recognition, awards, success in obtaining substantial educational research funding and publications. Applications containing a brief Curriculum Vitae and evidence of achievement should be a **maximum** of three pages, **plus a single page argument for their nomination**.

In considering nominations, the judges will take into account the nominee's contributions to scientific meetings of the Society.

Prize:

The recipient of this award will be presented with a medal and a cash award, at the conference dinner in the year of the award, and will be invited to deliver a keynote lecture at the Educational Symposium in the following year's AuPS conference.

Email applications to the AuPS National Secretary

A/Prof Renee Ross: Renee.Ross@utas.edu.au

Closing date:

Applications close 5pm (AEST), 18th September 2026.

When awarded, the winner will be announced during the conference at the following AuPS meeting.

Past winners can be viewed in the [archive](#)

AuPS Postdoctoral Publication Prize**Sponsored by AuPS**

An annual award for the best original paper published by an AuPS member during their first seven postdoctoral years.

Eligibility:

To be considered for this award:

- The paper must be based on work carried out and published during your first seven postdoctoral years.
- The paper must have been published (either on paper or online) in the 12 month period between 30th September to the 1st October in the year of application.
- Applicants must be current financial Members of the Society (provisional members* are not eligible to apply)

Application:

Applications should include:

- A pdf of the publication
- A statement of date of award of your PhD
- A short statement on the paper's impact
- An explanation of your contribution (to multi-author papers only)

Assessment Criteria:

Applications will be ranked by a committee of AuPS Council members according to the following criteria:

1. Impact on the field
2. Applicant's contribution to the publication, endorsed by the supervisor and/or senior author of the paper
3. Innovation and originality
4. Technical difficulty
5. Scientific rigour
6. Clarity of organization and writing style
7. The prize will only be awarded once to a given individual

Prize:

The Prize consists of a \$500 award, to be used to present work at a conference. (Note: winners will be reimbursed after providing a copy of an invoice of conference expenses). Winners will be announced during the conference at the AGM and in the December AuPS newsletter.

Email applications to the AuPS National Secretary

A/Prof Renee Ross: Renee.Ross@utas.edu.au

Closing date:

Applications close 5pm (AEST), 16th October 2026.

When awarded, the winner will be announced during the conference dinner at the following AuPS meeting..

Past winners can be viewed in the [archive](#)

AuPS PhD Student Publication Prize**Sponsored by AuPS**

An annual award for the best original paper published by an AuPS member during the course of their PhD studies.

Eligibility:

To be considered for this award:

- The paper must be based on work carried out during your PhD and accepted for publication during your PhD or up to one year after the acceptance of your PhD.
- The paper must have been published (either on paper or online) in the 12 month period between 30th September to the 1st October in the year of application.
- Applicants must be current financial Members of the Society (provisional members* are not eligible to apply)

Application:

Applications should include:

- A pdf of the publication
- A statement of date of award of your PhD
- A short statement on the paper's impact
- An explanation of your contribution (to multi-author papers only)

Assessment Criteria:

Applications will be ranked by a committee of AuPS Council members according to the following criteria:

1. Impact on the field
2. Applicant's contribution to the publication, endorsed by the supervisor and/or senior author of the paper
3. Innovation and originality
4. Technical difficulty
5. Scientific rigour

6. Clarity of organization and writing style
7. The prize will only be awarded once to a given individual

Prize:

The Prize consist of a \$500 award, to be used to present work at a conference. (Note: winners will be reimbursed after providing a copy of an invoice of conference expenses). Winners will be announced during the conference at the AGM and in the December AuPS newsletter.

Email applications to the AuPS National Secretary

A/Prof Renee Ross: Renee.Ross@utas.edu.au

Closing date:

Applications close 5pm (AEST), 16th October 2026.

When awarded, the winner will be announced during the conference dinner at the following AuPS meeting.

Past winners can be viewed in the [archive](#)

AuPS Student Presentation Prizes

Sponsored by AuPS



In 1990, the Society instituted the awarding of prizes at each meeting for the best presentations (oral and poster) by graduate students in physiology and related disciplines. First and second prizes in both categories are normally awarded.

Prize:

The first prize winners in each category will receive \$250, and the second prize winner in each category will receive \$100 sponsored by AuPS

Eligibility:

Only persons who have been approved as Student Members will be eligible for Student Prizes.

Application:

Student presenting authors need only indicate they wish to be considered for the presentation prizes when they submit their abstract through the on-line system.

Past winners can be viewed in the [archive](#)

Peter Gage Student Collaborative Grant and AuPS Student Collaborative Grant

Sponsored by AuPS



AuPS has developed a competitive grant scheme for student members to help establish new independent collaborations, develop the student's CV and provide experience in preparing grant applications.

In 2025, up to two x \$4000 AUD grants will be available to support a student's visit to a host lab, in Australia or internationally, to further the development of students' Masters or PhD research programmes.

The **Peter Gage Student Collaborative Grant** will be awarded to an outstanding research proposal in basic physiology. The **AuPS Student Collaborative Grant** will be awarded to an outstanding research proposal in any field of physiology.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for this grant, applicants must:

- Be currently enrolled in a physiology-related Masters or PhD programme at an Australian University/Research Institute
- Have been a member of the Society for at least one year in November 2025
- Not be already involved in the host group's work in any way

Application:

The application should include:

- Research proposal including background, rationale and aims (300 words).
- Significance of the research and expected outcomes of the funding (200 words).
- Value of the new collaboration and future collaborative plans (300 words).
- References (maximum of 10, Vancouver reference style)
- Letter of support from primary supervisor (1 page limit)
- Letter of support from host (1 page limit)
- Curriculum Vitae (maximum of 2 pages)

The application will be assessed on the scientific merit of the project, the value of the new collaboration and the CV of the student ((please note that AuPS funds must not, under any conditions, be allocated to overheads). Early PhD candidates are encouraged to apply as CVs will be judged relative to opportunity. The application will NOT be assessed on the basis of the host's track record, or on the basis of existing collaborations between the primary supervisor and the host. The most highly ranked applicants will be asked to attend a short interview with the AuPS Council Executive.

The winner will be asked to deliver a webinar presentation to AuPS students and ECR members after their visit.

Email applications to the AuPS National Secretary

A/Prof Renee Ross: Renee.Ross@utas.edu.au

Closing date: Applications close 5pm (AEST), 12th September 2025.

Winners will be announced at the AGM

AuPS Physiology Education Grant Scheme

Sponsored by AuPS



The AuPS Physiology Education Grant scheme aims to support an education-based research project that has the potential to benefit physiology education and /or student engagement in Physiology. A condition of the grant is that the research outcomes of the funded project must be presented at the AuPS meeting the following year, and

it is expected that they will be suitable for publication over the subsequent 1-2 years. The recipient(s) will be mentored by a senior physiology education researcher appointed by the AuPS council, typically a former recipient of the Michael Roberts Prize.

One \$3 000 AUD grant is available, awarded to the best application from members of the AuPS.

Application & Eligibility:

The scheme is **open to all current ordinary financial members** of the Australian Physiological Society (Provisional members* are not eligible to apply). Note: eligibility has been expanded to include ALL academics regardless of career stage.

Individuals or Teams may apply, but all team members should adhere to these eligibility criteria and a Chief and Associate Investigator should be identified.

The application is assessed on the significance, innovation, clarity and feasibility of the proposal; justification of the budget; potential benefits for physiology education and/or engaging students in Physiology including breadth of potential impact across institutions. Applications will be ranked by at least two selected members of the AuPS Council, and the successful applicant will be announced at the annual AGM.

Note that funds will not be provided for conference attendance or travel (unless an integral part of the proposal). Furthermore, AuPS funds must not, under any conditions, be allocated to overheads.

Applications should be written in Times New Roman 12 point, justified formatting, 1.5 line spacing using the following headings, adhering to word counts:

- Chief Investigator, including institutional address
- Associate Investigator(s) and role in project (if relevant)
- Research Proposal (including background, innovation, rationale, aims and timeline: 500 words)
- Budget and Justification (200 words)
- References (maximum of 10)
- Brief CV of Chief Investigator and each Associate Investigator (1 page limit per person)

Applications should be written in Times New Roman 12 point, justified formatting, 1.5 line spacing and adhere to word limits.

Successful applicant(s) must provide a half -page report the following year to the AuPS Council, describing how funds were spent, and the outcomes of the project (including presentation at the meeting and publication plans). The report may be published in the AuPS Newsletter.

Email applications to the AuPS National Secretary

A/Prof Renee Ross: Renee.Ross@utas.edu.au

Closing date:

Applications close 5pm (AEST), 18th September 2026.

Winners will be announced at the AGM

Nominations are now open for three positions on the Australian Physiological Society (AuPS) Council

The AuPS is seeking nominations from members to fill three vacant Council positions commencing at the 2026 Annual General Meeting:

- Education Officer
- Sponsorship Officer
- Social Media Coordinator

These roles provide an opportunity to contribute to the future direction of the Society, support our members, and help advance physiology research and education across Australia. The vacancies were identified and approved for nomination by Council at the 2026 Mid-Year Council Meeting.

Nomination Requirements

Applications should include a brief statement (approx.. one paragraph) containing:

- Name
- Current position
- Institution
- General research area
- Previous links to AuPS and what you would bring to the role as an AuPS Council member

In addition, applications must include:

- A statement signed by three (3) full AuPS members supporting the nomination
- Confirmation from the nominee indicating their willingness to stand for election
- A single combined statement from the nominators and nominee is acceptable.

Closing Date

Please submit nominations to the AuPS National Secretary, Renee Ross (renee.ross@utas.edu.au). Nominations must be received by 5pm (AEDT) on Thursday 1 October 2026.

We particularly encourage nominations from members at all career stages who are enthusiastic about supporting the Society and contributing to its ongoing growth and development.



BRISBANE
29 NOV - 2 DEC 2026



AuPS SCIENTIFIC MEETING

Hosted by
University of Queensland,
St Lucia campus



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AuPS Satellite Meeting: Brisbane Calcium Symposium

In conjunction with the Australian Physiological Society (AuPS) Scientific Meeting, to be held at The University of Queensland from **29 November**, Professor Greg Monteith, Dr Melanie Robitaille and I are pleased to host the **Brisbane Calcium Symposium (BCS)** as a satellite meeting.

Calcium signalling is fundamental to cellular function, acting as a universal intracellular messenger that regulates processes including muscle contraction, neurotransmitter release, gene expression, metabolism, cell growth, and cell death. Through these diverse roles, calcium signalling coordinates physiological function and maintains cellular and organismal homeostasis.

Since its inception in 2018, the Brisbane Calcium Symposium has brought together researchers working across a broad range of disciplines, cell types, tissues, and experimental models. The meeting has featured presentations from senior, mid-career, and early-career researchers and has proven to be an excellent forum for scientific exchange, networking, and fostering collaborations within the calcium signalling community.

This year, we are delighted to hold the symposium alongside the AuPS meeting, providing an opportunity for calcium researchers travelling to Brisbane for AuPS to connect with colleagues from across Australia and overseas.

Meeting Details:

Date and Time:

- **Saturday 28 November:** Commencing around lunchtime
- **Sunday 29 November:** Continuing through the morning and concluding prior to the commencement of AuPS registration

Venue:

- The University of Queensland
- We anticipate using the same or nearby facilities as those hosting the AuPS meeting

Registration and Social Activities:

Thanks to a small budget allocation, we hope to provide refreshments and lunch on Sunday. We are also planning an informal **pay-your-own dinner** on Saturday evening at a venue close to UQ.

There is no registration fee, and all are welcome.

Stay Informed

If you would like to receive updates and further information about the Brisbane Calcium Symposium, please let us know and we will add you to the mailing list.

For enquiries, please contact:

Dr Melanie Robitaille
m.robitaille@uq.edu.au

Professor Gregory Monteith
greg@pharmacy.uq.edu.au

Professor Bradley Launikonis
b.launikonis@uq.edu.au

We look forward to welcoming you to Brisbane for an engaging and collegial meeting of the calcium signalling community.

AuPS Council

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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 December 2026.
All contributions for AuPS News should be sent to: **suzanne.estaphan@anu.edu.au**
before the end of November.

Thank you to the supporters of AuPS



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