



[Home](https://www.innovationaus.com/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/>) [About](https://www.innovationaus.com/about-us/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/about-us/>)

[News](https://www.innovationaus.com/news/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/news/>)

[Anniversary Feature](https://www.innovationaus.com/anniversary-feature/)

(<https://www.innovationaus.com/anniversary-feature/>)

[Reconstruction Feature](https://www.innovationaus.com/category/reconstruction-feature/)

([https://www.innovationaus.com/category/reconstruction-](https://www.innovationaus.com/category/reconstruction-feature/)

[Feature/](https://www.innovationaus.com/category/reconstruction-feature/))

[InnovationAsia](https://www.innovationaus.com/category/innovationasia/)

(<https://www.innovationaus.com/category/innovationasia/>)

[Podcasts](https://www.innovationaus.com/podcasts/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/podcasts/>)

[Subscribe](https://confirmsubscription.com/H/I/F03C6774B21DDB8D)

(<https://confirmsubscription.com/H/I/F03C6774B21DDB8D>)

[Data](https://www.innovationaus.com/category/data/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/category/data/>)

Oppermann charts new ACS course



James Riley

(<https://www.innovationaus.com/authors/james-riley/>)

Editorial Director
16 March 2020

Newly elected Australian Computer Society president Ian Oppermann has stepped away from his full-time role as chief data officer at the NSW Customer Service Department so he can devote more time to addressing the ACS' thorny problems.

To be clear, Dr Oppermann is not leaving the high-profile data analytics role with NSW Customer Service. But he has negotiated new arrangements with the state government that enable him to spend more time focused on the ACS than a full-time job would



COMMERCIAL DISCO
with James Riley

Subscribe to our podcast today.

Also available on iTunes and Spotify

Share(<https://www.innovationaus.com/oppermann-charts-new-acs-course>)
have allowed.

It is a measure of how big the challenge is at the ACS that Dr Oppermann made sure the arrangements were in place before nominating for the president’s role. In the end, he was elected unopposed.

The ACS is still rebuilding its national structures after last year’s failed corporate restructure and the Federal Court debacle that followed.

(<https://www.innovationaus.com/ads/innovatic-podcast-2-300x600/>)



(https://www.innovationaus.com/ads/results_s2/)



Ian Oppermann: Spending more time on ACS duties as the new president

With the ACS national congress now largely reconstituted, and with the election of a new management committee, the society has largely put itself back together.

Two branch executive committees still need to fully reformed in the Northern Territory and WA, but strides have been made since the Federal Court declared on December 23 that an ACS extraordinary general meeting held last October was invalid.

That ruling meant an ACS restructure from being an association registered in the ACT to being a Company Limited by Guarantee and regulated by ASIC was also invalid. The society had not held a series of election in anticipation of the changes and has been scrambling to catch-up ever since.

As its new president, Dr Oppermann says his first priority is to

rebuild its governance structures, and then to reassess how the society moves forward and the directions it takes. In the end, it will be up to the 20-odd members of the national congress to set the direction.

But for the all the bitterness of the very public fight between the ACS management and a large group of angry senior members, there was still an opportunity to find common ground, he said.

“There are some loud voices and there are some not so loud voices that we need to listen to. But ultimately we need to bring all of these voices and views back to the congress,” Dr Oppermann said.

“The congress is the ultimate decision-making authority under the current rules and regulations, and [we need] to get the congress to make rulings on where we go,” he said.

“There is still an opportunity listen, still an opportunity for some conciliation, and there is an opportunity ultimately to go back and retest what congress wants to do and to move forward.”

The membership of the powerful management committee remains largely unchanged, and certainly the chief architects of the 2019 EGM debacle and the scathing Federal Court assessment that followed remains on the committee in the form of Immediate Past President Yohan Ramasundara and ACS chief executive Andrew Johnson.

Dr Oppermann has thrown his support behind the embattled Andrew Johnson to remain as CEO, despite the failed restructure plans and the invalid extraordinary general meeting. He says Mr Johnson has done a good job in meeting his performance metrics that he had been set, particularly around revenue growth.

“Andrew has been a very good CEO from the perspective of delivering on and managing the direction that is set by the management committee. Our job is to make sure that direction is the right one.”

With his election last week as president, Dr Oppermann has vacated his previous role as vice-president for the Technical Advisory Board. He said the management committee was calling for expressions of interest from people wanting to fill that role.

In terms of his planned program of work, Dr Oppermann said he wants to make sure that the ACS does “some big things in areas that are having an impact on society.” He is keen to continue to focus on work that he had been doing on the Technical Advisory Board.

The continuation of work on data-sharing standards would continue, and he wants to ensure that work on issues of artificial intelligence are scaled up, and to make some inroads into the

smart cities and smart places sectors.

“There is a real opportunity here as these areas lines up with federal, state and local priorities of each level of government,” he said.

“And then there is an opportunity to do a whole lot better at connecting the research sector and innovation sector with industry. Each one has a slightly different approach that they take, but I really want to deliver big things here.”

But data-sharing, smart cities and AI are key areas of interest, which would then also be applied to the skills framework.

“I really want to make sure that we build out what are known to be some of the gaps in our skills framework, particularly around data science and data analysis and AI capabilities.”

Dr Oppermann said a lot of work remained to be done in better integrating the various acquisitions the society had made in the past two years.

More pressing though will be the development of an ACS response to changing market conditions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The society is preparing to shut down events and to make possible adjustments to staffing levels and a potential revenue hit on the back of the virus.

Do you know more? Contact James Riley via [Email](mailto:james@innovationaus.com) (<mailto:james@innovationaus.com>) or [Signal](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.thoughtcrime.securesms&hl=en_AU) (https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.thoughtcrime.securesms&hl=en_AU).

Related: [ACS](https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/acs/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/acs/>) | [Andrew Johnson](https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/andrew-johnson/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/andrew-johnson/>) | [Australian Computer Society](https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/australian-computer-society/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/australian-computer-society/>) | [Ian Oppermann](https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/ian-oppermann/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/ian-oppermann/>) | [Yohan Ramasundara](https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/yohan-ramasundara/) (<https://www.innovationaus.com/tag/yohan-ramasundara/>)

← Previous post

Next post →

An Aussie voice in AI standards

(<https://www.innovationaus.com/an-aussie-voice-in-ai-standards/>)

Retrospective RDTI changes ‘simply unfair’

(<https://www.innovationaus.com/retrospective-rdti-changes-simply-unfair/>)

2 COMMENTS



Helen McHugh
9 months ago

Reply

Good Article.

Ian is a great performer with a real passion for our Industry. I have known him for