

Ecological Society of Australia Research Chapters – FAQ

What is a “Research Chapter”?

- Research Chapter (ESA RC)
 - an inclusive collection of ESA members with a shared interest around a research theme
- ESA is supporting the formation of Research Chapters to facilitate greater interaction among the membership, and to build capacity in Australian ecology
 - e.g. A chapter is currently being developed on *Arid Ecology*
 - Future Research Chapter could potentially be organized around any topic of shared interest

Why is a Research Chapter beneficial?

- A Research Chapter provides opportunities
 - To engage with people who share similar intellectual passions
 - For new ESA members and students to engage with established researchers in their field
 - To develop vibrant collaborations
 - To be part of a group of engaged experts within ESA who can contribute to policy debates on their theme
 - To host regular thematic events as part of the ESA

What do I have to do to start a Research Chapter?

- Sound out a core group (~10) of people who are interested in a theme, and interested in interacting regularly
- Contact one of the following from ESA for a ‘start-up kit’, and any clarifications about a Research Chapter
 - VP-Research (Glenda Wardle)
 - email: gwardle@bio.usyd.edu.au
 - Executive Officer (Gail Spina)
 - email: ExecutiveOfficer@ecolsoc.org.au
- Send an invitation (via ESA’s E-News) to the ESA membership to join the Research Chapter

What do I have to do to join a Research Chapter?

- Contact one of the following from ESA to see if there is a Research Chapter aligned with your interests
 - VP-Research (Glenda Wardle)
 - email: gwardle@bio.usyd.edu.au
 - Executive Officer (Gail Spina)
 - email: ExecutiveOfficer@ecolsoc.org.au
 - Your Regional Councillor
 - check <http://www.ecolsoc.org.au/who.html>
- Contact the Research Chapter Convenor/Deputy
- If one does not exist, consider starting a Research Chapter

What will it cost to be a member of a Research Chapter?

- Nothing at present, and not much in the future
 - Depending on the types of activities a Research Chapter’s members want to organize, there may be a small charge (\$10-30/year) to cover costs in the future
 - This is no more than the cost of a few decent cups of coffee!

What are the planned activities for any Research Chapter?

- At the very least an Research Chapter will be expected to
 - Host one annual get-together of the chapter members, e.g.
 - Themed Talk/Poster session at the annual ESA Conference
 - Pending approval by the conference LOC
 - Social function at the annual ESA Conference
 - Themed one-day event independent of the conference
 - Interact via electronic means (e.g. teleconference, email, social networking sites)
 - ESA's teleconference facilities can be used for this
 - Submit a brief annual report on chapter activities to the ESA Council

Who runs Research Chapters?

- The Research Chapter's membership runs the Research Chapter
 - This is facilitated by a Convenor and Deputy
 - What is the role of Convenor & Deputy?
 - Engage Research Chapter membership (via electronic and face-to-face interactions)
 - Organize one annual get-together
 - ESA's Conference Organizer can assist with this
 - Submit a brief annual report on the Research Chapter's activities to ESA's Council
 - Term of positions can be defined by membership
 - Once the group gains some momentum after an initial setting-up phase (~1y), the Research Chapter's membership will select people for these roles
 - What is the role of the Research Chapter's Membership?
 - Participate in Research Chapter activities
 - Inform Convenor and Deputy of potential activities and assist in their running
 - Nominate for serving as Convenor and Deputy
 - Participate in selection of Convenor and Deputy

What help will ESA provide to Research Chapters?

- The ESA's Research Chapter Working Group (Convenor: VP-Research) is able to assist in the setting-up phase of a Research Chapter
- The ESA's Council will always be there to serve as a sounding board for the Research Chapter's Chair, Deputy and Membership
- The ESA will assist with funding a Research Chapter with seed funding for up to 3 years of its operation
 - At present this is up to \$1000 per year, for up to 3 years subject to Council approval.
 - Guidelines on spending of these monies are available from ESA's VP-Research & EO
 - Funding support beyond this initial seed-funding phase may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the ESA Council

The ESA's website and associated electronic resources are available for use by Research Chapters Meeting space at the annual conference and teleconference costs may also be available if required.

Are there any examples of Research Chapters?

- An *Arid Ecology Research Chapter* is in the process of being established by the ESA
 - Keep an ear and eye out at ESA 2010 in Canberra for this
- Research Chapter's are a vibrant part of other Ecological Societies, e.g.
 - Ecological Society of America http://www.esa.org/chapters_sections/
 - British Ecological Society
 - http://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/getting_involved/special_interest_groups/index.php