



australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy



Annual Report 2019

ASCIA is the peak professional body of clinical immunology and allergy specialists in Australia and New Zealand and is a member society of the World Allergy Organisation (WAO).

The mission of ASCIA is to promote the highest standard of medical practice, training, education and research, to prevent and control allergic diseases, immunodeficiencies and other immune diseases, and therefore improve the health and quality of life of people with these conditions.

www.allergy.org.au

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This report is based on the ASCIA Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 5th September 2019, 13.30-14.00 AWST at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, Western Australia. The image on this page was used for the ASCIA 2019 Conference and is reproduced with permission from the artist Valerie Sparks.

1. ASCIA PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Dr Brynn Wainstein

ASCIA STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2015 ASCIA updated its Mission, Objectives and Strategic Plan in the process of changing from an incorporated association to a not for profit company. A new constitution and bylaws were also developed and these are available open access on the ASCIA website www.allergy.org.au/members/constitution

In 2020 it will be five years since these were updated, so it is timely for the ASCIA Directors to review these and make recommendations to Council for the next five years. Whilst we don't expect to make major changes to ASCIA operations, we need to ensure sustainability and continued prioritisation of areas that are core business for ASCIA, to benefit ASCIA members and contribute to improved patient care.

ASCIA MISSION

Advance the science and practice of allergy and clinical immunology, by promoting the highest standard of medical practice, training, education and research, to improve the health and quality of life of people with immune system disorders. These include allergic diseases, immunodeficiencies and other immune diseases.

ASCIA OBJECTIVES

1. Standards - Promote the highest standards of allergy and immunology medical training, practice and care.
2. Education and Training - Provide high quality allergy and immunology education and training for ASCIA members, health professionals, patients, consumers and carers.
3. Expertise and Advice - Utilise ASCIA and stakeholder expertise to address allergy and immunology issues, provide advice, representation and submissions to government and other organisations.
4. Advocacy and Collaborations - Increase the profile of allergy, immunology and immunopathology and advocate for patients.
5. Research - Promote and fund research to improve health and quality of life of people with allergy and other immune diseases.

ASCIA PRIORITIES

- ASCIA Annual Conferences
- ASCIA Education and Training
- ASCIA Submissions, Reports, Communications and Collaborations
- National Immunodeficiency Strategy
- National Allergy Strategy
- AIFA Research Grant Program
- Sustainability

ASCIA PRIORITIES: Annual Conference

Since 1990, ASCIA Annual Conferences have provided an international standard of continuing professional development (CPD) education and are therefore a highlight of the year for ASCIA members and other health professionals working in allergy, clinical immunology and immunopathology.



Thank you and congratulations to Professor Michaela Lucas and her committee for the ASCIA 2019 Conference in Perth, the 30th annual conference of ASCIA. The ASCIA 2019 conference report is available on the ASCIA website www.allergy.org.au/conferences/ascia-annual-conference

Sponsorship has continued to increase each year, with almost double the stands compared to a few years ago, and in 2019 all stands sold out by 30th June. It is important for this to continue, so that all ASCIA Annual Conferences are a financial success, to help sustain ASCIA's operations.

We are looking forward to the ASCIA 2020 Conference in Melbourne, which is being chaired by Dr Dean Tey. For preliminary information go to www.ascia2020.com



The schedule for future ASCIA Annual Conferences is available on the ASCIA website: www.allergy.org.au/conferences/ascia-annual-conference/schedule-for-ascia-acs

ASCIA PRIORITIES: Education and Training

One of the most important (and time consuming activities) in 2018-2019 has been implementation of the ASCIA Education Project, which has been intense, but productive. Thank you to the committee chairs for guiding us with this project, which will expand further in 2019-2020. This is now feasible as we have an ASCIA Education Project Officer, Nadene Dorling to work on this project.

STAGE 1: WEBSITE

In August 2018 a significant redesign of the ASCIA website was completed and launched. The ASCIA website is a trusted and extremely popular source of information about allergy and other immune diseases. Access to more than 140 ASCIA educational resources was improved by redesigning the website to be more user and mobile device friendly.

ASCIA website statistics (see table below) exceed those of most other health organisations. From 1st July 2018 to 30th June 2019 the ASCIA website has attracted around 1.9 million annual visits, 1.6 million unique visitors, and 3 million pageviews. We currently achieve these results without ASCIA spending anything on PR or agencies, and without any government funding.

ASCIA website statistics	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
ASCIA website annual visits	1,447,910	1,689,043	1,811,796	1,633,627	1,890,889
ASCIA website annual unique visitors	1,168,913	1,434,548	1,530,003	1,362,044	1,568,474
ASCIA website annual pageviews	2,529,824	2,821,268	3,111,000	2,987,752	2,979,089

STAGE 2: FAST FACTS

In February 2019 new ASCIA Fast Facts were completed and added to the ASCIA website. ASCIA Fast Facts provide bite sized, easy to read and trustworthy information on allergy and other immune diseases for patients, carers and the community. ASCIA Fast Facts have been adapted from existing evidence based ASCIA information and have been developed as part of the ASCIA Education Project.

www.allergy.org.au/patients/fast-facts

STAGE 3: PATIENT INFORMATION

In May 2019 the updating of more than 70 ASCIA patient information topics was completed. Language was revised to make the information easier to read and understand.

www.allergy.org.au/about-ascia/info-updates/ascia-patient-education-resources-reborn

STAGE 4: HEALTH PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

In May 2019 work commenced on updating more than 60 ASCIA health professional resources, including e-training courses, which are used extensively (see table below). The updating of these resources is essential before evidence based standards of care can be developed. As part of Stage 4, we aim to increase the number and quality of updated or new templates and protocols that are only available on the ASCIA members section of the website, to provide further benefits to ASCIA members.

ASCIA e-training statistics	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
ASCIA e-training total registrations (cumulative)	221,016	287,438	379,852	465,120	560,662
ASCIA e-training HP registrations (cumulative)	15,052	22,022	30,324	41,268	60,619

Recently completed health professional resources include:

- Nurse and Dietitian Forum Groups
- New ASCIA-TAPID Consensus SCID Guidelines
- Updated ASCIA Chronic Urticaria Position Paper and Treatment Guidelines
- Updated ASCIA Anaphylaxis Guidelines
- New ASCIA Venom Immunotherapy Guide
- New ASCIA Aeroallergen Immunotherapy Guide (available after the ASCIA 2019 Conference)
- New ASCIA Immunodeficiency Register (available after the ASCIA 2019 Conference)

ASCIA PRIORITIES: Submissions, Reports, Communications, Collaborations

ASCIA SUBMISSIONS

- Feedback to Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy. Submitted 30th November 2018, further to original submission 18th June 2018. A further letter was submitted on 5th August 2019, requesting a wording change regarding ASCIA Guidelines on page 39. NAS and CFAR also submitted letters. This request was successful.
- ASCIA response to PBAC letter re Dupilumab. Submitted 30th May 2019. ACTION: No response has been received so this requires further follow up. DONE This submission was unsuccessful.
- Revised MSAC application for an item number for food allergen challenges (with workforce data included and more limitations, as stated in February Council minutes. Submitted 18th July 2019. This reconfigured submission was unsuccessful.
- ASCIA response to NBA request regarding Berinert information. Submitted 4th September 2019.
- ASCIA response to new MBS Review Specialist and Consultant Physician Consultation Clinical Committee of the MBS Review Taskforce. Submitted 25th March 2019.
- ASCIA wrote to the RACP President requesting TGA Authorised Prescriber endorsements. Submitted 28th February 2019. This request was unsuccessful. The current status is on the ASCIA website: www.allergy.org.au/members/ascia-member-access-to-spt-reagents#s2
- ASCIA letter to NBA re BloodSTAR issues. Submitted 27th May 2019. ACTION: No response has been received so this requires further follow up. DONE
- ASCIA submission in relation to the FSANZ Review of Food Standards Code chapter 3 and 4 – Food Safety Management Requirements (Australia only). Submitted 14th June 2019.
- ASCIA submissions in response to Consultation on the Draft National Clinical Quality Registry Strategy. Submitted 20th June 2019.

ASCIA submissions, communications and collaborations are listed on the ASCIA website: www.allergy.org.au/about-ascia/ascia-initiatives#collab

ASCIA PRIORITIES: National Immunodeficiency Strategy

On Friday 8th March 2019, ASCIA hosted the first meeting for the National Immunodeficiency Strategy at the Parkroyal Hotel Melbourne Airport. This meeting included group discussions, based on the draft mission and goals of the Strategy, which have been condensed as a result of the meeting's discussions.

A document has been drafted and will be circulated for review. The final document should be relevant for Australia and New Zealand and will be used by ASCIA to advocate for key issues.

The revised mission and goals are shown below.

MISSION

Improve the health and wellbeing of people with primary immunodeficiencies (PIDs), and minimise the burden on individuals, carers, health services and community.

GOAL 1: ENABLE EARLY DIAGNOSIS OF PIDS

Enable early diagnosis of PID, by implementing national newborn screening of the population for severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), and promoting recognition of early signs of PID to inform diagnostic tests.

GOAL 2: IMPROVE ACCESS TO GENOMIC TESTING FOR PIDS

Improve access to appropriate genomic testing performed in expert centres, for patients with suspected PID, recently diagnosed patients or those with a family history of PID.

GOAL 3: IMPROVE ACCESS TO SPECIALIST AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY CARE FOR PIDS

Improve access to appropriate medical, nursing and multidisciplinary care for patients with PIDs and recognize the complexity of care required for patients with PID.

GOAL 4: IMPROVE ACCESS TO PID TREATMENTS

Ensure sufficient supply of appropriately supported and funded treatment choices for patients with PIDs, including subcutaneous or intravenous IRT (SCIG or IVIG) and HAE treatments.

GOAL 5: SUPPORT PID EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Recognise the need to support development of education and training resources about PIDs and treatment options for patients, carers and health professionals.

GOAL 6: SUPPORT PID RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIONS

Recognise the need for supporting clinical research into PID and collaborations between clinical immunology specialists and nurses with other health professionals and collaborators.

For preliminary information go to www.nationalimmunodeficiencystrategy.org.au

ASCIA PRIORITIES: National Allergy Strategy

Since it was launched in 2015, the National Allergy Strategy has developed into a highly successful collaboration with Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia, in consultation with other stakeholders. With four years of government funding now secured, it is a very exciting time for implementation of the National Allergy Strategy projects listed below, which would not be feasible without government support.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank A/Prof Richard Loh, Maria Said, Sandra Vale, ASCIA members, and all the other contributors over the past five years, since the first Allergy Summit. We also thank Dr Preeti Joshi for taking on the role of National Allergy Strategy Co-Chair, as Richard Loh steps down from this role and becomes a founding patron.

FOOD SERVICE PROJECT LAUNCH 30th JULY 2019

All about Allergens: The next step for cooks and chefs 2019 www.foodallergytraining.org.au

Two new National Allergy Strategy e-training courses, funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, are now available for cooks and chefs to help improve food allergen management in food service, including camps. The two courses (one for general food service and another for camp providers) provide information relevant to the specific settings. The first All about Allergens course should be completed before undertaking the new courses for cooks and chefs.

Food Allergy Aware website www.foodallergyaware.org.au

The National Allergy Strategy has also launched a food allergy awareness campaign funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, aimed at communicating the shared responsibility when it comes to food allergen management in food service. This website is a resource hub for consumers, food service providers, environmental health officers/authorised officers and health care providers, who all play a role in food allergen management.

FOOD ALLERGY PREVENTION PROJECT LAUNCH 24th JUNE 2019

Nip Allergies in the Bub www.preventallergies.org.au

The National Allergy Strategy has launched the Nip Allergies in the Bub food allergy prevention project, which is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health. As well as online resources, face to face education has been provided to inform and support health professionals, in preparation for the national launch. The Nip Allergies in the Bub project aims to implement the ASCIA guidelines for infant feeding and allergy prevention.

250K YOUTH PROJECT

In May 2019 a new 250K young adult website <https://ya.250k.org.au/> was developed to provide information specific to older teens and young adults. A new landing page www.250k.org.au was also developed and the original 250K website <https://teen.250k.org.au> has a new look and is now specifically for school aged teens. In January 2019, the National Allergy Strategy held a pilot camp for teens and young adults living with severe food allergy.

OTHER INITIATIVES

- Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) project – commencing August 2019.
- Shared Care Model Forum on 5th April 2019, continuing with Zoom meetings and targeted consultations in August and September 2019
- An Anaphylaxis Register Scoping Meeting was held with state/territory health department representatives and key representation from ASCIA and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia on 12th March 2019. This will also be discussed at an AHMAC meeting.
- Parliamentary inquiry into allergic disease

For more details go to www.nationalallergystrategy.org.au

Development of a New Zealand National Allergy Strategy is currently under consideration and ASCIA will assist wherever possible.

ASCIA PRIORITIES: AIFA Research Grant Program

For the past two year, donations to AIFA and sponsored AIFA grants have exceeded \$100,000 which has allowed AIFA to start providing more substantial research grants. ASCIA now manages AIFA with minimal expenditure, to allow 100% of donations and sponsorship to go towards grants.

In 2019 AIFA has awarded a total of \$120,000 in AIFA grants to allergy and immunology research, presented by Dr Melanie Wong, AIFA Chair, at the ASCIA 2019 Conference closing function.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Melanie Wong, AIFA Grant Selection Panel members, and Michelle Haskard, for all their work on the 2019 AIFA Grant Round, which is a milestone for AIFA and ASCIA. There were 28 Expressions of Interest and a shortlist of 10 full grant applications, so there was considerable work behind the scenes to administer and select the grant recipients.

AIFA has now provided a total of \$250,000 in grants since 2015. We expect to have a similar number of grants to award in 2020. To date we have \$60,000 reserved for 2020 AIFA grants (1 x \$40,000, 1 x \$20,000 from donations) and pledges from industry for some more grants, which we will need to confirm before EOIs are requested in early 2020.

The AIFA Grant Selection Panel has recommended that to be eligible for an AIFA grants in the future, the chief investigator should be a financial member of ASCIA for at least 12 months before the Expression on Interest is submitted (by mid-April each year). This recommendation was approved by ASCIA Council and wording will be included on the AIFA website. The only exception may be a possible future ASCIA-ASI grant, which could also be open to ASI members.

ASCIA PRIORITIES: Sustainability

From an operational perspective, a major highlight of 2019 was the move to a new office suite which has enabled ASCIA to sustain its operations.

In 2020 we will develop a sustainability plan, to further reduce ASCIA's impact on the environment and obtain funding from other sources to sustain ASCIA into the future.

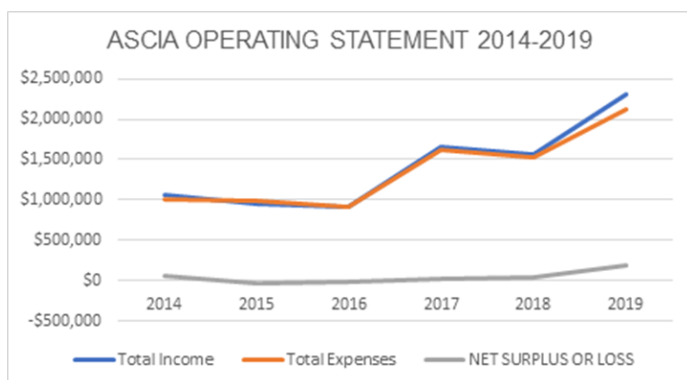
In the meantime you can read about ASCIA's current sustainability initiatives on the ASCIA website: www.allergy.org.au/about-ascia/ascia-initiatives#sustain

Thank you to:

- ASCIA Directors and other Council members
- ASCIA committee and working party chairs and members
- Past ASCIA presidents who have established a strong foundation
- ASCIA staff (Jill Smith, Rikki Dunstall, Nadene Dorling, Michelle Haskard, Sandra Vale, Heather Roberts)
- Impagination (websites), ICMSA (conference logistics), Rachel Hopkins (graphic design)

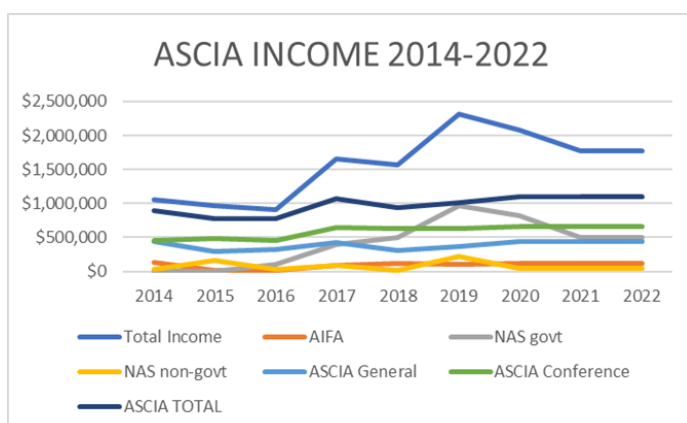
2. ASCIA FINANCE REPORT: Dr Michael O’Sullivan

The ASCIA finance report for 2018-2019 has been audited, and based on these figures, Rikki Dunstall has prepared detailed profit and loss statements for ASCIA (general and conference), National Allergy Strategy (govt and non-govt) and AIFA, from 2014 to 2019. This has enabled us to track the finances for ASCIA, and project income and expenses for 2020-2022. The following graphs show some interesting trends and opportunities for improvement.

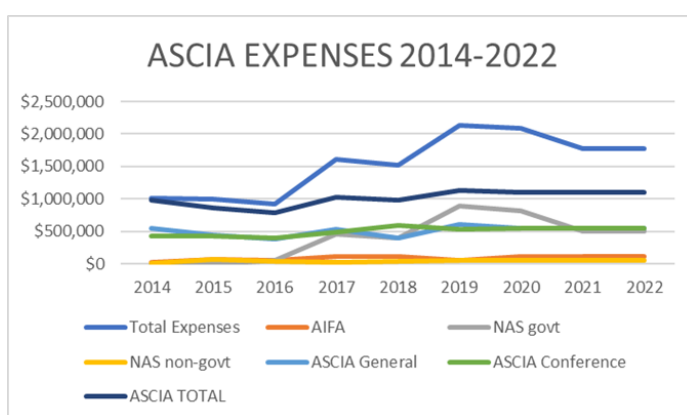


ASCIA is a not for profit company, and whilst we don't wish to make a loss, there are factors that currently limit ASCIA's ability to be profitable. These include the supply of free training courses and education resources, rotation of annual conferences and relatively low membership numbers.

The surplus of \$183,607 in 2019 is due to non-government National Allergy Strategy (NAS) funding, which needs to be reserved for advocacy work (to seek future government funding). It is also required for future long service leave entitlements of NAS staff, so that ASCIA does not have to carry these costs, and any other costs that are not covered by the NAS government funding.



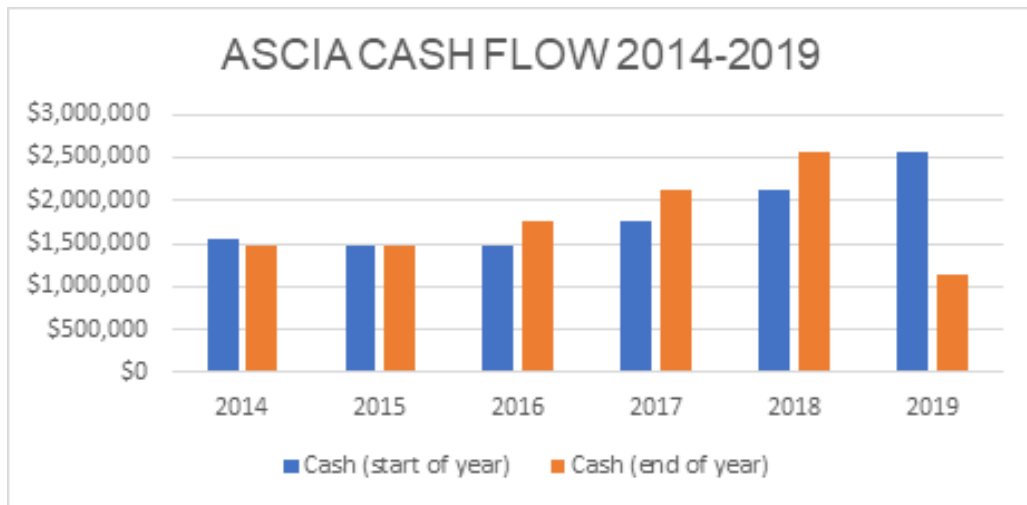
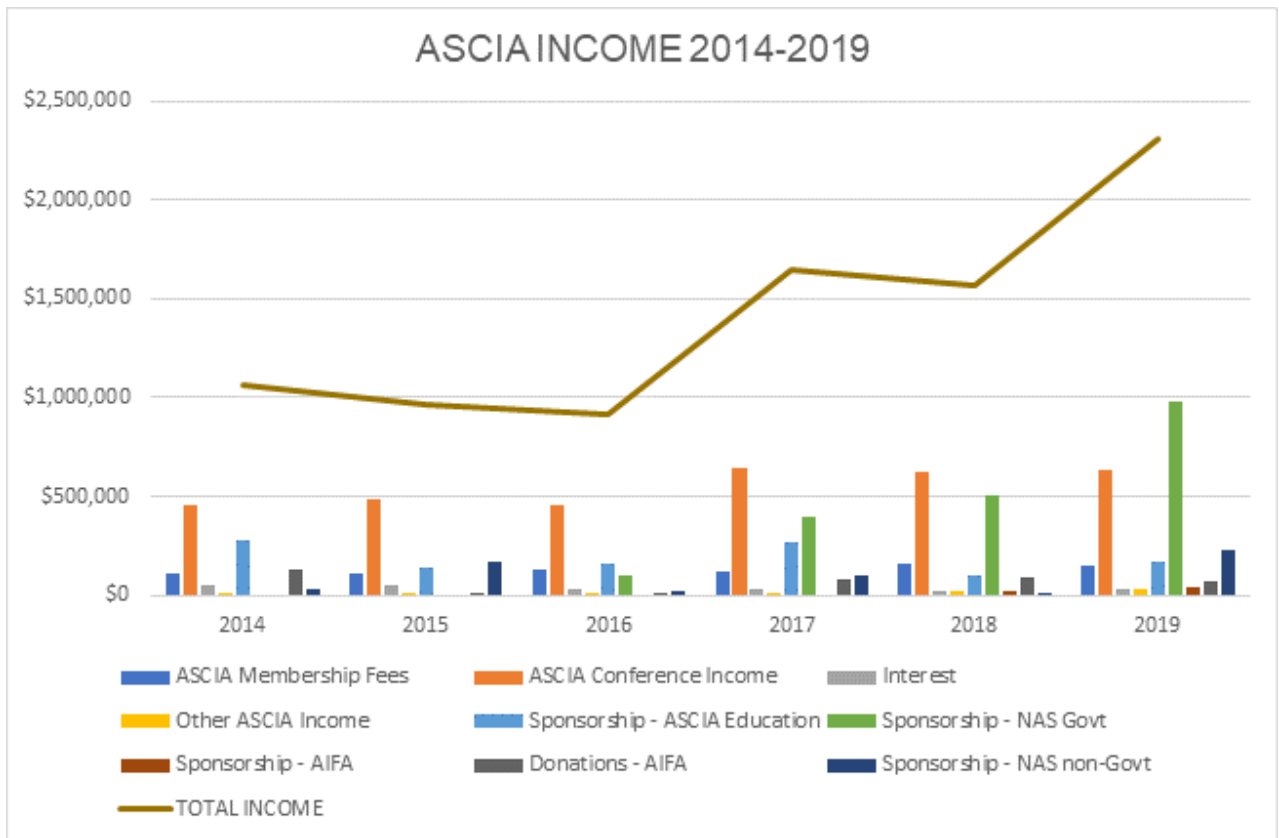
Fluctuations in the total ASCIA income and expenses are mainly due to NAS government funding. If this funding is not continued beyond 2022, the funded projects will need to be ceased, so that ASCIA does not have to carry these costs. This will be included in a written agreement between ASCIA and A&AA, which is currently in draft format.



The unrestricted education grants obtained by ASCIA in 2014 (\$35,000) and 2015 (\$168,000) for development of the NAS will now be acknowledged on the NAS and ASCIA websites.

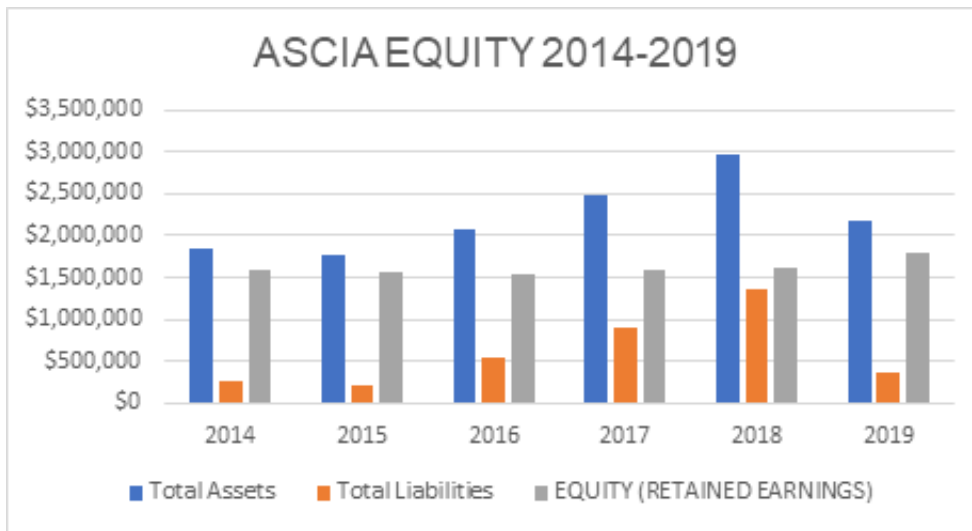
Total ASCIA income and expenses (conferences and general) are increasing at a relatively gradual pace, with few variations, except for conference income that peaked in 2017, due to the high returns from the ASCIA 2016 Conference on the Gold Coast, and a slight increase in expenses in 2019, mainly due to staffing changes and office renovations.

OPERATING STATEMENT	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Total Income	\$1,061,782	\$960,849	\$913,988	\$1,648,836	\$1,563,349	\$2,311,470
Total Expenses	\$1,004,893	\$995,193	\$923,490	\$1,616,218	\$1,525,704	\$2,127,863
NET SURPLUS OR LOSS	\$56,889	-\$34,344	-\$9,502	\$32,618	\$37,645	\$183,607



ASCIA’s cash flow decrease in 2019 reflects the outright purchase of the ASCIA office, but as this is now an asset it will be reflected as such in the ASCIA equity financial statement.

ASCIA’s considerable equity (retained earnings) of \$1,798,278 are mostly attributed to ASCIA. This is largely due to careful financial management and continued conference income, whilst substantially expanding ASCIA’s activities over the past 10 years. However, it is important that ASCIA generates more income in future so that we retain around \$1,500,000 in retained earnings, to keep ASCIA viable in the long term.



Assets and liabilities have shifted compared to previous years, which is mainly due to there being less NAS funds in the bank account at EOFY19 compared to EOFY18 (~\$700,000 less) so lower assets. That also means the liabilities were lower as EOFY18 saw income in advanced being higher with the NAS funds allocated to that account, whereas we did not have to shift this liability at EOFY19.

NEW ASCIA OFFICE

From an operational perspective, a major highlight of 2019 was the move to a new office suite for ASCIA in the Lifestyle Working Building, a benchmark environmentally sustainable design (ESD) strata office building. This move has enabled ASCIA to sustain its operations and allow for growth.



PLANS FOR 2020

In 2019-2020 ASCIA is working towards improving its sustainability, particularly in regards to ASCIA education, training and operations.

As part of a sustainability plan for ASCIA from 2020-2025, the ASCIA CEO and ASCIA Directors will develop a budget with new income sources included, to help sustain ASCIA into the future.