



# Annual General Meeting of the British Neuroscience Association 2025

## For the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

13:15 – 13:45 Tuesday 29 April | ACC Liverpool

### Minutes

#### **Item 1: Welcome and review of the year by the Chief Executive, Dr Laura Ajram**

Introduction and welcome by the Chief Executive, Dr Laura Ajram.

The meeting was quorate.

Our strategic pillars remain 'Inform, Connect, Influence', and we have had several successes in each of these areas:

#### **INFORM**

##### **Journal**

We are delighted to welcome Dr Claire Durrant (University of Edinburgh) to join Dr Kate Baker (University of Cambridge) as co-Editor-in-Chiefs of the journal.

New article types are performing well and all members are encouraged to submit articles to the journal.

##### **Training Academy**

The BNA has made significant progress in developing a structured training programme to support the neuroscience community. Building on our commitment to professional development, we have been working to create the BNA Training Academy, recently launched in Q2 YE2025.

The academy will include a mix of in-person and online training, covering topics such as research integrity, industry collaboration, communication skills, and neuroscience-specific professional development.

The BNA has also successfully contributed to the Royal Society of Biology's Accreditation scheme, providing recommended Learning Outcomes for undergraduate degrees in neuroscience. Thanks to Education and Engagement Secretary, Dr Sandrine Williame-Morawek, for her leadership in this area.



## **CONNECT**

### **Membership**

Over the course of YE2024 we saw membership make a significant increase from 2,653 to 2,992 (+339). This is a huge improvement on our small growth of +32 members from YE2022-23. At the time of the meeting, we have over 3,000 members.

In YE2024 we expanded the ways in which individuals and organisations can become members of the BNA, introducing Organisational Membership and re-focusing efforts on expanding our Group Memberships. We currently have 14 active Group Memberships at Academic institutions across the UK and 2 new organisation members – PSP Association and MSD.

## **INFLUENCE**

### **Advocating for our members**

The BNA remains an active member of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee and has this year joined the Campaign for Science and Engineering to further support our advocacy efforts.

In September, we held an event at the Welsh Parliament, and we continue to represent and advocate for our members in the devolved nations across the UK.

Our commitment to Equity and Diversity remains strong – we have recently enrolled a further 7 Scholars on the BNA Scholars Programme, bringing the total number of individuals supported by this scheme to 35.

### **Partnerships**

As part of our ongoing efforts to redefine and strengthen our value proposition to partners, the BNA developed a comprehensive Grant Partnership Offer. This new initiative positions us to partner, co-deliver, and advise on research grant proposals, further amplifying our influence in the sector and creating new opportunities for collaboration. Over the course of the review period, we played a key role in 9 grant applications, ranging from UKRI grants to internal university funding and government initiatives, including the Office for Life Sciences. 4 of these applications were successful, with 3 pending decision.

### **Representation**

We have significantly enhanced our influence through notable appointments and engagements:

- Tara Spires Jones appointed Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences
- Laura Ajram appointed to the Board of ELRIG UK
- Royal partnerships with the Queen's Reading Room



And we continue to champion and promote our members with our internal prizes. Prize winners in the YE2024 were as follows:

- Award for Outstanding Contribution to Neuroscience: Professor Julie Williams
- Award for Public Engagement of Neuroscience: Phoebe Reynolds
- Undergraduate Prize: Alex Voce
- Postgraduate Prize: Lydia Hickman
- Credibility in Neuroscience Prize (Student): Josephina Weinerova
- Credibility in Neuroscience Prize (Individual): Lei Zhang
- Credibility in Neuroscience Prize (Team): CODECHECK

In addition to our own national prizes, this year we established a Nominations Committee to nominate exceptional individuals for prizes, awards, council positions and roles at international organisations such as SfN, FENS and IBRO. The 2024 SfN meeting was particularly successful with 3 successful nominations of BNA members for prestigious prizes.

#### **Item 2: Report from the Treasurer, Dr Trevor Bushell**

Trevor Bushell presented the annual accounts for the British Neuroscience Association Ltd and for BNA Events Ltd.

#### **British Neuroscience Association Ltd:**

For YE2024, total income was £434,297 (major sources were membership subscriptions, dividend income from BNA Events, grant funding and donations).

There were net gains (£48,797) on investments.

Expenditure totalled £409,476, and major expenses came from office/staff costs, Gatsby funded activities, bursaries, subscriptions/membership and BNA Bulletin production.

£103,294 of reserves are restricted for Gatsby-funded and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) activities.

0% of investments are in alcohol, gambling, fossil fuels or weapons.

In summary, YE2024 accounts show a stable pattern of income and planned expenditure. British Neuroscience Association Ltd remains in a good position, with planned expenditure in line with its core mission, activities, and further support from Gatsby Charitable Foundation funding.

#### **BNA Events Ltd:**



For YE2024, total income was £10,001 and expenditure was £141,566. Loss (£131,565) was higher than the previous year due to transfer of funds from BNA Events to the BNA charity account as transfer of income from the BNA2023 Festival of Neuroscience.

Members voted to approve the annual accounts.  
Accounts approved.

**Item 3: Governance Updates from the President, Professor Tara Spires-Jones**

- a. Governance: Confirmation of elected Council and Committee members since previous Annual General Meeting (AGM) and thanks to outgoing members

Welcome to **Talitha Kerrigan** (*University of Exeter*), *Local Group Coordinator 2024-2028*.

Welcome to **Bethany Facer** (*University of Liverpool*), *Students & Early Careers Representative 2024-2028*

Thanks to **Richard Henson** (*University of Cambridge*) who has served on the BNA Council for 6 years as President-Elect, President and Past President.

- b. Proposed update to Articles of Association and BNA governance structure

The BNA has undertaken a comprehensive governance review to ensure its framework, culture, and decision-making processes are aligned with best practices and allow the Association to operate efficiently and confidently. The review has identified opportunities to streamline governance structures and improve overall effectiveness.

Following extensive external review, members were presented with proposed updates to the BNA Governance structure, and subsequent required changes to the BNA Articles of Association and BNA Rules. Full details were provided in advance to all members eligible to vote on 1 April 2025 via email, and can be found [here](#).

Members were asked to vote to approve changes to the Articles of Association.  
Changes approved.

**Item 4: Introducing the BNA's new leadership**

Tara Spires-Jones extended a welcome to the new BNA leadership team (2025-2027):

- President Elect: Julie Williams
- President: Narender Ramnani
- Past-President: Tara Spires-Jones

**Item 5: Any Other Business**

No AOB was raised.

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