

Ashlee Pearson

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Statement to support election to AAEE Committee

As a recent mechanical engineering graduate who is beginning a career in engineering education, I offer a unique and relevant perspective of two key demographics of AAEE – the PhD student and the “new to engaging with engineering education” academic.

My current research projects include enabling transferable skill development, and inclusion of diverse peoples in engineering. Both these areas of interest stem from personal experiences in the engineering education system and a passion to not only provide feedback on my educational experience, but actively work to improve on current approaches in teaching, leadership and policy.

I have pursued the opportunity to work on several reports in these areas. I co-authored a report for Engineers Australia on diversity in the engineering profession and was subsequently invited by the Dean of Engineering at RMIT to research and report on diversity in engineering at RMIT. My work as a lead engagement activity co-ordinator has shown my successful ability to manage projects, co-ordinate a team and liaise with external stakeholders. For my work in this area I was awarded the Monash University Vice-Chancellor’s Diversity and Inclusion Award. I currently hold a position on the RMIT Engineering HDR Student Representatives Committee which has seen me establish and maintain the committee’s social media presence, clearly communicating key events and information with my peers. I have also shown capability to communicate with various audience types having been interviewed for 9 News (short segment) and SBS The Feed (panellist). Additionally, I took the creative lead driving the marketing, branding and communications behind the successful inaugural RMIT HDR Industry Night on transferable skills for transition from PhD into the workforce. This also reflects my passion for finding novel ways for communication of key messages to support an enhanced student experience.

My commitment to capacity building and improving the quality and performance of engineering education was noted in 2016 with a Monash University Learning and Teaching Committee Student Recognition Prize. This propelled me to be a founding member of an early career educational research community of practice in Melbourne, who have planned and facilitated educational retreats around the scholarship of learning and teaching in engineering. Additionally, I have worked on projects in the educational space on the development of training and teaching materials, analysis of learning outcomes and learning management system use, as well as flipped classroom and peer evaluation implementation. I have been a private tutor for 8 years in mathematics, science and physics and have demonstrated design engineering in some capacity at universities for 3 years, extending this to also mentor design challenges like the EWB Monash Chapter Ideathon.

The passion to create meaningful impact and contribute to our community that initially drew me to engineering education is also the passion that motivates me in seeking this nomination. I am a driven individual determined to have an impact on engineering education in Australasia and I see myself having a valuable perspective at a committee level and the skills required to succeed particularly in communications and capacity building initiatives.

Thank you for considering this nomination.