

# APEN Activities Presentation APIRAS Workshop

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APEN Treasurer



# Australasia-Pacific Extension Network Ltd. (APEN)

- APEN: <https://www.apen.org.au/>
- Members are involved in:  
government & industry agencies, agribusiness, community & rural development, adult education, communication, private practice & educational institutions
- Current membership is approximately 480
- Members pay an annual fee: increase annually by 5%.



# APEN challenges (& opportunities)

- Politics & policy: lack understanding of extension best practice
  - short termism in politics & projects
  - top down approach
  - extension as add-on to R&D or better communication
- Production & natural resource management RD&E separated
  - leads to confusion & lack of trust of farmers
- Lack of trained professionals:
  - universities not teaching extension
  - people don't know what they are doing or recognise they are in extension game
  - often on short-term contracts.

# APEN strategic directions & activities

## ■ Influence:

- promote extension best practice – AIS
- e.g. Great Barrier Reef programs

## ■ Relevance:

- create value proposition for members, industry & government
- our activities attempt to address

## ■ Professionalism:

- strengthen capacity & professionalism
- Master classes, ExtensionChat, mentoring, professional membership

## ■ Organisation stability:

- good governance & financial base
- charge for services, but discounts for members

# APEN Conferences

## ■ Feb 2022 at Melbourne University

fully online

282 registrations

80 participant presentations

3 online Masterclasses with 68 participants

## ■ Nov 2023 in Launceston, Tasmania

currently in-person

### CONFERENCE SPONSORS



**APEN 2022**  
CONFERENCE

# Trainings

- Building Better Regions funding – 2022
  - ran Emerging leaders program
  - 20 participants
- ExtensionChat series 2022:
  - Skilling up for Virtual Extension
    - Capturing participants conversations, content, and data in online sessions
    - Bringing people together and connecting online
    - Effective use of online tools – the voices of experience!
  - 24 participants
  - Available online but at a cost.



# Webinars

- 5 webinars: recordings & pdfs available online
  - Mistakes I've made that others might avoid, what's working well and new opportunities for extension
  - Small group-based extension and the (overlooked) art of facilitation
  - The value of difference
  - Supporting extension officer development
  - Supporting farmers - a New Zealand perspective of extension
- Average 15 participants

# Mentoring scheme

- Runs for 8-9 months
  - On-line group induction session with program facilitator
  - 6 monthly mentoring sessions (as agreed with Mentor)
  - 4 x on-line group mini-training sessions with guest presenter and program facilitator
  - 1 x group on-line progress & 1 x group on-line end-of-program evaluation session
  - 2 x evaluation surveys (mid-term and end-of-program)
- A\$350 for members
- Last year 10 participants, was larger but organizations have begun their own schemes based on ours.

# Publications

## ■ ExtensionNet

- Quarterly newsletter
- Feature articles  $\approx$  1,000 words and minor articles  $\approx$  500
- Available online to members only

## ■ Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal

- Peer reviewed Research & Review articles
- Field Notes articles on field extension projects
- Available free online:

<http://www.apen.org.au/rural-extension-and-innovation-systems-journal>

# Other activities

- APEN Book Club for members
  - alternate months: 5 per year
  - online conversations about discussion papers
- Regional cluster events
- Monthly eBulletin
  - Messages, reports, trainings, webinars, events, readings, Board news, jobs, other news including national and international (GFRAS, APIRAS)
  - Sent via email to members (& GFRAs I think)\
- Social media:
  - LinkedIn, Facebook & Twitter

# Other membership benefits

- Excellence in Extension Awards
  - Open and Young extension categories
  - Announced yearly
- Professional Membership (APEN-PM)
  - Introduced in 2021
  - Recognises higher level of skills, knowledge and experience
  - Requires a formal vetting process
  - Higher cost.

# How APEN & APIRAS can work together

- Exchange presentation(s) on webinars
- Involvement of guest speaker at next conference
- Sharing articles: e.g readings, book club
- Share what our committees are working on
- Others associated with our activities?

