

International Small Islands Studies Association
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
June 29, 2024
Lombok, Indonesia

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am delighted to be writing this, my first ISISA President's Report, having accepted the presidency at our 2022 AGM in Zadar, Croatia. I am ISISA's fourth president, following in the footsteps of founding president Theo Hills (1994-1998), Grant McCall (1998-2014), and Godfrey Baldacchino (2014-22). I'm also pleased to report that this, the 19th Islands of the World Conference in beautiful Lombok, is being held on our 30th anniversary. Thank you and congratulations to all who have paved the way for us to be here today!

It has been a busy two years, with our Executive consisting of Vice-president Sarah Nimführ, Secretary Anna Baldacchino, Treasurer Andrew Jennings, Newsletter Editor Anica Čuka, Ordinary Members Adam Grydehøj, Rosemarie Azzopardi, and Ayano Genoza, and co-opted member Tomislav Oroz keeping our little boat afloat. Since 2022, Sarah has covered our social media accounts; Anna has kept us in minutes and updated our website and membership lists; Andrew has managed our accounts and stickhandled our bid for Charity Status; Anica has produced several comprehensive and inviting semi-annual newsletters; and Adam, Sarah, Anica, and Tomislav have worked tirelessly with the organizing committee who put together this year's outstanding conference led by Prof Luky Adrianto, Dean of the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences at Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia. I also want to personally thank ISISA member Bruce Potter for very generously paying for and keeping up the Listserv.

Achieving Charitable Status in Scotland was not an easy task, with oceans of paperwork involved, but thanks to Andrew's perseverance, we finally received our designation and are currently on the verge of gaining access to our PayPal account. As anyone who has tried to purchase an ISISA membership can attest, it's not been an easy subscription (through no fault of yours or ours!) – and we appreciate your dogged determination to join. It is currently possible to pay the \$20US annual fee, or the \$200US lifetime fee, via bank transfer by contacting Andrew directly. But by virtue of having attended Islands of the World XIX here in Indonesia, you are now a member for the next year.

Andrew also assisted in the bridging of *Island Studies Journal's* finances during the transitional period between editors-in-chief, from August 2022 to May 2023. ISISA's official journal is now in a financially stronger position than at any previous point in its history, and it continues to publish as a non-fee charging open access journal on a biannual basis. Adam will report on this more fully at our General Meeting.

After these past few years as Treasurer, Andrew has indicated his desire to step down from this noble role. But first he was able to convince Bobby MacAulay, from University of the Highlands

and Islands in Perth, to finish out Andrew's term as Treasurer. Thank you, Andrew, for your amazing service, and thank you, Bobby, for saying yes!

It has also been a difficult two years, having lost our second president, Grant McCall, on July 22, 2023. Following his passing, messages poured in from around the globe, testimony to the impact he had on our burgeoning discipline and organization. Our world of islands is brighter for him having been in it and we miss him. Please head to our website to find the amazing [tributes](#) you sent and a glimpse of the legacy he has left.

Over the past two years we have seen a significant increase in the number of organizations devoted to the study of islands worldwide, as well as in conference and publishing activity. In Godfrey's 2022 President's Report, he mentioned our collaborations with "like-minded organizations" such as GLISPA, the Global Islands Partnership, and Island Innovation. Although I'm bound to miss more than I could possibly mention, I will single out a few here with which I've been personally involved. Godfrey and I and other ISISA members have been part of the resurrection of RETI, the Research Excellence Network of Island Universities, spearheaded by colleagues at the University of Corsica. Godfrey and I are also on the advisory board of the Archipelago Institute at Åbo Akademi University (ÅAU), Finland, and Anica Čuka and I were invited to be keynote speakers at the 1st Swedish conference for island research on Holmön Island, Sweden, last fall. In fall of 2022 I was invited to speak virtually about Island Studies to TalTech Kuressaare College in Saaremaa, Estonia. Here in Indonesia, I spoke virtually at the Archipelagic and Island States Forum last September. Andrew Jennings and I spearheaded the creation of the Northern and Arctic Islands Studies Thematic Research Network of the University of the Arctic through which we hope to collaborate on research projects, as well as continue our successful "Yarns and Yarns" virtual knitting and storytelling series. The 1st International Islands Water Congress will take place in the Faroe Islands this coming September, and the University Centre of the Westfjords, in partnership with the University of Iceland and the Árni Magnússon Institute, will host its first conference on islands and remote communities in early October. And in addition to the Virtual Island Summit, Island Innovation has launched a series of in-person Global Sustainable Island Summits on Madeira and my home island, Prince Edward Island. And this is just the proverbial tip of the iceberg – there are so many more!

All this to say that Island Studies is alive and well in all corners of the globe, with several "new kids on the block" stepping up to the plate. It is my wish that ISISA continue to play an important role in bringing these groups of researchers, policymakers, and community and industry stakeholders together through our conferences and various communications tools. Together we are unstoppable.

On the academic front, in addition to Island Studies graduate programs at the University of Malta, the University of Prince Edward Island, and the University of the Highlands and Islands, four universities – University of Groningen, the University of the Aegean, the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, and the University of Iceland – have joined together to offer the Islands and Sustainability (ISLANDS) Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree Programme. We look forward to seeing more scholars than ever before thinking and doing with islands.

Finally, it is a testament to the popularity of Island Studies and ISISA that we received an unprecedented FIVE bids to host our 2026 conference! We are pleased to announce at our meeting the hosts and locations of our 2026 conference – as well as three more, in 2027, 2028, and 2029. Stay tuned for further announcements on our website, newsletter, and social media platforms.

To wrap things up, we overlooked one very important detail at the 2022 General Meeting, and that was to nominate Godfrey Baldacchino as an Honorary Life Member, joining Dr. Peter Meincke, the late Dr. Grant McCall, and Dr. Huei-Min Tsai in sharing this special designation. Through this award, we celebrate members who provide exemplary service to the organization. As noted on our website, “The designation is extended to deserving individuals who, in the eyes of the ISISA Executive, have made a significant and notable contribution to island studies scholarship, policy, and/or practice.” I know you will agree with me that Godfrey has done this – and more – through his teaching and writing, his leadership and mentorship, and his embodiment of the spirit of Island Studies. I can’t think of anyone more deserving than this award. With this I would move that the membership ratify the Executive’s awarding of the Honorary Lifetime Membership to Dr. Godfrey Baldacchino. Congratulations, Godfrey!

Thank you again to for entrusting this organization to me and the Executive. We will continue to do our utmost to serve you well in a collegial and respectful environment. A huge thank you goes to Prof Luky and his team who have gone above and beyond in providing us with a stellar conference experience. We are so pleased to bring ISISA to the world’s largest archipelago where we are reminded of our islandness everywhere we go. And a final thank you to all conference-goers who paid their ISISA membership! Like it or not, you are now part of our Island Studies family!

Sincerely,

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PS

One final plea: please consider taking out an ISISA lifetime membership. At \$200 US, the cost is equivalent to ten years of membership fees: as Godfrey pointed out, this is good value for money for anyone planning to live more than ten years from now! And it all goes to support scholarships for students attending our conferences.