

Meet the Team

Biennium 2022-2024

President—Christine Johnstone



A new biennium and how proud I am to be leading the Federation in this biennium of transition as we embrace the changes, of a new federation name, constitution, directors and structure.

I have been a member of SI Beenleigh for 29 years, working with wonderful women to bring about positive change to our community.

My professional background is in the ICT Industry, providing me with skills such as project management and business analyst, skills which have been transferable to my Soroptimist life.

I am married to Ron and we have 3 daughters who are married to wonderful husbands and 6 grandchildren who fill our lives with joy every day. The grandchildren keep us connected to this new 21st century, no time to grow old. I look forward to this biennium, and hopefully a post covid normal where with precautions I can get out and visit the clubs and their projects.

President Elect—Joanne Yeoh



I have been an active Soroptimist since 1998, having served as President of the Soroptimist International Region of Malaysia, President of my club Soroptimist International Club of Damansara (SI Damansara) and National Representative of Malaysia at the Federation of the South West Pacific, Local Co-Chair of Logistics and Operations of the Soroptimist International Convention KL 2019 and was a member of the Federation Programme and Membership teams.

Joanne is not afraid of challenges and is willing to give a try when she believes in the cause. She is passionate about education and is a trainer for some of the education projects at her club and region level.

She believes in teamwork and together, teams can do so much more.



OUR VOICE
for Change

2022 - 2024

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Special points of interest

- Soroptimist International South East Asia Pacific has 13 countries in the Federation and 129 clubs consisting of 2,189 members.
- Soroptimist International South East Asia Pacific is a public listed company limited by guarantee

Carolyn Hudson — Company Secretary



I am the company secretary of SISEAP, a role which I have held for the last two and a bit years.

This coming July I will celebrate my 40th anniversary as a Soroptimist and during this time I have held many roles in our federation, including Federation President, and in Soroptimist International.

I have seen many changes including a new constitution under the banner of “Towards 2020” and the incorporation of our federation as a public company limited by guarantee.

Now we have yet another new constitution which, together with the restructuring which I have been involved with during the last biennium, I believe gives us the chance of a new direction and purpose.

For the first time we have directors who have been able to apply for the position because they want to be involved in the governance of our company, not because they have been elected to a position which they wanted and just had to be directors as well. These new directors are qualified in governance and associated fields and should bring a level of competence to our board.

I look forward to working with the incoming team to settle the new structure into place.

Chair of the Programme
Committee -

Donnell Davis.

Members of the committee
are:

Asst Programme Convenor
1—Cesarina Gigante

Asst Programme Convenor
2—Saradah Narayanan

Programme Convenors
Zone 1—Anne Allen

Zone 2—Nooraini Binti
Mohd Yasin

Zone 3—Rhonda

McCormack

Zone 4— Pauline Glover

Dr Donnell Davis—Programme Convenor and Director



Originally from tropical Far North Queensland, my basic rural upbringing made me appreciate the opportunities that came my way for study and work options for girls. I was so fortunate to have a strong mother who expected us to be self-sufficient and pave our own path, in a time that affirmative action was introduced in Australia. I worked from age 15, gained senior at night school and early entry to university by correspondence. I married young. My work encouraged women to take professional direction which allowed me to accelerate my career, even though I was a single mother of two at age 24. Armed with my first degree in Business (Audit) and useful work experience, I relocated for better opportunities for my kids

and myself.

As a professional, I was given challenging assignments which were also rewarding. I was supported to continue study (Masters Environmental Management) and introduce reforms for sustainable development portfolios, in central agencies and in intergovernmental relations. Retiring early to consult, lecture, undertake masterclasses for diverse professional bodies, volunteer for charities, I finally gained a Doctorate of Professional Studies that captured my life’s work putting ‘policy into practice’. I worked with UN Habitat, and Commonwealth Human Ecology Council for two decades while undertaking roles reinventing regional governance and interdisciplinary professional bodies. I worked and played in 48 countries, and learned much about different cultures.

Back in Australia, I was elected as President United Nations Association Australia (Queensland) and National Director for UNAA for several terms, advocating Sustainable Development Goals. More than ever our Region deserves better governance, and I believe Women set the example of efficiency and ethos for a better future

Sue Latta—Federation Secretary



I grew up on the South Coast of NSW before moving to Goulburn, NSW. From an early age I learnt to give back to the local community and others through my service with the Girl Guide and Scout organisations and later through my involvement with NSW Rural Fire Service & State Emergency Services.

I have been an active member of SI Goulburn since 2007 and have held various positions at club, NSW region, and federation levels.

The federation secretary role is one I know and love and have done before. The secretary role suits me very well, as I like to organise things and people and I am always willing to help and assist.

In 2014 I married Greg, who has travelled with me on my federation journey, even attending the Conference of Clubs in Kuching as part of our honeymoon. Without his love, support and understanding I couldn't do any of my soroptimist roles or attend as many meetings or run the webinars that I do

I am looking forward to the new biennium to consolidate all the hard work that we have done in bringing in the new constitution and restructuring of the federation.

I reminded of one of my favourite quotes from Sir Richard Branson "If someone offers you an amazing opportunity but you are not sure you can do it, Say YES, then learn how to do it later".

13 Countries in the Federation

- Australia
- Cambodia
- Fiji
- Hong Kong
- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Mongolia
- Myanmar
- New Zealand
- Papua New Guinea
- Singapore
- Samoa
- Thailand

Membership Team

Membership Convenor—Yvonne Simpson, chair of the Membership committee.

Asst Membership Asia—Joyce Lim

Asst Membership Australia—Elizabeth Butson

Asst Membership New Zealand & Pacific - Veena Sharma

Friendship Link Convenor—Zareena Bi

Yvonne Simpson QSM—Membership Convenor



I have been an active Soroptimist since 1996 and held leadership positions at club, region, national, federation and international levels. It has been a challenging and stimulating journey culminating in the international presidency for SI (2015 - 2017) and being awarded the Queen's Service Medal for services to women in 2015. One highlight was the SI President's Appeal, Educate To Lead Nepal, which has benefitted over 7000 Nepalese women and girls, through education, skills development, trauma counselling, and leadership training to recover from the devastating earthquakes in Nepal in 2015.

Membership Development has been a natural point of connection. I have been privileged to be empowered to reach towards my potential through education and would be delighted to see that opportunity available for others. The role of Membership Convenor (2020 - 2024) will assist me realise that dream. Leadership training and opening the door to membership by younger women are two main foci.

I am looking forward to the new biennium to build on, and consolidate the successes we have achieved to date. We can only do this as a team - as we work together. There are exciting opportunities and I am keen to embrace them. .

Finance

Helena Cheah — Finance Convenor



I am Helena Cheah from SI Bangsar, Malaysia. I joined Soroptimist International Bangsar as a charter member in October 1992 ie have been a Soroptimist for 30 years. I have 2 grown up sons with 2 cute grandchildren and 2 very loving 4-legged children (dogs -Shih Tze, Max & Ruby). I lost my husband to Covid-19 a year ago, on 14th of May 2021. Thank you to my Soroptimist sisters who have helped me throughout this difficult period.

I am a qualified marketeer, a member of CIM.UK and a professional trainer leading a team of managers and staff, and a human resource manager in my present company. I am a people person; hence I love meeting people and have a passion in driving with a good sense of directions (my friends said that I was a taxi driver in my past life).

As a Soroptimist, I have always been an active member, holding various positions such as President, Treasurer, Extension Convenor in Club and Region level. I was also part of the organizing committee in SI Convention Kuala Lumpur 2019 as a local Treasurer. In SISWP, I served as the Treasurer for 4 years (2018 – 2022) and am the newly elected Finance Convenor.

Lastly, I believe in punctuality and will deliver what is required of me.

Finance Committee

Helena Cheah - Chair

Treasurer—Wendy Evans

Wendy Evans—Treasurer and Director

Hello, my name is Wendy Evans. I live in Tasmania, the island state. I am a member of Soroptimist International of Hobart and have been an active member since joining SI Devonport in 1999 before moving to Hobart in 2000 with my work. I continue to work full time at St Michael's Collegiate, the largest private girl's school in Hobart.

I have chosen to contribute to my community: I spent 30+ years supporting and giving time to hockey in Tasmania as a player, umpire, coach and administrator; I also volunteer with A Fairer World, a social justice hub.

Outside of work I enjoy being in my garden, spending time with my family and nine-year grandson and travelling.

As the incoming Treasurer for the Federation, I hope to use my financial and accounting skills and experience gained working in both for profit and not for profit businesses as a senior manager for over 30 years, to support the Federation team and HQ.



Oriana Titisara —Communication Convenor



Hello, my name is Oriana Titisari, and I will take on the communications role for the new Biennium.

I am an introvert at heart and an extrovert by demand. I am hoping my 20 years of professional experience as a journalist, an editor, a public relations, and a corporate communication practitioner will help me in this new role.

Although my time as a Soroptimist is quite short, my Soroptimist sisters at SI Jakarta have been a great support and mentor of the Soroptimist spirit! Thus, I am excited to learn from my predecessor and work alongside the brilliant officers under President Christine Johnstone.

I hope to be able to connect with all the clubs and hear fresh ideas or incorporate local pride into the communication assets of the federation. As the world is opening itself after the Covid-19 pandemic, I plan to assist clubs in starting new projects that will be aligned with the federation’s vision and mission for the new Biennium. My role will be of service to all the clubs, and I am looking forward to communicating with you all.

Suman Lal—Immediate Past President



Suman currently owns a family business engaged in General Medical Services. She studied and graduated with Civil Law and Special Education-Disabilities and was a Bank Officer Executive for 30 years. During her career in banking she was able to explore many aspects of business especially establishing rapport, marketing and conversion and risk management.

Suman has been a member of SI Sigatoka Club since 1995 and has held positions including Club Secretary, Treasurer and President. At a Region level she has held positions of President and Treasurer, Constitution, Public Relations, Extension and Training Convenor. She was associated with the SI Region of Fiji for 15 years continuously, ensuring smooth operation and continuity of the organisation.

Suman has held the positions of President and Program of Service/UN Liaison at a Federation level and has been National Representative of Fiji twice.

Communications
Convenor Oriana Titisara
is chair of the
communications
committee.

Communications
Committee members are:

HQ staff

President

Programme Convenor

Membership Convenor

Friendship Link Convenor

Directors

The directors of the company consist of:

President—Christine Johnstone

IPP—Suman Lal (for 1st year of the biennium)

President Elect Joanne Yeoh for 2nd year of the biennium

The other directors are elected from the financial members of SISEAP

Sonia Casanova

Donnell Davis

Wendy Evans

Theresa Lyford

Anthea Penny

Sonia Casanova —Director

When I became a Soroptimist, my motivations were straightforward – help other women and campaign for gender equity. I imagined that it would be a useful way to give something back to my community. Clearly, I had no concept of just how much I would receive in return.

Fast forward twelve years, and I'm thrilled to have recently been elected a director of SISEAP. The separation of 'Company' business from 'Soroptimist' business is vital for the growth and future sustainability of our wonderful organisation. It enables members to focus more clearly on the specific role for which they have volunteered, and this will help us achieve more.

2022 is an unusual year for my family; we are living in northern Italy. It's a remarkable opportunity and each day brings a new experience. I'm convinced that this year will be unforgettable for us all.

Tonight, our after dinner conversation turned to diversity, and we had

a dynamic discussion about merit vs. quotas. Our 14-year-old son received a crash course in unconscious bias. While he is emerging from his childhood bubble with a strong social conscience, I think he was nevertheless surprised to hear that the world is not equal for women.

The work of Soroptimists is not yet done. Through my role as a director, my goal is help make our organisation stronger and realise our vision.



Theresa Lyford—Director



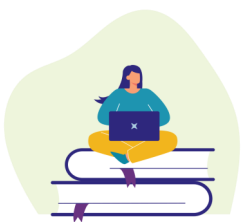
I am Theresa Lyford, Past SISWP Federation President and incoming Director for the new Board of SISEAP. I am looking forward to being part of this exciting new chapter of our Federation as we embrace our new name and our new President and her team for 2022-2024.

I look forward to contributing to our Federation's strategic priorities and being part of the reimagining as to how we will grow and prosper as Soroptimists in the South East Asia Pacific region.

Anthea Penny—Director

Thank you most sincerely for your support and encouragement to use skills developed in my career that have led me to this position in Soroptimism. My skill set involves working internationally in: leadership development, governance, strategic planning and leading change. I have been able to find a use for these skills locally, where I am a Club President, nationally as part of a New Zealand national membership team that developed a strategic plan for the way forward and as a facilitator of a national leadership development programme, piloted last year and being offered again this year.

My involvement in Soroptimism is underpinned by the wonderful women that I meet and the strength and depth of the mission and values that the international organisation stands for and lives by. We are living in a time of worldwide change and I look forward to working alongside our Federation President and Board members to adapt and build on what we have achieved to date. There is an opportunity for us all through a new constitution, by-laws and structure to embrace a renewed perspective within our international Federation that continues to value diversity and our cultural heritage while fulfilling our mission



Education



Enterprise



Equity



Economic



Environment

Our Voice for Change—Use your voice to amplify your actions to change the lives of more women and girls world wide.



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Soroptimist International South East Asia Pacific

