I've just gotten back to Melbourne after spending a few days on the Gold Coast for the [39th Annual Scientific Meeting](http://www.dcconferences.com.au/aps2019/) (ASM) of the [Australian Pain Society](https://www.apsoc.org.au/) (APS), which was nothing short of a resounding success. Before I get into my recap, I need to congratulate the Local Organising Committee – Chaired by [Dr Daniel Harvie](https://experts.griffith.edu.au/academic/d.harvie) – as well as Tracy Hallen, Vanessa Lane, and the rest of the team at [DC Conferences](https://www.dcconferences.com.au/) for putting on such a fantastic event.

APS2019 featured a great line up of international speakers, including \*\*Professor Beth Darnell\*\* (Department of Anesthesiology, Stanford University), \*\*Dr Nanna Finnerup\*\* (Department of Clinical Medicine, Aarhus University, Denmark), and \*\*Professor Tor Wager\*\* (Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience laboratory, University of Colorado). The seven national speakers were equally impressive, featuring:

+ Associate Professor Ben Colagiuri (University of Sydney)

+ Professor Clare Collins (University of Newcastle)

+ Dr Melissa Day (The University of Queensland)

+ Associate Professor Michael Farrell (Monash University)

+ Associate Professor Julia Hush (Macquarie University)

+ Ms Jenni Johnson (NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation)

+ Professor Glenn King (The University of Queensland)

Sunday summary – pre-conference workshops and welcome reception

\*\*Sunday\*\*

It was an early start on Sunday, with pre-conference workshops running from 8.30 in the morning. I attended the \*\*Basic Pain Research workshop\*\*, where seven speakers gave insightful presentations into their work. Of particular interest were [Dr Christine Barry]() from the Centre for Neuroscience at Flinders University, Adelaide, and Preet Makker, a MD and PhD Candidate from the University of New South Wales. Dr Barry presented research on a new mouse model of [vulvodynia]( <https://www.thewomens.org.au/health-information/vulva-vagina/vulva-vagina-problems/vulvodynia>) that her team has been developing. <More on Preet talk>.

After having some time to relax in the afternoon, it was time for the \*\*Welcome Reception\*\*—the first social function of the ASM—on the Sunday night. The Welcome Reception always provides a great opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues in a relaxed environment. It also provides an opportunity to put faces to names—or in my case, Twitter handles—as I met [Marg Vandemost](<https://twitter.com/margvdmost>), a local psychologist and researcher, and had a brief chat with [Dr Owen Williamson](<https://twitter.com/DrODWilliamson>), a pain physician and ski tragic who is based in British Columbia.

Monday summary – trainee session

\*\*Monday\*\*

Following a Welcome to Country from Aunty Robyn xxxxx, Beth Darnall xxxxxxxxxxxxx.

New initiative - IASP Global year talk

The \*\*early career researcher session\*\* organised by Tasha Stanton was well attended, as usual. Keynote speakers Glenn King, Beth Darnall, Tor Wager, and Nanna Finnerup sat with students and trainees and had their brains picked in an informal setting. Personally, I always enjoy these kinds of events as I feel like I walk away with at least one new perspective or idea to think about. These sessions also allow you to meet other people who are going through similar parts of a research journey. I met [Megan McPhee](<https://twitter.com/MegasaurusPheet>), an Australian currently completing her PhD in Denmark and had a great chat about setting up a personal website using R.

Tuesday summary – Beach yoga, Gala dinner

One of the most anticipated events of any APS conference is the \*\*Gala Dinner\*\* – and it never fails to disappoint. This year that Gala Dinner was held at stunning HOTA – pronounced Hoe-ta – the stunning [Home of the Arts](https://hota.com.au/). [Take picture at the gala dinner to add to post]

Wednesday summary – to write.

Mention APS rising star - link to previous talk with Flavia

It was great to see so many conference attendees using social media to connect and disseminate everything that was going on. [Comment about someone else who was v prominent throughout conference]. Make sure you check out [#AusPainSoc]( https://twitter.com/search?q=%23AusPainSoc&src=tyah) to see all of the best tweets from the ASM!

[Closing statement]. Hope to see everyone in Hobart next year so we can do it all again!