

Julian Wagner Memorial Fund Inc.

Strategic Plan for 2023-2024

Developed on 10 December 2016

Reviewed on:
10 August 2023

Background

The Association was established in 2016 for the charitable purpose of promoting or protecting human rights for the public benefit to perpetuate the memory of Julian David Wagner, barrister, musician and passionate supporter of humanitarian and social justice. Our major focus is on education, human rights and promoting or opposing changes to law, policies or practices.

We will advance education, including by:

- a) promoting education for the community as a whole about capital punishment; and
- b) providing opportunities for Australians to volunteer in overseas capital defense offices.

We will advance human rights, including by:

- (a) providing effective representation and humanitarian aid to individuals facing the death penalty; and
- (b) promoting human rights generally.

We will promote or oppose changes to law, policy or practices, including by:

- (a) providing public policy advocacy opposing capital punishment;
- (b) raising awareness of capital punishment; and
- (c) supporting ongoing and strategic anti-death penalty campaigns.

Vision

The Julian Wagner Memorial Fund is committed to worldwide abolition of the death penalty through public education, working with like-minded NGO's, including the Capital Punishment Justice Project (CPJP) and Australians Against Capital Punishment (AACP), providing opportunities for Australians to gain experience in defending individuals facing the death penalty and supporting ongoing and strategic anti-death penalty campaigns.

According to the Amnesty International Global Report on Death Sentences and Executions 2022, research revealed a spike in the number of people known to have been executed worldwide in the 2022 calendar year, including a significant increase in executions for drug-related offences. This negative trend contrasts with a countervailing positive tendency, that a substantial number of countries have taken decisive steps away from the death penalty during this period.

Known executions, excluding the thousands believed to have taken place in China, which remained the World's leading executioner, increased by 53% on those in 2021, from 579(2021) to 883(2022). The executions recorded in 2022 were the highest since 2017(993). Secrecy and restrictive state practices continued to impair an accurate assessment of the use of the death penalty in several countries, including China, North Korea and Vietnam.

The sharp increase in known executions in 2022 was mainly due to the significant increase recorded in the Middle East and North Africa region, where known executions went up by 59% from 520 (2021) to 825 (2022). This constituted 93% of known global executions (excluding China). Of these 825 executions, 94% were carried out in Iran (70%) and Saudi Arabia (24%), two countries that routinely execute people after unfair trials. In Iran recorded executions increased by 83% to 576 from 314 recorded the previous year. In Saudi Arabia, recorded executions tripled from 65(2021) to 196 (2022), the highest number Amnesty International has recorded in the country in 30 years.

Four countries, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Singapore, executed people for drug-related offences in violation of international human rights law which prohibits the use of the death penalty for crimes that do not meet the threshold of “most serious crimes” (that is, crimes that involve intentional killing). At the end of 2022, 325 executions were recorded for drug-related offences. The number more than doubled the 134 executions recorded for the crime in 2021, and represented 37% of known global executions in 2022. Of the 325 confirmed executions, 255 were recorded in Iran- where drug-related offences accounted for 44% of known executions carried out in 2022; 57 were recorded in Saudi Arabia where the moratorium on executions for drug-related offences, which the Saudi Human Rights Commission had said was put in place in 2020, ended in 2022; and 11 were recorded in Singapore- where executions resumed in 2022 and all executions in the year were for drug-related offences (and all 5 mandatory new death sentences also related to this). Amnesty International confirmed executions were carried out for drug-related offences in China but had insufficient information to record a credible minimum figure. The escalation of the use of the death penalty for drug-related offences is a violation of the right to life, undermines international human rights law and constitutes a threat to the global progress made against the death penalty.

Notwithstanding this, significant progress against the death penalty was made in 2022, demonstrating the world continued to move away from it, and only a minority of countries actively used the punishment.

Six countries abolished the death penalty either in full or partially in 2022.

Four countries - Kazakhstan, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic abolished the death penalty for all crimes. Papua New Guinea became the 21st country in the Asia-Pacific region to do this.

By the end of 2022, two countries - Equatorial Guinea and Zambia - had abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes only, with the death penalty remaining in their military laws.

Since 1977, when only 16 countries had abolished the death penalty for all crimes, at the end of 2022, 112 countries were abolitionist for all crimes and 9 were abolitionist for ordinary crimes only.

Furthermore, Kazakhstan became a state party to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. Gambia, Maldives and Sri Lanka continued to observe moratoriums on executions. In Asia, the Authorities in Malaysia took steps towards reforming the mandatory death penalty, with the Abolition of Mandatory Death Penalty Act 2023

coming into effect on July 4 to remove the death penalty as a mandatory punishment for 11 capital offences; and the Indonesian Parliament adopted a new Criminal Code that, once effective in 2026, would allow for commutation of death sentences after 10 years if certain conditions are met. In the Sub-Saharan Africa region, legislative steps towards the abolition of the death penalty have been taken, in Liberia and Ghana.

In December 2022, at the plenary session of the UN General Assembly, 125 UN member states voted to adopt the ninth resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. Support for the resolution increased since it was last adopted in December 2020, an indication that the community of UN member states is steadily moving closer to rejecting the death penalty as a lawful punishment under international human rights law. Ghana, Liberia and Myanmar voted in favour after abstaining in 2020; Uganda changed its vote to in favour; and Papua New Guinea changed from against to abstention. Palau and Solomon Islands voted in favour after not voting at the plenary in 2020.

In the USA, as the restrictions put in place in response to the Covid-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021 waned, the number of recorded death sentences and executions showed an increase. Executions carried out there in 2022 (18) increased by 64% on the 2021 total (11). Despite this the 2022 total remained the lowest recorded since 1991.

While new death sentences imposed by USA courts slightly increased compared to previous years, rising from 18 in both 2021 and 2022 to 21 in 2022, this is the second lowest figure since executions were reintroduced under revised laws.

To date 13 people have been executed in the USA in 2023. The Florida Governor has signed a Bill allowing an 8-4 vote of the jury to sentence a person to death, becoming the State with the lowest threshold for imposing the death penalty.

In the Asia-Pacific region, during 2022 Singapore executed people for the first time since 2019. It has executed 16 people since March 2022, including the first woman executed in almost 20 years. In all cases those executed had been found guilty of drug trafficking.

Although the global trend remains unmistakably in favour of abolition, the recorded increases are warning that it is not yet time to reduce the pressure.

We are committed to promoting Australia as a strong opponent of the death penalty in the Asia Pacific area and worldwide while working for the abolition of capital punishment.

Mission

Our mission is to raise awareness in Australia of capital punishment through community engagement and providing public advocacy in opposition to the death penalty.

Our aim is to provide funds as financial assistance through bursaries to Australians seeking to gain experience by volunteering in overseas capital defense offices.

Marketing and Communication Plan

Our Networks and audience	What do they need to hear from us?	What is the best way to find and communicate with them?	When will we communicate with them? How often?	How will we know if they have heard our message?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association Members • Legal Firms • Amnesty International • Other coalition partners • Australian public 	<p>Feedback has shown a strong need for people to support and inform their opposition to capital punishment. We can provide a financial avenue to directly assist at the grassroots level of advocacy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through member networks • Advertising through local media • Promotional events and fundraisers • Public forums • Our website • Social Media • School talks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly through social media and by updating our website. • Annual awareness and fund-raising event and other fund raising and information initiatives • With membership subscription correspondence • Email member updates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of online followers • Membership will increase • Increase in funds raised • Increase in applications for bursaries • Increase in Australian opposition to the death penalty

Objectives and Priorities

Objective	What will be done	When
Increase online followers	Engage help to improve online presence. Maintain and update a website, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts	By 30/06/24
Collect annual membership fees	Send membership forms	By 30/06/24
Actively seeking donations	Contact networks and promote Assoc.	By 04/03/24
Continue actively fund raising	Hold various events	By 30/06/24
Promote applications for bursaries	Through Capital Punishment Justice Project (CPJP) and link to CPJP volunteer program on our website	By 30/06/24
Build links with like-minded organisations nationally and worldwide	Contact networks and promote Assoc.	By 30/06/24

Objective	What will be done	When

Operating Budget - Estimated Operating Budget Worksheet 2023-2024

		<i>Estimated Amount</i>
<i>Expected Income</i>		
<i>Membership Fees</i>		<i>\$ 1,000.00</i>
<i>Donations</i>		<i>\$ 4,000.00</i>
<i>Fundraising</i>		<i>\$ 5,000.00</i>
<i>Legacies</i>		
<i>Interest</i>		
<i>Other income</i>		
	<i>TOTAL INCOME:</i>	<i>\$ 10,000.00</i>
<i>Expected Expenditure</i>		
<i>Staffing Costs</i>		<i>\$ 0.00</i>
<i>Office running costs (rent, etc.)</i>		<i>\$ 0.00</i>
<i>Supplies</i>		<i>\$ 0.00</i>
<i>Marketing</i>		<i>\$ 0.00</i>
<i>Event associated cost</i>		<i>\$ 600.00</i>
<i>Insurance</i>		<i>\$ 800.00</i>
<i>Administration</i>		<i>\$ 700.00</i>
	<i>SUB TOTAL:</i>	<i>\$ 2,100.00</i>
<i>Programs/Project Costs</i>		
<i>Association costs</i>		<i>\$ 0.00</i>
<i>Bursaries</i>		<i>\$ 9,000.00</i>
	<i>SUB TOTAL:</i>	<i>\$ 9,000.00</i>
	<i>TOTAL EXPENDITURE:</i>	<i>\$ 11,100.00</i>

TOTAL Profit/Loss:		(\$ 1,100.00)

Note: As at 30 June 2023 the Association had \$12,689 in its bank account and no outstanding liabilities.

Risks and Opportunities

SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A clear purpose with a measurable outcome ● Committed and dedicated members ● Strong legal networks and reach ● Little to no overhead cost, e.g., rent and staff costs ● Australia has a strong voice in the Asia Pacific area and governmental support in opposing capital punishment ● Access to pro bono professional services 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not yet registered as a tax-deductible charity which will reduce donation potential ● Reliance on busy volunteers to complete tasks
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Worldwide trend of decline in capital punishment ● Topical subject with heightened awareness due to events in 2015 and 2020 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scare factors such as terrorism influencing public opinion ● Economic downturn, competition by other campaigns affecting donation outcome and uptake of bursaries.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong alliances with CPJP, Amnesty International, ALHR, AACP, World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, ADPAN and other regional human rights networks ● Opportunities for domestic and international coalition building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Many death penalty countries, for example China continue to hide their use of the death penalty by restricting access to death penalty related information.
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Success Measures

<i>Measures of Success:</i>	<i>When this will be measured:</i>
Online followers	At each committee meeting
Number of bursaries provided	30/06/24
Total financial assistance given	30/06/24

Management Plan

This Strategic Plan will be reviewed after each AGM and updated or modified as necessary.