

University of Melbourne Student Union



Meeting of the Students' Council

Annual Reports 2021

Meeting 18(21)

President	Jack Buksh	<i>Submitted</i>
General Secretary	Allen Xiao	<i>Submitted</i>
Activities		
	Phoebe Chen	<i>Not Submitted</i>
Clubs and Societies	Kalyana Vania	<i>Submitted</i>
	Muskaan Hakhu	<i>Submitted</i>
Creative Arts	Vaishnavi Ravikrishna	<i>Late</i>
	Merryn Hughes	<i>Late</i>
Disabilities	Lindsay Tupper-Creed	<i>Not Submitted</i>
	Brigit Doyle	<i>Submitted</i>
Education (Academic Affairs)	Jennisha Arnanta	<i>Late</i>
	Planning Jay Vynn Saw	<i>Late</i>
Education (Public Affairs)	Hannah Krasovec	<i>Submitted</i>
	Tejas Gandhi	<i>Not Submitted</i>
Environment	Lynne Bian	<i>Submitted</i>
	Disha Zutshi	<i>Submitted</i>
Indigenous	Shanysa McConville	<i>Submitted</i>
Media	Lauren Berry	<i>Submitted</i>
	Ailish Hallinan	<i>Submitted</i>
	Pavani Ambagahawattha	<i>Not Submitted</i>
People of Colour	Mohamed Hadi	<i>Submitted</i>
	Emily AlRamadhan	<i>Submitted</i>
Queer	Amy Bright	<i>Submitted</i>
	Laura Ehrensperger	<i>Submitted</i>
Welfare	Hue Man Dang	<i>Submitted</i>
Women's	Srishti Chatterjee	<i>Submitted</i>
	Mickhaella Ermita	<i>Late</i>
Southbank	Leyla Moxham	<i>Submitted</i>
	Jamie Kim	<i>Submitted</i>
Burnley	Kaitlyn Hammond	<i>Submitted</i>

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Jack Buksh**

**President**

I'm not going to give a step by step recollection of everything that has happened over the past year – you've all read my regular office bearer reports. There are some things I want to pull out however, and make recommendations on for future Presidents. There's probably things I've forgotten!

## **The University**

### **New Student Precinct**

It has been interesting watching the New Student Precinct evolve broadly over the last two years but even within the last twelve months. As the project moved (and continues to shift) from the design and construction phase into an operation phase for 2022 as the precinct is complete.

I began the year on the New Student Precinct Steering Committee with very few decisions left to make that would impact UMSU directly. The overarching decisions – especially around design and construction – were done and dusted – and the main decisions left were involving precinct operations and governance.

Alas, this came to a quick halt early on when the University informed about their Value Management process. And by informed, well, that's a big term. In the beginning, UMSU was not consulted on the value management. It was circulated to the Steering Committee, on the agenda with a long list of cost savings that were required across the precinct, with a large number of these having a significant impact on the organisation and our day to day operations post relocation.

A decision on this was pushed back, and it was after then that the University met with us to discuss their proposed changes in full. The plans we were presented with were a significant change in the plans previously agreed to. Mind you, plans that had spent years and years being discussed between UMSU and the University.

This will be a theme across this report and you'll hear me touch on it a lot – but there has been a definite change in the way in which the University (especially Chancellery) engages with UMSU. In hindsight, the value management process was a sign of things to come – not just on the New Student Precinct, but across the board.

The value management was resolved. The project achieved the cost savings it needed to, and there were no significant impacts on UMSU. Many of the savings came from non-essential items, on items like

technology, tiling, wood and other décor items. Yes, these may change some of the visual aspects of the buildings, but our operations can continue as they were.

This lack of consultation on major issues continued. Another of note was the Precinct Charter. A document that directly impacts the ongoing involvement of UMSU in the operations of the Precinct when it opens, yet not a shred of conversation with us before it came to Steering Committee. The University argued that the document coming to Steering Committee was consultation.

Alex Kennedy – Project Director of the New Student Precinct for the first half of the year organised fortnightly catchups to discuss the project in between Steering Committee meetings. The very nature of Steering Committee is that it is an approval body, not one that can be a body of consultation. When Alex finished up at the University, these regular catch-ups finished as well. I **recommend** that the incoming UMSU President establish similar regular catch-ups with key project members.

The opening of the precinct is becoming closer by the day, and while COVID-19 lockdowns have had significant impacts on the timeline, UMSU should be in the new precinct by Semester 2. Enjoy the new digs!

### **Academic Board**

Academic Board is a regular meeting for the President and an Education Academic representative so I don't have any specific recommendations.

The issues with Academic Board stem from the University. It is a difficult body to achieve anything on, and the student representation is stemmed down to simply five votes. The University forgets that student representatives (on Academic Board or any committee for that matter) are not just a vote, but rather they do represent all students.

The joy of the year started (as usual) with Special Consideration changes from the University. We opened up for students to write in with their experiences, and how the changes will impact them – these stories were shared. Indeed, UMSU along with the GSA argued strongly against the changes. Yet, the University reduced this down to 4 votes, and the changes were made.

We've had a couple of changes in Academic Board Leadership. Andrew Kenyon has recently began as the Academic Board President. He seems better than the others, but time will tell.

I **recommend** that the incoming President sit down with the Academic Board President at the beginning of their term to discuss upcoming priorities for the year. I think it sets a good tone for what is to come and allows a frank dialogue about issues that need to be resolved.

### **Chancellery Meetings and the Student Life Portfolio**

In April this year, Kerri-Lee Krause (the previous Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Student Life) left the University of Melbourne and was replaced with Sarah Wilson, Pro-Vice Chancellor Student Life. Make with the change of title what you will.

Nonetheless, this has seen a shift in the way the University engages with UMSU. Under Kerri-Lee Krause, UMSU would have fortnightly meetings with her and others from the University, as a way to discuss

priorities for both groups. While it certainly wasn't perfect, it did allow a forum to raise important issues and discuss them.

Since Sarah Wilson became the point, these meetings have ceased, and more of a focus has been put on the monthly 'Elected Reps' meetings instead – a meeting with UMSU, UMSU International and the GSA and a large number of University staff. These are less of a meeting, and more of a way for the University to just talk at us and effectively gaslight about how brilliant they are. They never schedule enough time to discuss the points from every group, and they never actually allow for proper discussion of the topics. I know that Jeremy (GSA) and I have had many discussions about how difficult Elected Reps is as a forum and the need for more direct, one-on-ones are to be able to effectively represent students to the University.

I **recommend** that the incoming President (working with the GSA President) address this directly with Sarah Wilson, and work to get the regular meetings back on the table.

### **Other University Committees**

I want to briefly touch on the SRN and other University Committees. There have been a number of shifts on committees, with a few new ones and a few disbanded.

I did want to raise the Academic Consultation and Coordination Committee. Councillors with a good memory will recall the first meeting of this Students' Council, where councillors decided it was appropriate to remove the elected President off of a University committee. No legitimate reasons were identified, and indeed a cynic would make the assumption that it was for purely political reasons. It was a pretty bad indictment on this Council, and set a poor tone for the way in which this Council would behave in the rest of the term. That's my opinion anyway.

But I'll cop that – and I did. I respected the vote that Council took, and I stepped down from ACCC. The Education Academic Office Bearers never publicly opened up EOIs or applications for a replacement nominee for ACCC. They also never appointed a new representative to ACCC. It was really disappointing behaviour from the Education Academic Office Bearers – to not only force the President off of the committee, but to then deny students a representative *at all* on the committee is exactly the opposite of what they are there to do. I still am not sure why Planning and Jennisha never made an appointment to ACCC and why they didn't allow for student representation on an important University committee.

What was sadder was that the ACCC was disbanded and no longer exists. A vote was taken at a meeting to disband the committee. Why was this step taken? We have absolutely no idea – because the Education Academic Officers never made an appointment to the committee.

## **UMSU**

### **Budget Process & Induction**

The budget process this year began similar to previous years, noting the budgetary climate in which the organisation has been operating. Students' Council – for the second year running – approved a budget strategy to manage the reduction in income as a result of lowered SSAF.

This was:

1. *Ensure that any unbudgeted expenditure can be offset via an unbudgeted increase to income, or a reduction in budgeted expenditure.*
2. *minimise expenditure for the remainder of 2021 to increase the pool of funds available to offset the impact of reductions in income in 2022 and subsequent years.*
3. *Acknowledge the continuing impact of public health restrictions on income.*

*Students' Council will monitor all proposed expenditure for the remainder of 2021 in line with this budget strategy*

This was the same strategy adopted in 2020 – one that has seen UMSU in an extremely strong budgetary position.

Yet, despite endorsing this position, Students' Council this year has at a couple of points needed to be reminded of a position they endorsed. While I will explore this in a little more depth, there is a grave importance for Students' Council to practice proper governance, especially on expenditure. UMSU doesn't have a magic bucket of money. It is student money – there to provide services to students, to represent students and to enrich student life. Students' Council needs to remember this, and make responsible, well-considered financial decisions in 2022.

I know that for the incoming Office Bearers this year, the budget induction process has changed slightly. The Communications, Marketing and Events Division have met with the incoming Office Bearers to understand the plans of each department, and to assist with costings and the like. I think this is a really great step, to help incoming Office Bearers get a feel for what is possible and how to achieve their goals for their terms.

### **Orientation & Summerfest**

After the shocking year we had last year, I think everyone was very hopeful that we could have a normal, full capacity Summerfest once more this year. Unfortunately, lockdown number (3? 4? I can't remember anymore) saw an end to that for 2020. With this, we had a scaled down Summerfest with a hybrid online element.

Of course, an online Summerfest will never be as good as one in person – it's simply not possible to be able to replicate every element as efficiently online

### **Media**

Media has been a focus of this year. This is an extremely important part of the role as President. Student Unions are there to help push debate – both within and outside the University. Having a student voice in some of those key debates is a key part to the representation of our members.

Indeed, it is also a great way to pressure the University on coming to the party on a bunch of issues. Many times this year I found on key issues, the University lacking in a response or action. After an appearance in the press, magically the University begins working hard to fix the problem!

An example was this article **\*CW: Sexual Assault and Harrassment\***

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/melbourne-uni-allowed-sexual-harasser-professor-to-keep-jobs-20210317-p57bmm.html>

## **Annual Report 2021**

I won't go into detail about the article, but it was after this article was published that the University began discussions about implementing the many of the safety on campus initiatives that were implemented this year, especially the stand-alone policy.

I'll put a list of various news articles where UMSU was featured. Additionally, I did multiple interviews on ABC Radio, a piece on ABC's The Drum (about subject cuts) and a piece to Channel 9 News Melbourne (on vaccinations).

Something that I wanted to make sure was that UMSU could have strong, on-going relationships with journalists – especially ones that are sympathetic and write decent articles expressing our views.

I've been very grateful to have built up some good relationships with journalists this year – I'm handing those over to Sophie, and making sure they know where to go for comment on issues.

My main **recommendation** is to take up all media opportunities that present (unless they're very hostile). Additionally, make sure the incoming President receives media training right at the beginning of their term – media requests can come in right at the start, and the more training the better.

<https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/students-academics-battle-opening-of-liberal-backed-institute-at-melbourne-uni-20210721-p58bna.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/jun/13/universities-promise-to-ramp-up-face-to-face-learning-as-student-frustrations-grow>

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/melbourne-uni-allowed-sexual-harasser-professor-to-keep-jobs-20210317-p57bmm.html>

<https://www.heraldsun.com.au/education-victoria/tertiary/universities-sneaky-online-learning-short-cut/news-story/298b4a20bad73d0f164d5a149799cecd>

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/university-head-says-free-speech-does-not-override-transgender-safety-20210615-p58171.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/jan/20/australian-universities-plan-to-ramp-up-in-person-learning-in-early-2021>

<https://www.heraldsun.com.au/education-victoria/uni-students-plea-to-return-to-facetoface-learning/news-story/f0802a57875446cece5f795b94cd20ec>

<https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/good-to-have-thoughtful-labor-person-onboard-says-menzies-institute-architect-20210723-p58cbw.html>

<https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/university-students-forking-out-hundreds-of-dollars-to-cheating-companies-promising-plagiarism-free-work/news-story/06419bbfdd2cab7f54e6b035a60dc1bd>

### **Some favourite campaigns**

Again, I won't rehash content you're all aware of from Office Bearer reports, but I wanted to touch on a few campaigns from this year that I think will continue into next.

## **Annual Report 2021**

## **Zero Tolerance for Zero Action**

This campaign was launched after the Age article above was published.

At the outset can I thank Sristhi & Michaella, Dee and Patrick for doing some really brilliant work on this, which has led to some good outcomes.

While we were able to achieve a stand-alone policy this year, there is still much more that needs to be done to achieve UMSU's 10 Priorities for Safety on Campus. Indeed, in 2022 we will have the results from the National Student Safety Survey, which will have a whole suite of recommendations with it that the University of Melbourne will need to implement this year.

The Zero Tolerance for Zero Action campaign will be a useful tool for next year and I **recommend** it is continued into next year. It had a simple and clear message that speaks to the asks of the campaign, and the concept came to fruition very nicely.

## **Housing**

This was one that made some progress earlier on in the year, but got swamped by COVID. A Councillor from the City of Melbourne reached out to discuss some ways to work through issues faced by students in student housing and accommodation towers in the city. We know that many of these accommodation providers use loopholes to be able to get around the rental standards that apply to normal rental properties. Isabel from UMSU Legal has been doing some fantastic work around it, and as students return to these towers in 2022, a strong campaign here is definitely needed. I **recommend** that this goes ahead.

## **Menzies Institute**

Again, this one has been very much well fleshed out already so I don't need to recap it too much!

We know that the University will continue to spend a few hundred thousand dollars a year on keeping the institute running. I think it will be a big test into next year if the institute will be able to actually remain impartial (spoiler alert: I doubt it will). Indeed, it will be a strong contrast to highlight as to the money the University is giving to a Liberal party affiliated research centre, rather than to students and learning.

## **Staffing & Hiring**

This year I've had the opportunity to be involved in a number of recruitment panels. These include Host Program Directors, interns and a number of other positions. It is great to make sure a student representative is involved with the process, as I think it strengthens the quality of recruit we get and enhances the depth of the process. No recommendations, just a good vibe.

## **UMSU Management**

UMSU Management has obviously been the topic of many discussions at Council this year.

I've been lucky to have had two years on UMSU Management – I don't think many have had that opportunity during their time in UMSU. This year there has been many discussions with a substantial

## **Annual Report 2021**

misunderstanding of the role that Management (and indeed other staff) have within the organisation, and a misunderstanding of the role that Council has in the whole picture.

Since day 1, I've worked constructively with the rest of the Management team. Does this mean I've agreed with them all the time? Of course not. But properly engaging on issues – in a professional manner – has allowed for some great outcomes and issues to be resolved. Staff are here to help us as student representatives achieve the goals we'd like to achieve, and at every step of the way staff – and UMSU Management – have done nothing but that.

### **Students Council**

I won't harp on here, as I think my views on how Students' Council has operated this year are very well canvassed and minuted.

Students' Council (and UMSU broadly) will always be political, and there will always be fights and disagreements. Factionalism exists, and it will always have a presence on Students' Council. As you all know, I love a good fight as much as anyone else.

But there are some things that need to come out of the political fights – governance. This year has been the worst governance of the organisation I have seen, and it stems from one particular grouping within UMSU.

Cutting speaking lists when it suits, taking motions to votes, moving large financial motions without notice, Council meetings going out with improper notice and swathes of missing Office Bearer reports. Still, in November we have 6 months of missing Students' Council minutes from the website. Students pay us their money each year, and they have a right to see how it is being governed.

It is not even remotely in the book of good governance, and it certainly isn't what students expect from their Student Union. People on this Council need to have a good look at themselves, and how they have contributed to an unstable UMSU, and indeed, an UMSU that has the University questioning whether our governance is working.

We are lucky to have the financial backing we do, but this isn't magical and it isn't without requirements. Next year's Council needs to act better than this one – properly consider your decisions, read material and make decisions that are not just best for you politically, but that are best for the organisation.

Basically grow up, read your obligations to govern this organisation and do your jobs. It's not hard.

### **The end**

It's been a weird year. In no way am I going to pretend I was the greatest President of UMSU ever – or even close to it.

I get it – a President from a different faction to pretty much every other office bearer and most of the council. Indeed, me being President has meant that someone else wasn't. So I came into this year knowing it was going to be a very different term to my last, and knowing that barriers would exist. What I didn't expect was the sheer amount of hostility and blind factionalism that I would encounter – roadblocks to running campaigns, to being an effective President.



I've spent most of this year waiting for it to be over – which says a lot I think.

I'm glad I got a year as General Secretary last year, in a year where I think UMSU has been at its most effective. In 2020, we had some of the highest engagement with UMSU and our work for a long time, we had strong campaigns that got wins for students when they needed it most. I'm proud of the work we did in 2020.

This year, the organisation has been disjointed – which is odd considering that most of it is run by people elected on the same ticket. Indeed, key campaigns have struggled and not gotten as far as they otherwise would have, due to a refusal to engage broadly and use the resources of UMSU to its fullest. The Student Engagement Survey results that have been distributed to Council reflect this.

I do think UMSU's good days are ahead of it. UMSU must as an organisation look at how we adapt to an increasingly hostile University, an apathetic student body and a tertiary education system that continues to be stacked against us. UMSU has to focus on students, to bring them along in the change process.

2022 will offer up a range of new opportunities – with the return to campus and a whole new suite of changes the University is bound to bring in will see challenges for students that UMSU needs to mobilise on.

Thank you to those who have supported me not just this year, but in the previous year also. To Justin, Phoebe, Dee (as well as Goldie & Naomi, who are no longer with us) and all of the other amazing staff in this organisation – thank you for the help you've all given me and other reps. If there's one thing I've learnt over the past two years, it is how much passion you all have for students and student representation. It's been a joy to work with you all.

To the other comrades both in and outside of UMSU – I can't list you all but you know who you are.

And of course to the 2022 office bearers – you've all got a big task ahead of you in 2022 but I know you'll do a brilliant job. How good is Sophie Nguyen though? Good luck superstar.

Anyway. Bye besties.

Annual Report 2021

To Students' Council 18(21)

Allen Xiao

General Secretary

Attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum. – Aeneid VIII, 730-31

*He raises to his shoulders the fame and fortune of his heirs.*

It is with a sense of relief- and perhaps regret- that I conclude my term. I never expected to finish my year like this, but am nevertheless grateful for the opportunity to make genuine changes to UMSU in a time of great transition.

My term follows one of the most difficult resignations at UMSU in recent years. And it is only right to recognise the work done by my predecessor Ciara O'Sullivan. She established an innovative, reforming, activist portfolio that, had it been executed in its entirety, would have brought UMSU closer to the students we represent.

Despite every attempt to diminish her, alienate her, marginalise her, and her contributions to our union, her work persists. It would do well to remember that.

### Key activities throughout the year and evaluation

I began 2021 as the Welfare Officer along with the inimitable Hue Man Dang. While the achievements of the Welfare Department are best told in her own words, I do want to express my gratitude for my time leading it, particularly in the establishment of Union Mart at the start of the year; it shows that UMSU is capable of great innovation while continuing to deliver outcomes for students in need.

The messages of appreciation for Union Mart, even after my term as Welfare Officer concluded, is testament to the impact that the Department had during the difficulties of a pandemic year.

I also had the opportunity to liaise with university stakeholders at CAPS and SEDS, particularly around reforming its structure and access mechanisms in the wake of staffing changes. As anyone who's had to make a booking can attest to, CAPS is notoriously opaque and user-unfriendly at the worst of times. This is certainly not a project that one term of officers can complete, and I look forward to future UMSU leaders taking up this fight.

#### 1. Regulations and governance

**Constitutional changes** were a major focus of the work in the first half of the year. The UMSU Constitution is an extensive and oftentimes confusing document. Over the course of several

Constitutional Working Groups, Councillors contributed robust debate and a clear vision for how UMSU's governing documents can be improved.

While it was impossible to execute every item on the Constitutional agenda, given the significant disputes at some stages of the process, it is certainly my hope that the Constitution continues to evolve with student representation on campus. The changes this year were significant. There are now formal provisions for an accessible, online election (more on this later) and stronger representation for Southbank and international students in UMSU.

The **Special General Meeting** on the 27<sup>th</sup> was the culmination of months of effort, from Councillors and Office Bearers alike. The proposed constitutional changes were endorsed with an overwhelming majority, in addition to a record attendance of nearly 500 students both in-person and online. It was a pleasure coordinating one of the largest events in recent UMSU memory, despite the immense logistical barriers put upon many of the organisers.

A special thanks must go to the outgoing committee of UMSU INTL, whose tireless contributions across timezones were critical to this success. Every single volunteer on the day, too numerous to name here, has my gratitude.

**Regulatory changes** became the key agenda in the latter half of the year, particularly as the practicalities of an online election rolled on. Through extensive consultation with Councillors and Moores Lawyers, a set of clear, understandable and transparent **electoral regulations** were endorsed by Council on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July, and approved by the Tribunal on the 16<sup>th</sup>. It was a monumental change in the way UMSU has historically conducted elections, opening up access to students overseas, interstate, and those most impacted by inaccessible physical campaigning. It is certainly my hope that this trend continues in future years.

Likewise, it was a pleasure to work with the Media Officers to complete a new set of **Media Regulations** and **Policy**, which will hopefully make the (oftentimes fractious) relationship between General Secretary and Media far more well-organised. Like many things in my term, it was a direct legacy of Ciara's contributions, and I'm glad that we have something to show for it.

**Evaluation:** I can confidently say that the journey to strengthen UMSU's governing documents has made them enter 2022 in a far stronger state than I have known them. Nevertheless, much work remains, in particular the provisions for affirmative action in the Constitution, the translation of key UMSU documents into plain language and foreign languages, as well as general accessibility of the documents as a whole.

For the first time in many years, UMSU's Students' Council has fulfilled its true potential as a forum for constructive debate, regulatory reform, and thorough considerations of policy. I sincerely hope that future Councils will not be limited by where 2021 fell short, and instead take this as a minimum to build from.

## 2. Advocacy

A major part of UMSU's achievements this year have been fought in the field of **Elected Reps**. Commendations go, first and foremost, to Planning and Jennisha's work in negotiating, advocating, and executing some truly outstanding achievements this year. These meetings are one of the few windows of opportunity that elected representatives get to interact with senior decision-makers at the university, and is vital in holding them to account.

In particular, the **WAM Adjustment Campaign** was a product of these extended negotiations. I'm very proud to have been part of the planning and advising at every stage of the campaign, and I certainly hope it brings relief to the student body as exam season approaches.

Furthermore, following a failed attempt to secure WAMnesty for MDHS postgraduate course entry (Medicine, Dentistry, Physiotherapy among others) in the previous year, there are now ongoing discussions with the MDHS faculty regarding the future of this policy. The grind never stops!

**Evaluation:** Though I cannot claim more credit than is rightfully owed, I have appreciated the impact that continued attendance at Elected Reps can have. It was frustrating at times to see the implacable forces of university management bear down on student representatives, including my colleagues at UMSU INTL and GSA, but it made our victories all the better.

## 3. Other matters

It's been a pleasure handling **SIG Applications** over the past year, seeing the creative ways in which student groups have facilitated engagement over lockdown. More prosaically has been the collation of minutes and agendas, many of which had been missing in the transition period and is set to be complete imminently. The Operations Subcommittee remained responsive, active, and ready to help out office bearers at short notice- my thanks go to them as well.

There is a miscellany of committees, consultations, and plans that have taken place under my watch. **The Safer Partyng Initiative** is a key program that UMSU has been working to revive in time for on-campus activity; I have had the chance to finalise a roadmap with Dee, Hue Man and the SSDP team, hopefully in time for execution as Summerfest (and parties!) rolls around again.

**Evaluation:** The less flashy, but no less important parts of the job. An excruciating transition did little to help, but I am glad that Council was able to find its footing as the year progressed.

On a more sobering note, this year, unlike many others, was marked by a great number of resignations. As Council begins a transition to a new team, it would do well to reflect on the culture of this space, and what it can easily do to ordinary students who have never experienced UMSU before.

Activism, advocacy and the right to fight for your community should never be made destructive by self-appointed gatekeepers.

### Recommendations for future Office Bearers

1. Keep up the Constitutional work! Though we may never quite perfect the Constitution, there are certainly reforms that future General Secretaries can- and should- choose to pursue. Maintain a close working relationship with Moores, who have been legends of the game throughout the year.
2. Revive and build on the Translation Working Group. UMSU, and the University at large, deserves to be accessible to a student body in more than one language.
3. Use your position as an advocate well. Your role is more than just the keeper of agendas and minutes (as vitally important as they are!) Your voice, in the leadership of UMSU and outside, carries weight; never lose sight of that, and push for the causes you care about.
4. Find your support. This is often a job that isolates you from the OB community, and the people in UMSU at large. Know that this work is critical to the organisation, and know that there will always be someone backing you on.

### **Conclusion:**

There's probably far more to say here than can possibly fit the bounds of these pages. My thanks go to everyone who has supported me, especially during the transition period of early May. These past six months have certainly not been easy. And it is often crushing to see that the work you have put in be undermined, opposed, and invalidated. Nevertheless, we have persisted.

It has been an honour to serve as your General Secretary for 2021. To steer UMSU through 2022 will take creative resolve; as we emerge, tired and disoriented into a new normal, I am ultimately optimistic that we will realise a vision of 'the good life' for our collective university experience.

**It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:**

**It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,**

**And see the great Achilles, whom we knew. – *Ulysses*, Lord Tennyson**

Far from being a Socratic abstraction, the power to fight for it lies squarely in UMSU's hands.

The Happy Isles of mass demonstrations and student unionism setting national agendas may be history (thanks, VSU), but the journey to reclaim it has never stopped. We have, as the adage goes, a world to win.

**Activities**

Phoebe Chen

*Not Submitted*

### **Key activities throughout the year**

- Summerfest 2021 and Midsemester expo
- Clash of Clubs
- Leadership and Online event management Workshop
- Funding for RSA & SFH Training

### **Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

1. Summerfest 2021 and Midsemester expo

I think that expo and orientation week were able to occur to the best of everyone's abilities given the constant changing of restrictions. Albeit a much smaller scale than how it used to be, having a small period of time where there were in person stalls helped clubs get back in touch with the university sphere. That being said, we are aware that many clubs still suffered a lot in the decline of memberships and not being able to gain new members due to lockdowns. Feedback regarding the online expo in Hopin shows that the platform weren't able to bridge this membership issue and getting students to join online events prove to be a hurdle in itself. I recommend that if in person expo still weren't still able to be held next year, we place utmost emphasis on promotions. Working together with the Communications department to create various promotional materials and also even holding giveaways as incentives could probably work better in the future. I believe that communicating with clubs and getting them to help promote any C&S Department events such as Orientation week/ Expos, etc would also benefit everyone involved and increase exposure for these events.

I also think that doing promotions through ads in Facebook could do well for future events and activities.

2. Clash of Clubs

This event was able to occur alongside the Midsemester expo during semester 1. The collaboration event between C&S, Welfare and Activities department was able to go smoothly with very satisfactory participation from clubs. Due to density and capacity limits, we tried our best to get this event to help increase exposure to the expos and clubs. Once things go back in

person, this kind of event can definitely be done again in a more larger scale and more games included.

3. Leadership & Online event management workshop with Josh Farr  
Given the shift to online events and activities again starting semester 2, we weren't able to hold a proper Orientation week expo for clubs. As such, we held our very first C&S workshop around Leadership and Online Event management, with aims that it can assist clubs on leadership skills and also the shift to creating more online events given the circumstances of lockdowns. Base on feedback and attendance, these workshops prove to be very successful and a lot of clubs have expressed interest for more workshops to come. I highly encourage that future workshops be held on topics that may be needed especially for newly elected execs in clubs.
4. Early semester 1, we passed a budget line to fully fund RSA and SFH trainings for around 100 participants across 4 days. Although it was able to provide help for some clubs, having fully funded activities always opens up the problem of accountability for attendance, hence why we decided not to do the same in semester 2. I recommend that if the department provides free events/activities that either we make it very explicit that non attendance may open up the possibility of liability and/or we avoid doing fully funded trainings unless its very clear that clubs are in need of these trainings at that point in time. My recommendation is to always put some money set aside in the budget line for special activities, in the case that future OB or committee are eager to provide these funded trainings/activities.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

- I am sure that everyone has future ideas they are keen to bring in place and I won't touch much on what they need to do. As mentioned previously, now is a time where communications is as crucial as ever, and making sure that clubs know where to go for when they have queries or in need of help/assistance is something we want to make sure is relayed. Being OBs for the C&S department, it is also important to remember that there may be some areas where admin work is needed. Hence, having someone be in charge of constitution amendments, motions on notice for grants, lockers, and in some cases covid safe plan review is going to be something that you guys will have to do and also keep in mind during your term. It may be good if these tasks are segregated, so to make sure that any other events or activities that you want to be done can still be pushed forward with adequate timing and support. Also during AGM or IGM season, we may be needed to help chair and RO meetings, and segregating these equally between office bearers works best in my opinion.
- My other recommendation for future OBs is to keep pushing forward for camp welfare ideas and make sure they are finalized and put in place. As a department we are constantly learning new things as well as gaining feedback from clubs. It is important that we still try our best to



make sure camps/excursions place priority on welfare whether it be through additional training and/or more resources put in place.

- For a start, making sure that the Camp welfare form is formalized for all clubs is a priority. From there on out, we can help provide in person trainings via Safer Communities and also the addition of Sexual Harassment response workshop from CASA house or other external providers best suited for the role. I hope that the introduction of the camp welfare working group, can help you in making sure that pre training resource materials could be made, to assist clubs before any in person workshops/trainings. At the end of the day, the idea around welfare is done for the benefit of all clubs and students, hence a certain degree of proactiveness is needed from everyone not just OBs. It is important to remember that you are not alone and that the committee is also there to help you. You can also ask clubs who normally do camps for their feedback, or thoughts anytime to help build on this.
  
- Once things resume back to in person, I believe that much could be done for clubs. Having a big O week like the ones pre lockdowns would do well for everyone. I highly encourage that we make use of all our social media platforms to promote clubs and also future events to come. One thing to keep in mind is the production of the annual clubs guides. Its important to firstly discuss the appropriate cost of the guides with Fiona and Comms, and figuring out the quantity to print. One of the biggest regret for 2021 was having tons of the guides printed, thinking that in person Summerfest was able to occur. Making sure we don't end up with a lot of back stock from unused guides and thinking sustainably is also worth noting when thinking of publishing future clubs guide! In our experience, pushing forward more on the digital clubs guide is also a really good way to go, as everyone can access it anytime as long as we direct them to it and publish it in the clubs & societies website.

**University of Melbourne Student Union**



**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Muskaan Hakhu**

**Clubs and Societies**

## **Key activities throughout the year**

### **1. Online Trainings / Canvas**

This year we tirelessly worked towards converting the C&S trainings into online modules. We made quizzes, which execs would have to complete after finishing watching a training module to ensure that there were no miscommunications or misunderstandings of the training material occurring. While we still have a long way to go before, we completely turn C&S training digital, this Canvas subject definitely will lead the way for future C&S OBs to build the online training fort on!

### **2. Leadership Workshops**

As mentioned previously, we wanted to help club executives run their respective clubs better by providing them with resources and hence we decided to conduct a leadership workshop.

The response of the leadership workshop was great! With about 115 people attending the first one and 125 people attending the second we would definitely recommend future OBs to continue these!

### **3. Sustainability for Clubs**

This is something very recent that we are working on with the UMSU Environment department. We are planning to host a sustainability workshop for club execs where conversations like how can we make club events more sustainable would take place. All execs who attend this workshop would be receiving a certificate. We will be sending an email inviting all club executives to attend once the dates for these workshops are set on. (This workshop would not be compulsory)

### **4. Free SFH/RSA Courses**

Start of this year, back when we thought everything would soon be okay because the pandemic had ended ( how naive of us) to help Club execs, the C&S department had decided to conduct free SFH and RSA courses. These courses were extremely helpful as per the feedback and we did have a good turn out too.

The C&S department also acknowledged that clubs were coming out of a hard financial year and hence to help them financially the following steps were taken :

1. Clubs' grants cap increased to \$2,700
2. Initial grant for new clubs to increased to \$150
3. 100% reimbursement of online event hiring and purchasing grant
4. We also did a regulation change of Regulation 8.3.7.b from "reducing the proportion funded for grants of a particular size or category" to "reducing or increasing the proportion funded for grants of a particular size or category." By doing this we opened the door of increased grants for clubs.

### **In person Clubs Expo**

The C&S department this year was quick to adapt to the changes as, as soon as the state regulations changed and allowed us to hold events we held an in person clubs expo. Even though this club's expo was small it was wholesome and cute! And it was fun to see all the clubs in their element.

### **Clash of clubs**

Another event that we held in collaboration with UMSU welfare and activities was a clash of clubs. This event was a lot of fun and encouraged interclub communications and friendships and also helped in bridging the gap between C&S and clubs. I would definitely recommend future clubs OBs to do this event again.

### **Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

For most of our activities we received positive feedback, especially the Clash of clubs and club leadership workshop.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

My future recommendations would be:

1. To conduct more SFH and RSA Training sessions
2. Enhancing the Online Canva Module
3. Making the Leadership workshop an ongoing thing

University of Melbourne Student Union  
Annual Report 2021  
To Students' Council 18(21)  
Merryn Hughes  
Creative Arts Department



### Key activities throughout the year

It's been a bittersweet year of making, sharing and enjoying art while navigating life in and out of lockdowns but I feel really proud of all the Creative Arts Department has achieved despite the challenging circumstances.

We began the year with Speed-friending with Media and the first ever online Arty Party as part of Summerfest. We got to work on Mudfest, opening call-outs for artists and production team members and by the end of semester, we had our full prod team and 60+ student art projects to display. In-between lockdowns, we hosted two in-person events but we also made sure to continue online activities as they're more accessible, especially to international students stuck overseas. We ran 'A Handful of Humans: Chalk & Chats', an in-person collaborative art project as part of Diversity Week and 'Sustainability in Art-Making Workshop' with Enviro in Arts Lab to celebrate Earth Day. We co-produced two Zoom workshops: 'Telling Your Stories' with UHT, facilitated by award-winning writer Glenn Shea and 'Arts Grant Writing Workshop' with Arts Programs which was facilitated by Channon Goodwin. At the end of semester, the May/June lockdown was announced so we cancelled the in-person versions of our 'Welcome to Mudfest' Party and 'De-stress Dance' collaboration with Erin Adams from UHT and put all our energies towards the online versions instead.

In semester two, we launched Mudfest which ran online from the 5th to the 13th of August responding to the theme, HOME. During the festival, audiences could view up to 50 Mudfest works from the comfort of their homes by attending online events held on Zoom or YouTube Premiere or by exploring the Mudfest On Demand website, GPG Virtual as well as the Mudfest Virtual Exhibition via Mozilla Hubs. Though the Mudfest On Demand exhibition season officially ended on Saturday 11th September, it can still be viewed [here](#). We celebrated the end of the festival at the Mudfest Awards Night on Friday 27th August, in which 26 award-winners were announced on Zoom. After Mudfest, we co-produced several online events; Making Masks (and friendly chats) with Enviro, TriviARTS with UHT, Art Relaxation with Women's and Disabilities, Know Your Rights with Music Students' Society and Southbank and Trivia Night with Southbank. We also launched *Above Water* vol. 17 with Media at the end of September which you can view [here](#)! Then in collaboration with Erin from UHT, we introduced 'The Swift Tailors: At Home High Fashion', a collaborative fashion project & competition celebrating innovative, sustainable and home-made fashion. Rounding off the year, we presented three Creative Arts Awards at the UHT Awards Night and will celebrate the passing of the baton to the incoming OBs at our final event, All Kinds of Arty – An Open Mic Party!

### **Annual Report 2021**

Throughout the year, we also ran a weekly Creative Arts Collective on Zoom, supported 35 creative projects through the Creative Arts Grant Program and introduced the Student Artist Spotlight which received over 100 submissions.

It's not lost on me that this year has been incredibly challenging for so many, including everyone who has needed to experiment to continue making and sharing art but it's been so inspiring witnessing a generation of artists demonstrate such resilience and innovation. I've been so grateful for the opportunity to work with Vaishnavi, staff and other student departments to support our vibrant student artist community and I wish the future OBs all the best!

### **Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

#### **Activity 1 – Mudfest 2021**

Mudfest was a huge project and though the move to online delivery was quite devastating, I'm still immensely proud of all we achieved. Understandably, a few artists pulled out when we had to pivot to online-only delivery but we still ended with a total of 49 Mudfest works on display and over 130 artists involved along with 12 production team members and 82 volunteers. We also offered a mentorship program in which 14 student artists received mentorship from an industry professional as well as an Artist Grant program in which 28 artists/groups received funding. The Mudfest 2021 Official After Movie reflecting on the festival was released on Monday 4th October and can be viewed on our website [here](#). For a detailed report with recommendations, future office bearers should refer to the Mudfest 2021 Report in the Arts share folder.

#### **Activity 2 - Creative Arts Collective**

We ran Creative Arts Collective online via Zoom every week from Dec 17th 2020 - Nov 26th 2021. Based on our predecessors' recommendations, we started a Facebook group to foster the Creative Arts Collective Community and post updates/Zoom links and we also introduced weekly themes/prompts which was great for students who needed a little inspo. Some weeks we merged collective with a workshop such as Invasion Day Banner-Making Workshop with UMSU Indigenous and People of Colour, Moodboarding workshop with Media and Sustainability in Art-Making with Enviro which was fun but I'd recommend keeping the two events separate in future as it detracted slightly from the purpose of the collective which is to provide a relaxed space for students to hang out with other arty folk while doing their own arty things.

#### **Activity 3 – Student Artist Spotlight**

## **Annual Report 2021**

Running for a total of 26 weeks across the year, the Student Artist Spotlight was a great way to celebrate student artists within our community and feel inspired by what others were making. Students submitted their artwork online via a simple Google form and then we'd share the submissions online via our socials and website. The project gained significant popularity in Semester 2 and by the end of the year, we received over 100 submissions. The weekly gift-card prizes that were awarded to the creators of standout submissions were a great incentive and introducing a weekly theme in semester two was also helpful for artists who needed some inspiration. It was also really helpful getting our committee involved as the judging panel to decide the winning artwork for each week.

#### **Activity 4 – Grant Program**

Based on our predecessors' recommendations, we expanded the program to provide funding for periods of artistic development as well as specific projects and we increased the number of grant rounds to six and the grant budget to \$15,000 for the year. We met with every applicant to provide feedback which is a great way to support students who have never submitted a grant application before and by the end of the year, the department had supported a total of 35 creative projects. I feel very proud of the support the department has been able to provide students during what has been another very challenging year.

#### **Activity 5 - Summerfest & Winterfest**

During Summerfest, we hosted an online Speed-friending event with Media which was sold-out however, some students made typos in their email addresses when registering so did not receive the Zoom link to join. We still had a fun time with the 16 or so people who did attend and Vaishnavi and I used the same speed-friending format for other events like the 'Welcome to Mudfest Party' to help students connect while in lockdown. For our other Summerfest event, we hosted a 'Cyberpunk' themed online Arty Party with Southbank and UHT which featured a beautiful performance by guest artist, Bumpy and an open mic segment in which several students performed.

During Winterfest, we collaborated with Erin Adams from UHT for 'De-stress Dance' and though we planned to have two De-stress Dance events – one online and one in-person at the Guild –the July lockdown had other ideas! This was the second De-stress Dance event we hosted for the year, the first held at the start of exams. It's a super fun event and curating the dance playlists with Erin and Vaishnavi was definitely one of my favourite meetings of the year. Similar to 2020, there was a smaller attendance compared to our other events however, for those who did come, they had a great time and some expressed interest in more at home boogies!

We also had online booths on Hop-in for both Summerfest and Winterfest which we treated as extended creative arts collectives but I found it was helpful to have some scheduled activities planned like a viewing of the Student Artist Spotlight submissions from Semester 1 or playing with home-made fortune tellers to predict students' artistic futures.



## **Activity 6 – In-person events**

We were fortunately able to have a few in-person events in Semester 1 in-between lockdowns. ‘A Handful of Humans – Chalk & Chats’ was an experimental collaborative art project where students could draw with chalk on Concrete Lawn to celebrate Diversity Week. We had music playing and chalk provided and about 20 students stopped by to add to the ‘Diversi-tree’ as they walked passed. It did get a bit messy with the chalk but it was mostly fun! We also had our ‘Sustainability in Art-Making Workshop’ with Enviro which was a fun way to celebrate Earth Day! Several students met in Arts Lab and we reused old Farragos to make collages (which now decorate the walls of the Arts Office). We were planning a ‘Welcome to Mudfest’ party for the end of Semester 1 but then when that was cancelled due to the May/June lockdown, we planned ‘Arty Party 2.0’ for Winterfest however, that was also cancelled due to the July lockdown. It helped having online alternatives planned for every in-person event as it meant we still had activities on offer when snap lockdowns were announced.

## **Activity 7 – Online Workshops**

During Semester 1 we co-produced two Zoom workshops: ‘Arts Grant Writing Workshop’ with Arts Programs which was facilitated by Channon Goodwin and ‘Telling Your Stories’ with UHT, facilitated by Glenn Shea. These were great ways to foster connections with industry professionals and promote students’ artistic development however, they could have been a bit more interactive. In Semester 2, we co-produced ‘Making Masks (and friendly chats)’ with Enviro which was facilitated by a student artist, ‘Know Your Rights’ with Music Students’ Society and Southbank and an ‘Art Relaxation Workshop’ with Women’s and Disabilities. We would have liked to have produced more online workshops like the ‘Drag Make-up Workshop’ we had begun planning with Queer however, we were unable to secure a facilitator in time. Though a lot of students were getting quite tired of online events and Zoom especially after a day of online classes, I’d still recommend producing online events as it’s more accessible, especially for students stuck overseas. These online workshops were also great opportunities to work with other departments and broaden our audience.

## **Activity 8 – Above Water**

In collaboration with Media, we produced the annual creative writing and art anthology and competition *Above Water* which launched in late September. We received 130+ submissions which we whittled down to a short-list of 24 works. The short-list was then presented to a panel of judges who selected winners and runners-up as well as highly commended works for both the Art and Creative Writing category. We delegated roles between our two departments based on each other’s strengths; Media handled the publication design, illustration team, communication with our editorial assistant, printing and delivery elements while we managed the judges, prizes and launch party. We were hoping to host the launch in-person at Southbank however, we scrapped that idea during lockdown 6 and ended up having a wonderful online launch instead! Up to 50 people attended - students, staff, family and friends – and we all flicked through the anthology together via Issuu for an hour or so. One of our judges, Sandie Bridie from Arts Programs announced the winners of the Art category and the lovely Lauren Berry announced

the Creative Writing winners. We also had about 10 students whose work featured in the anthology read their pieces and/or talk about their artistic process which was a particular highlight.

### **Activity 9 – Trivia**

We co-produced two online Trivia nights in Semester 2; TriviARTS with UHT and Trivia Night with Southbank. UHT broke attendees up into teams whereas we used *Kahoot!* with Southbank which was a bit more of an individual-based approach. Both methods proved effective - the teams approach worked well for UHT as there was a large attendance (approx. 50 people) and the *Kahoot!* worked for Southbank as there was a smaller group (approx. 10 people).

### **Activity 10 – UHT Awards Night**

It's customary for the Creative Arts OBs to present at the UHT Awards Night and this year was no different! Vaishnavi and I created three awards; 'Keen-bean-always-here-machine' for a student who has demonstrated significant involvement in the department throughout the year, 'Across-The-Sea Creativity' for a passionate and enthusiastic international student who has engaged with the department from abroad and 'Mover-and-Shaker Experimental Art-Maker' for a student in our community who has significantly challenged the boundaries of experimentation with their art-making or art mediums in 2021. As a team, we consolidated our nominations, selected winners and decided on prizes. We gave the recipient of the 'Mover-and-Shaker Experimental Art-Maker' Award the option to choose either a gift-card or a mentorship with an industry professional as we had the budget for it however, there realistically wasn't enough time between the UHT Awards Night and the end of our term to lock in a mentorship so I'd recommend sticking to gift-cards or other easy to source prizes.

### **Activity 11 - The Swift Tailors: At Home High Fashion Project & Competition**

In collaboration with Erin Adams from UHT, we launched The Swift Tailors at the start of October, inviting students to submit a 15 second video of them showing off a home-made, recycled and creative fashion piece. We received 7 INCREDIBLE submissions and Vaishnavi collated them into a video which was then shared on our socials and website. Our trusty Creative Arts Committee joined the judging panel and voted for three winners who were awarded gift-card prizes. I was so amazed at the innovative creations and though this project was quite niche, I think it was a nice way to attract a different kind of arty audience and celebrate sustainability in art-making.

### **Activity 12 - Student Representation**

Vaishnavi and I joined the University of Melbourne Theatre Board and invited 3 other students to join the board and represent the student voice in meetings. I would have liked to have been more involved in the Theatre Board but clashes with class made that difficult in Semester 2. Vaishnavi and I also attended fortnightly Arts & Culture meetings led by Susan Hewitt, UMSU's Manager for Arts & Culture which was a great way to stay connected with staff and receive updates from other departments in the Arts & Culture

## **Annual Report 2021**

division. I felt so supported by all the staff; Xain from AV Melbourne, Clint from the Rowden White Library, Xanthe from UHT, Dave and Sandie from Arts Programs and of course, Susan. Their support and advice was invaluable, particularly for all things Mudfest related and I encourage future OBs to reach out to them when feeling overwhelmed or stuck.

### **Activity 13 - All Kinds of Arty – An Open Mic Party!**

This event is planned for Thursday 25th November and will be held on Zoom. It's our last event for our term and Vaishnavi and I are excited to celebrate the year that has passed with lovely arty humans who have engaged with our department. There will be an open mic segment (we have 4 sign-ups already!) and we will also be introducing the lovely Marcie and Prerna as the incoming OBs!

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

#### **Recommendation 1 – Teamwork makes the dream work!**

- As you both begin your term, take some time together to reflect on the values of the department as well as your own. For Vaishnavi and I, we strove to support a diverse range of student artists to make, share and enjoy art that is sustainable, accessible and experimental and for our own work relationship, we valued honesty, teamwork and Taylor Swift's discography
- Once you identify the core values for the department and your work relationship, allow them to guide you as you dream up events, activities and work together to serve the student community

#### **Recommendation 2 – Communication and delegation**

- Establish boundaries and working hours as soon as possible and I recommend working the same times/days as your co-OB so that you can keep all work-related questions to days you're both working.
- Use an instant messaging platform that you both check often like Facebook messenger for sending quick updates, check-ins and links
- Vaishnavi and I also had a Zoom call at the start of each work day to touch-base and clarify 1) who is doing what and 2) when they are going to do it which worked really well especially when we couldn't share an office space (which was most of the year due to lockdowns)
- We also used a shared Google calendar so we could keep track of all our meetings, classes and other extra-curriculars and I encourage you to do the same! It really helped us know when to schedule meetings when we'd both be free as well as stay more organised in general
- Ensure you delegate tasks as equally as possible between the two of you. For example, you could have 10 emails to respond to, so you could both agree to take five emails each. Delegation is crucial, not only because you have a shared inbox and it's better not to send two responses to the same email (it's bound to happen) but also because it helps with achieving a sustainable balance and avoiding burn-out

#### **Recommendation 3 – Interdepartmental collaboration**

### **Annual Report 2021**

- Collaborate with staff and other student departments! Working with staff departments early in the year is also a great way to learn from industry professionals as you begin your role. I also recommend collaborating with other student departments to help share the work-load and broaden your audience by tapping into each other's networks.
- Interdepartmental collaborations can be super fun and a great way to connect with your UMSU community but just remember to maintain regular communication and delegate roles early on e.g. one department finds a facilitator and the other takes care of promotion.

#### **Recommendation 4 – Continue Creative Arts Collective**

- Continue collective online via Zoom as it is more accessible, particularly to international students, as well as easier to manage
- Keep the 'Creative Arts Collective Community' Facebook group active and continue the weekly themes
- Finally, though it seemed rational to me to merge a workshop with collective earlier in my term, it's better to keep the two separate as workshops attract a different crowd and have a different vibe

#### **Recommendation 5 – Develop Grants Program**

- Decide on the number of grant rounds you want to have as well as the application deadlines as soon as possible so you can update the website and start promoting. Arts Programs direct a lot of students to the grants so it helps them out when the deadlines are confirmed too
- Review the Grant Application Terms & Conditions as well as questions when you start your term. It's worth noting the importance of the questions about sustainability and accessibility as I found a lot of applicants hadn't considered these aspects of their project until the application
- Continue meeting with all applicants to give your feedback on their application before they submit it as well as clarify the acquittal process should they be successful
- When you're notifying applicants of the outcome via email, send the acquittal report form and the department logos to encourage recipients to acknowledge the department's support in any promotional material. I also recommend sending a calendar invite for the acquittal report deadline to remind both the recipient and yourselves of the deadline
- Keep the application form to a Word doc/pdf as it's easier for applicants to edit the file as opposed to a Google form submission.

#### **Recommendation 6 – Student Artist Spotlight**

- If you're keen to continue the Student Artist Spotlight, review the google form and I recommend adding a question to ask students to provide an image/video/artwork description to improve accessibility for screen-reader users
- It's also a good idea to add a question asking students about their art-making process which you could include in your post
- Always ask for consent to share work, especially if you're also sharing a student's identifiable information (name, course, ig handle)

### **Recommendation 7 – Producing events and programs**

- Allow 3-4 weeks to produce and promote an event or program
- Stay active on Basecamp
- Establish an event timeline and make adjustments if necessary
- Manage ticketing registrations yourselves through the department’s Eventbrite or Trybooking accounts so you can quickly get a sense of numbers/expected attendance
- Promote events/programs in all your channels:
  - Followspot – email Erin Adams from UHT
  - Social media e.g. Facebook page, Instagram accounts, Facebook groups
  - Send email invitations to staff and OBs
- Include the timezone in all promotional material e.g. 7PM AEST/AEDT
- Create an event schedule outlining who is doing what and when
- When hosting a Zoom event, schedule breaks and I also recommend sharing your audio to play music to get rid of any awkward Zoom silences

### **Recommendation 8 – Awards and prizes**

- Create award certificates for winners
- Offer high value prizes as this helps with promotion and engagement with your activity
- For gift-card prizes, let winners choose their prize from a list of potential stores/subscriptions that are approved by the UMSU Ethical Register (found on Resource Hub) and set a deadline for winners to make their choice so you can get it sorted promptly

### **Recommendation 9 – Social media & housekeeping**

- Ensure your socials, linktree as well as the Creative Arts page and Calendar on the UMSU website are ALWAYS up to date
- Create a YouTube channel for the department if you find you have a lot of video content to share
- Keep content varied and engaging e.g. use music, gifs and bright colours for ig stories, post memes, videos, student artwork to profiles
- Add Acknowledgements of Country and image descriptions/alt-text to posts
- Tag the following accounts on IG stories so other departments can share:
  - @unionhousetheatre
  - @rowdenwhite
  - @georgepatongallery
  - @mudfestarts
  - @abovewateranthology
  - other relevant departments
- Keep Mudfest and Above Water socials active when possible
- Create an ‘Opportunities’ and a ‘Welfare Resources’ page on the UMSU Creative Arts website and provide links to these pages during Zoom events or on Linktree
- Update graphics and copy particularly for the grants program, creative arts collective and student artist spotlight
- Upgrade subscriptions e.g. Typeform, Linktree, Canva

### **Recommendation 10 – Create an Office Inventory**

- Clarify what items are in the office store cupboard and develop a loan system for students and other office bearers/staff so you can lend equipment and resources

### **Recommendation 11 – Creative Arts Committee**

- Invite your committee to join judging panels for events/comps and attend events
- Be transparent about the department's budget expenditure
- Support your committee and explain bureaucratic processes as most members may have never been in a committee before
- Lead discussions on grant applications with specific questions like "What do people think about the accessibility/sustainability of this project?", "Can anyone identify any breaches in the terms & conditions?", "what feedback do you have on this project?"
- Delegate who will chair and who will take minutes

### **Recommendation 12 – Support**

Finally, and most importantly, reach out to staff, other OBs, your committee and each other for support. It's normal to feel overwhelmed especially when you're starting out but always know that there are so many people who are ready to support you. You got this!

University of Melbourne Student Union  
Annual Report 2021  
To Students' Council 18(21)  
Vaishnavi Ravikrishna  
Creative Arts Department



### Key activities throughout the year

To start off on a stereotypical note and understatement – it has been a YEAR. We began our term thinking we'd have to spend it all fully online, then around March we realised that we could have a 50/50 hybrid year, by June we felt like we could have an in-person event heavy Sem 2, and finally come August, we're back fully online once again! It has been an incredibly difficult time for the arts industry at large, full of hopes, disappointments, and cancelled events. But in spite of all that, I'm so happy, proud, and grateful that Merryn and I have been able to create this tiny pocket for art to thrive and a space for students to explore their artmaking and learned to express themselves artistically, and that we have been able to aid their artistic development the best we could.

We supported 35 student projects with our Creative Arts Grants, we received a 100+ Student Artist Spotlight submissions throughout the year and had roughly 25 winners, we showcased 50 student artworks for Mudfest and declared 26 winners, organised 18 Mudfest artist mentorships, worked with 83 volunteers and a countless number of student artists, we put together other workshops, events, parties, and contests, and most importantly, we created a wonderful, tight-knit creative community that has bonded in the best way with our weekly Creative Arts Collectives that have run consistently throughout the year, right from the start to the end of our term.

To summarise what we've done this year, we started with our first Creative Arts Collective on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and have consistently kept it going every week except for 5 notable exceptions – 2 public holidays (Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve) and 3 workshops/events conducted during Collective (Invasion Day Banner-Making in collaboration with Indigenous, PoC, and Women's, Mood-boarding in collaboration with Media, and Sustainability in Artmaking in collaboration with Enviro).

However, our 'official' start to the year was with Summerfest. We put together a Creative Arts Program with cover art by a student artist that was released in time for Summerfest and was shared at our Summerfest Hopin stall. We actually did have a fair amount of engagement with our Hopin stall, especially from international students and new students, many of whom came along to Arty Party and Creative Arts Collective, and some of whom have become regular members of our community and activities! We held a Speed Friending on March 3<sup>rd</sup> along with Media which was organised by the Host Program Directors! We had a Cyberpunk-themed Arty Party on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in collaboration with

Southbank and UHT on Zoom and it was a huge success! It involved a whole lot of introductions, a guest performance from the incredible singer, Bumpy, meeting student theatre groups from Parkville and Southbank, a quick speed friending, an open mic segment, and just a fun costume/makeup contest!

Following Summerfest, we launched our Student Artist Spotlight in Week 2 as an avenue for students to submit their art (visual art, films, music, origami, anything basically) that we would display on our website and share on our socials weekly. Every week, we would blind the submissions for members of the Creative Arts Committee to vote on and pick a standout submission (subject to receiving a minimum of 3 submissions that week), the winner of which would receive a \$50 voucher to a store of their choice. We received 31 submissions in Semester 1, from Week 2 – Week 11, and selected 8 standout submissions. We restarted the initiative in Semester 2 from Week 2 and we've received 71 submissions so far with 15 standout submissions! It was so popular this semester that we decided to extend submissions until November 20<sup>th</sup>, the end of the exam period so that more students have the opportunity to showcase their work.

We had a small in-person event for the University's Diversity Week titled 'A Handful of Humans – Chalk & Chats' on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, wherein we, and anyone passing by, could outline our hands using chalk on a giant chalk tree that we drew on North Lawn. It wasn't super well-attended, but we had people come and go and they had fun doing it!

Following that, we had another in person event, a Sustainability in Art-Making event in collaboration with Enviro where we made collages using recycled Farrago Magazines (thanks Media!) and just had fun with it! It was very chill! It was during Creative Arts Collective and although we stated that people could join in online, no one came along online. However, this event went well and we have some of the collages up on our office!

We had a Zoom 'Telling Your Stories' workshop in collaboration with UHT that was facilitated by Glenn Shea, an award-winning playwright, a research/curator who talked about his experiences as a First Nations artist and the role his identity plays in his artistic practice. Mudfest artists were encouraged to attend this workshop and although it didn't have the highest attendance, it was recorded and shared.

We held an Arts Grant-Writing Workshop in collaboration with Arts Programs that was hosted by Channon Goodwin, who also hosted this workshop last year. It was really helpful, and the recording now lives on the Grants page of our website to help students with their grant applications.



There was our first De-Stress Dance in collaboration with UHT, that Merryn and Erin chiefly led on Zoom! We didn't end up having a whole lot of people, but those who were there did have a good time!

Up next was Winterfest where I had the chance to be at our in-person stall for a day alongside Tejas from EdPub and Brigit from Disabilities. Unfortunately, only around 15 or 20 people came around in total that day, although I was able to share information about Mudfest and our upcoming events. We also had Arty Party set to happen in person the next week, a stall at Southbank, an in-person De-stress Dance, and a decorate-your-tote-bag activity at the second Carnival Day stall. However, that was the week that we went back into lockdown, so all that ended up being cancelled. We had another Zoom De-stress Dance event that did happen though! As with the previous one, it was primarily led by Merryn and Erin, and only a few people attended.

The next big thing was, of course Mudfest which we started working on from December 2020 and which took place from August 5<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>. I was Artistic Director and Merryn was General Manager. We had a 10-person WONDERFUL production team whom we hired during the course of February to May. It was planned to be a hybrid festival that would be accessible to people domestically and overseas and, in the end, comprised 50 student artist works and 83 volunteers. Unfortunately, we once again entered lockdown shortly before the festival was scheduled to begin and made the decision to move it entirely online. This was tough but it still turned to be a wonderful experience! More detailed information will be in our Mudfest reports.

After that, we had a mask-making workshop on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021, in collaboration with Enviro that was hosted by student artist, CJ Starc, where we learned to hand sew face masks! We didn't have too many people come along, but it was really fun and a great learning opportunity!

We then had a TRIVIArts event on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, in collaboration with UHT that was presented by the UHT Peer Mentors! It was open to alumni and current students, and it was hugely successful! We had around 50 old and new members of the student theatre community there!

We finally had our Above Water Launch on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021! Above Water, our annual collab magazine with Media, turned out looking absolutely stunning! Props to the Media team for making it happen! Since it's also a competition, we presented the awards for the Visual Arts and Writing categories during the launch! Definitely worth having a read through the magazine! There's a digital copy and the physical copies have been mailed out!

We were also part of a collaborative Art Relaxation event on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, that was chiefly hosted by Women's and Disabilities wherein one of our Mudfest artists, Nicola De Rosbo-Davies, taught attendees the basics of art journaling! Attendees also received an art supplies gift voucher!

## **Annual Report 2021**

We were involved in a 'Know Your Rights' workshop in collaboration with Southbank and the Music Students' Society that had speakers from several different organisations form a panel and talk about the various rights of artists, particularly musicians. It was hosted by Annalyce Wiebenga from MSS!

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, we had another Trivia Night event, this one in collaboration with Southbank! Only a few people came along but it was really fun and an opportunity for people to get to know one another better! Jamie and Leyla put together most of the questions and organised the event, and also arranged for gift vouchers for winners and participants!

We had a really fun costume contest collab event with UHT called 'The Swift Tailors: At Home High Fashion' (definitely has nothing to do with Taylor Swift at all in the least and is definitely not a reference, we promise). We only received 8 submissions but they were all so dazzling and showcased all the talent of student artists! 3 winners received gift vouchers and I edited together a video compilation that's up on our socials and website!

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, we organised the winners of the Creative Arts Awards at the UHT Awards Night! We had the Keen-bean-always-here-machine Award, the Across-The-Sea Creativity Award, and the Mover-and-Shaker Experimental Art-Maker Award. Can you tell we're great with names? It was a really nice way to acknowledge the members of the Creative Arts community! We've been organising their prizes!

And FINALLY, we're having an 'All Kinds of Arty – An Open Mic Party' as our closing event of the year on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021, on Zoom, to celebrate this year and to introduce the incoming OBs! Fingers crossed that it goes well!

### **Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

#### **Mudfest 2021 (5<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2021)**

- Even though we weren't able to do everything we initially planned, it was a wild success!
- We conducted a survey afterwards and received some great and also constructive feedback.
- Being online made the event more accessible for a lot of people around the world and it would be good to keep the online component going in future Mudfest years.
- We're really proud to have been able to support SO MANY artists with Mudfest.
- More info in our Mudfest reports that will be helpful to the 2023 OBs when conducting Mudfest 2023.

## **Annual Report 2021**

### **Creative Arts Collective (weekly from Dec 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 to Nov 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021)**

- Definitely one of my favourite endeavours.
- The consistency has been great and a lot of student artists have been able to bond.
- It has been an opportunity for people to create their work and get feedback from others without judgement.
- We introduced themes which has been really helpful in giving people some arty inspiration if they don't already have something in mind to do.
- We started a Facebook group for people who have attended Collective and even though other people don't interact there much, it's still been a good place to share things about what we're doing.
- Conducting other events during collective time in place of our usual collectives didn't really work out. It disrupted the continuity and we noticed that our usual attendees didn't come along. We don't want to make changes to what has been a safe space for art and friendship for so many people.
- Some more regular advertising might have been helpful in drawing in new people to Collective.
- When we changed the day from Thursday to Friday in Sem 2, we did so with the input of the attendees, which was a good decision.
- Overall, definitely a success and one which should continue.

### **Above Water**

- The timeline was as follows:
  - Submission period: 9 April – 11 June
  - Blinding: 15 June – 28 June
  - Selecting pieces: 29 June – 6 July
  - Judging: 6 July – 19 July
  - Template creation – 2 Aug – 9 Aug
  - Templates go out: 10 Aug
  - Templates returned: 31 Aug
  - To Gen Sec: 10 Sept
  - To printer: 15 Sept
  - Above Water Launch: 30 Sept
- The Media department was absolutely the most active in this process and took care of nearly everything!
- It turned out amazing and we had a good number of works in there.
- We had trouble sticking to the timeline above, just because so much was going on.
- Since a fair amount of this process was going on during Mudfest prep and the festival, unfortunately we didn't contribute as much as we could have otherwise.
- In the future, it would be good for Creative Arts OBs to be more involved in the whole process right from the start so that the load can be shared better.

### **Student Artist Spotlight (Sem 1 Week 2 – Sem 1 Week 11, Sem 2 Week 2 – Sem 2 Exam Week 3)**

- This was an amazing endeavour and we received over double the submissions in Sem 2 as opposed to Sem 1.

## **Annual Report 2021**

- The initial deadline weekly was Friday midnight. We later changed that to midnight on Saturdays which was a good decision and worked better.
- Getting the committee to vote on the submissions was a good decision as it makes them feel more involved and also shows them some of the artistic talent that they're funding.
- While we always got the submissions up on the website on Mondays and also contact the winners on Mondays, we have dropped the ball on putting it up on our socials sometimes.
- We've fallen behind on posting submissions on Facebook and our Insta stories on time.
- We have some weeks where we don't get enough submissions. We should have done more consistent promotion.
- In Sem 2, we introduced weekly themes (not compulsory) for submissions based on some feedback we received from students, just to serve as inspiration if needed. We started using the theme from the previous week's Collective, which has worked well. People can make something during Collective on Fridays and then submit it the next Monday.
- Giving students a chance to win \$50 weekly is really good and can help them buy art materials. Even increasing the amount to \$100 weekly wouldn't be a bad idea.
- Keeping the submissions running out of semester like we've done in Sem 2 worked really well and would be good to continue.
- We always made sure to ask for permission from people to share their submissions with identifiable information.

### **Grant Program**

- We had 6 grant rounds in total, 3 in each semester and supported 35 projects in total.
- We allocated \$2,500 initially for each round, however some rounds went over that amount and some other rounds fell well under it, so it pretty much evened out and stayed within the total budget.
- A big problem – we didn't do enough promo for this. We barely did any promo for the Creative Arts Grants.
- Even though we were able to fund a range of different projects, we had a few repeat applicants, which is great! But our lack of promo means that we didn't have as many new people applying as we would have liked.
- Even though the Terms and Conditions of the grants were clearly listed in the application, a couple of people ignored them, and we had to remind them when they sent in the application. Highlighting those important points in some way would have helped with that.
- Every grant applicant has to first send in a draft, then we have a meeting with them where we give them feedback on their application, and then they make any necessary changes and submit a final copy which is what is circulated to the committee.
- Meeting with the grant applicants is very helpful, especially since many of them have never written a grant application.
- Having the grant application documents in Word and PDF format worked well because it's much easier to make changes and edits.
- Although 6 grant rounds is an increase from last year's 5, we feel like it was still limiting. The grant rounds were strictly within semester times, and increasing the number of rounds would be helpful in giving more students the opportunity to apply and receive funding.

### **The Swift Tailors: At Home High Fashion Project & Competition**

### **Annual Report 2021**

- This was a really fun project and one that I was really excited about.
- We did a fair bit of promo for this and also put up a couple of moodboards to inspire people.
- The submissions were judged by our committee using a rubric of creativity, sustainability, originality, skill, and effort. This was a really great way to break down the scores and helped with creating a more balanced view of the submissions.
- In spite of our efforts with promotion, we only received 8 submissions, 3 of which were different submissions from 1 student.
- All the submissions were gorgeous and displayed so much talent and creativity, however, it would have been nice to have received more submissions and get more people involved.
- The prizes were \$150 for the winner, \$100 for the runner-up, and \$50 for honourable mentions. While this was nice, I wonder if offering higher value prizes would have enticed more people to submit.
- We kept submissions open for three weeks. Possibly if we had put out some sample videos of really simple outfits/costumes, it might have encouraged more people to send in things, realising that it could be low-effort.
- I had fun making the video compilation and it's up on our website.
- We made sure to ask for permission from people to share their submissions with identifiable information.

### Online Workshops

- These were: Grant writing workshop, Telling Your Stories, Know Your Rights, Art relaxation workshop, Making Masks (and friendly chats), Invasion Day Banner-Making, Moodboarding.
- The details of these workshops are mostly listed above under Key Activities.
- Unfortunately, none of these workshops were as well-attended as we would have liked.
- We did do a fair amount of promo for each, so I'm unsure why we didn't have too many people present.
- We could maybe have considered appealing to more targeted audiences and getting in touch with relevant clubs & societies, asking them to share it with their members.

### Trivia

- We held a trivia night in collaboration with UHT and one in collaboration with Southbank. Further details are above in Key Activities.
- The TRIVIArts with UHT was really well-attended, possibly because so many people in the Student Theatre community know one another and it was a great opportunity for them to hang out on Zoom.
- UHT organised the prizes but they were only \$50 voucher/s to split between the members of the winning group/s.
- Either having a higher value voucher or having a set number of group members and allocating a certain amount of each would be better.
- The Trivia Night with Southbank unfortunately only had around 6 attendees, although participation vouchers were offered to incentivise them.
- More promo would have helped.

- The questions were also quite broad and encompassed a lot of general topics. Having more art/creative-specific questions would have given people a better idea of what they could expect and would also have allowed us to share it in a more targeted way.

### **Summerfest & Winterfest**

- This comprised Arty Party, Speed-friending, Hop-in, De-stress Dance Winterfest. More details in Key Activities.
- Our Zoom Arty Party was pretty successful. We had under 30 attendees, which is a pretty good number for a Zoom event. However, this is nowhere near how many people usually attend in-person Arty Parties.
- Collaborating with Southbank and UHT on it was really nice, especially with Southbank. We were able to create some more opportunities for engagement between the students.
- The open mic was also a great idea since we had a lot of people trying out their skills.
- Speed-friending worked well and a bunch of new students came along. It might have been a good idea to repeat it for Winterfest.
- Winterfest Hopin had significantly fewer people coming around than the Summerfest one. This might have just been a result of the lower number of new admissions in Sem 2 compared to Sem 1.
- Both times on Hopin we just had a somewhat extended version of Creative Arts Collective where we all just did art while talking and welcoming new people as they came.
- De-stress Dance had very few attendees. This is surprising because it was a very popular event last year.
- Possibly there was not enough promo done, and maybe we could have put out some 'hype' videos out on our socials leading up to the event.

### **De-stress Dance**

- More details in Key Activities. Same issues and evaluation as the Winterfest De-stress Dance.

### **Creative Arts Awards**

- We had three awards this year that were presented at the UHT Awards.
- The Keen-bean-always-here-machine Award: \$250 gift card/subscription awarded to a student who has been consistently engaging with Creative Arts community in the course of the year.
- The Across-The-Sea Creativity Award: \$250 gift-card/subscription awarded to an international student who has been meaningfully engaging with the Creative Arts department this year from overseas.
- The Mover-and-Shaker Experimental Art-Maker Award: \$500 gift-card/subscription/mentorship awarded to a student who has been experimental in their art-making while engaging with the department this year.
- We're really glad with the awards we chose this year.
- Merryn and I also chose the nominees and the winners without bias based on our knowledge of their engagement with our department in various avenues.

- However, we did take into consideration while choosing the winners, if it was someone that our department has already funded a great deal before, just to keep things equitable to the best of our abilities.
- However, it might have been nice if we had found some way to involve our committee in the selection process, just to keep things transparent and to keep us accountable.

### **In-person events**

- We only held 2 in-person events this semester: A Handful of Humans – Chalk & Chats (for Diversity Week) and the Sustainability in Art-Making Workshop. 2 other planned in-person events were cancelled due to lockdowns: Arty Party 2.0 and Welcome to Mudfest event.
- We didn't have much time to plan and execute our Diversity Week event, and barely any time to promote it, so it's unsurprising that we only had a couple of people come by.
- However, we did get onto it as soon as the University offered the chance to run an event for Diversity Week, so this wasn't really something we could have avoided.
- We still have a whole lot of chalk in the office!
- The sustainability event was conducted at the Arts Lab and did go well, but we shouldn't have done it during Collective time.

### **All Kinds of Arty – An Open Mic Party!**

- This is coming up on November 25<sup>th</sup> and will be the last event of our term.
- It's just going to be a fun open mic event to round out the year.
- We'll also be introducing the incoming Creative Arts OBs at the event.
- Depending on how many people sign up for the open mic in advance, we might also let people perform impromptu if that's something they want to do.
- We want to do some more promo for this event because we'd really like to have a nice crowd.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

- Have your communication sorted and established right from the start. This is a role that works best when both of you work together and in a balanced way. Decide on a start and end time (the same times if possible) for the days that you're working and touch base at the start of those days. Merryn and I, when working remotely, would Zoom every morning on the days that we were working so we could decide what we would each be working on that day, also preventing doubling up on things.
- Also, have a shared calendar. It helps so much with scheduling events and meetings without having to constantly check with the other person if they're going to be free.
- Delegate responsibilities and make it clear regarding who is in charge of what. Merryn and I decided at the beginning that she would take minutes and create the agenda for the committee meetings while I would chair. Similarly, we decided that she would handle most of the financial matters although I would also be aware of it. There are several things like that which are going to

pop up consistently throughout the year, so it's good to establish at the start what you'll each be doing, to keep things running smoothly.

- Do lots of collaborations with other staff and student departments! We wanted to do more, but we just didn't manage to work things out or find the time. So maybe put down some tentative dates for events at the start of the year, even if you haven't decided on what those events are going to be. That way you'll know when to start planning those and who you can plan them out with.
- Keep the Creative Arts Collective separate to other workshops. Avoid holding other workshops or events during collective/in place of collective. It disrupts the weekly flow and people treasure that space. Also, keep Collective going online because that keeps it accessible for a lot of people and also makes it easier for them to do their art and they already have all their materials there!
- Have more grant rounds beyond 6 and maybe hold some of them during the breaks and not just semester? Continue meeting with applicants before they submit their application and clarify the acquittal process. Review the Terms and Conditions and highlight/bold them so that people are aware of them. Grant recipients are supposed to thank/acknowledge us when promoting their projects and it would be good to emphasise that more. Send logos along with outcome emails. Send the acquittal report form and the acquittal deadlines via the Outlook calendar to remind both recipient and department of deadlines.
- Check and upgrade subscriptions to pro as needed (Typeform, Linktree, Canva Pro).
- It would be nice to keep the award certificates going! I made all the certificates myself but if you'd prefer not to do it yourself, you could hand it off to UMSU Design. But you'd just have to make sure to give them all the info well in advance. Try giving out some more high value prizes and continue to provide people with a choice of store/subscription but make a deadline so that people will get back to you in time. Mentorships as prizes are fine, but it's just not an ideal option if you don't have time or if you have a lot of people who are requesting mentorship.
- Put in your events on Basecamp at least 3 – 4 weeks in advance. Do your own ticketing registration via TryBooking or Eventbrite (it's super simple and intuitive) so that you can keep track of numbers and expected attendance yourselves. Promote your events in all groups, pages, and newsletters, and get in touch with other groups, clubs, and societies to share your things. Invite other staff and OBs via email.
- Make sure that the website, UMSU Calendar, socials, and Linktree are updated. Create a YouTube channel if you want to do a bunch of videos. Our social media engagement has significantly gone down, so keep putting up engaging content. Maybe do some reels and memes and things? Tag relevant people to share things. Update the graphics for Collective, Grants, and Student Artist Spotlight with UMSU Design help.
- Add a permanent page on the website for updated arts opportunities around and one for welfare resources that can be shared around everywhere.



- There is a list from 2019 of some of the stuff inside the storage space. Cross-check that and take inventory and put up a page on the website with the things that people can loan.
- Student Artist Spotlight – add question to provide image descriptions and add question about process of artmaking to include in the post.,
- Always ask for consent to share work, especially if you're also sharing a student's identifiable information.
- Continue to involve the Creative Arts Committee in things. Keep them in the loop about what's going on. Have them be on the judging panel for competitions. For a lot of them, this may be the first time they're on a committee, so make sure you take the time to explain all the processes and how funds are spent. Create a set list of questions to discuss in grant meetings that for each application which hit all the important parts of the application, so that the committee will know for sure what to express their thoughts on. Be transparent, take accountability, and always declare conflicts of interest.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. The UMSU staff are all so lovely, so you can always rely on them and each other. You can ask the Arts and Culture staff for advice during your fortnightly meetings.
- Play Taylor Swift if you don't want the office to be HAUNTED!

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Brigit Doyle**

**Disabilities**



### **Key activities throughout the year**

This year has been an interesting year with both in person and online activities. Popular activities were particularly around mental health issues and social activities.

- Collectives including collaborations with Queer and POCs.
- Art workshops, including Stress ball making.
- Mental health workshops
- Giveaways - Including. Mental health wellbeing bags and bath bomb making kits.
- Mental health first aid vouchers. For first aid training.
- Art competition.
- Merchandise. We made keep cups.
- Workshop around how to tell your disability story.
- Movie evenings.
- Art relaxation.
- Trivia afternoons
- And attempted exercise. Pilates movement for everyone.

Collectives towards the end of the year have really been going well with regular attendance and attendant the last collective running for 2 1/2 hours.

Our work with. The disability and conclusion through Unimelb has led a formal meeting with students about disability services and to the creation of an unofficial WhatsApp group which people have found really helpful at providing support.

I have really enjoyed running different activities and meeting new students. Each activity has found different people participating, which has been exciting. To meet so many new people and to in some way help these students.

### **Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

It has been a high idea and the moving back and forth between online and in person has been very challenging for myself. And made it hard to connect with some students as many students with disabilities don't feel the connexion to the online space which they really require from our department. We went through a period where there was not the engagement with online activities, so we have

**Annual Report 2021**

changed things up. and done more online giveaways rather than events and in the end with our voucher giveaways at collectives have become more popular. These activities include the art competition and the mental health workshops and mental health first aid. This is a way for us to be able to help the future as well as the present. The my plan for the year. Did not exactly come to effect. Because I realised there was more of a need for social events rather than educational events. I came to terms with that and very much enjoyed the social events as well.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

Understand your audience. Do activities that you want to run and that you believe will be good for people in the disability community. Staying motivated is critical.

I think taking the work we have started with working with the university to improve the connections with the SEDS department in the CAPS department so that we can improve those channels of communication and continue to improve the conditions for students with disabilities at the university.

*The following recommendations were prepared by Clea Porteous Borthwick, Students with Disabilities Representative 2021.*

### **This year I focused on**

- Building a disability community at university
- Hearing students concerns to gather information on areas needing changes to social understanding, processes and university policy reform.

### **Ways in which a bigger disability community was formed**

- Online events that focused on group participation such as workshops, seminars, mental health first aid trainings, online movie nights.

- New staff and new processes in Student Equity and Disability Services formed a two-part online university-wide feedback session with around 100 attendees, a university community member made a WhatsApp group from this. This WhatsApp group grew to be a really supportive, positive and understanding group and enabled me to listen and understand, make events on what people wanted, raise specific concerns with other University bodies and promote UMSU Disabilities events like collectives. The online group is also present on Discord and will hopefully be on Facebook next year. Finding a sense of community allows people to see some of their own disability struggles in others, which can help humanise and remove shame from deeply internalised ableism. Some people find that removing shame from experiences of disability is the first step to being able to ask for disability access needs to be met so this is why building a community was a 2021 priority for me. Also creation of community allowed for us to learn from each other, which is important as most disability access needs information is not common knowledge or easy to find on the internet or through other means.

### **Information channels I found helpful for understanding harmful processes and policies**

## **Annual Report 2021**

## **for people with disabilities**

- Committee meetings
- WhatsApp group chat
- UMSU Disabilities Collectives (I hosted semester 2, Thursday 12-1pm)
- Lived experiences of OB' s, myself and other students in UMSU
- Lived experiences of my friends
- UniMelb Love Letters

I attended all but one UMSU Disabilities Committee meeting this year, and hosted the semester 2 Collectives weekly on Thursdays lunchtimes, I was also in the online chats and listen to experiences of UMSU colleagues and my friends. As a council Representative and online student it's easy to be detached and not know what students are going through, or to have a deep understanding of one's own struggles with disability but a vague understanding of others experiences with different disabilities and different systems of oppression. Being present for formal and informal discussions on disability was essential to representing the current and rapidly changing needs of students.

Effort was made to have a friendly and energised UMSU Disabilities Committee to make information-sharing and discussions on priorities easier. I am grateful to Disability OB' s Brigit and Lindsay for facilitating this. Efforts such as getting to understand each other's understanding and experiences with disability at the beginning of the year was aided by getting committee recommendations on new books for the Disabilities Space bookshelf. Meeting reminders and knowing each committee members individually was helpful, as well as an end of year feedback survey of committee experiences, and thank you gifts sent to each committee member. Feedback was given that cancelled meetings due to not meeting quorum was a frustration.

An example of creation of events based on demand from the students with disabilities was in one of our collectives a student suggested having a panel discussion on Disabilities, and I asked what types of topics we should look at and we brainstormed while on screen share on Canva through Zoom. This type of event development based on students is an effective way to have events aligned to students needs.

The online UMSU Disabilities Arts Competition significantly increased UMSU Disabilities social media reach to students, and emphasised self expression, sharing experienced and participation by having participation prizes for all and prompts that emphasised intersectional experiences with disability, mental health conditions, neurodiversity and chronic illness. The way in which students shared their experiences of disability through digital art, poems, drawing and photography was deeply impactful and informative on themes of isolation, alienation, struggle and internal strength and constant adapting.

## **Future considerations**

### **Broadening the name or subtitle of the UMSU Disabilities Department to reflect a greater range of experiences and identities with disability.**

This is because social definitions of Disability can be quite narrow and government definitions of disability capture only a narrow group of people, and people with disabilities benefit from

broader definitions. Also the stigma of identifying as having a disability is difficult, thus making it difficult to come to a disability event. For example when promoting UMSU Disabilities events on my personal social media and in discussions with friends and newer people I tend to describe peoples with ‘Disabilities’ instead as ‘Disabilities, mental health conditions and/or are neurodiverse’ or experiences with disability or ‘identify’ as having a disability. Worth emphasizing is that it’s helpful to use lots of different terms and phrases for disability because different phrases speak to different people. Overall, using broader names for Disabilities events could help more people identify and take part.

### **Rebranding and/or more consistent branding**

The Disabilities Department is less well known than other departments so building a tool kit of symbols, colour palettes, fonts and design features that reflect long term values and long term priorities of the department would help build ‘brand awareness’ .

Trigger warning: mentions of sexual assault and workplace bullying and racism

### **Improved work practices, improved workplace culture and increased training**

Hearing the negligence of University processes and policies and ongoing struggles of students is emotionally difficult, so work culture, ongoing training and payment is essential to sustaining wellbeing and working well. I look forward to seeing changes implemented from the UMSU Governance review with improved feedback and guidance for OB’s and Councillors in ways that suit each individual. I also recommend more trainings for Council and Office Bearers in areas such as workplace bullying (Lifeline), how to receive disclosures of sexual harassment and assault (CASA House), trauma informed work practices (Blue knot), and team work training on how white people can avoid dominating discussion and other ways racism is often normalised in workplaces. Legal trainings helped me a lot and should continue. Training should also be on a more regular basis and OB’s and Council representatives should be paid for attending these. Better payment amounts and systems for OB’s and Council representatives would also help people structure their work and be able to afford a more reasonable quality of life.

**Disabilities**

Lindsay Tupper-Creed

*Not Submitted*

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Jennisha Arnanta**

**Education (Academic Affairs) Department**

### **Key activities throughout the year**

#### **1. Summerfest/Winterfest**

Every department was able to have an Instagram takeover of UMSU's account this year. This is a chance to create a short introductory video of what Education Academic department is and showing a bit of your personality.

There were also stalls which my co-office bearer manned for incoming Melbourne University students during their orientation/Summerfest week. Given that we were operating mostly online last year, we also needed to send a video for hopin just in case both of us were not able to manage the online stall.

Education department also still had merchandises and booklets left. Stalls during Summerfest/Winterfest is the place to give them out

#### **2. Student Representative Network**

At the beginning of our term, we updated the 2020 SRN Policy. Both Planning and I reviewed the 2020 SRN Policy and felt that more information can be provided in the SRN Policy to better inform applicants. Therefore, the SRN Policy was updated again to ensure greater transparency, fairness and accountability for SRN elected members.

Opening and going through the selection process to elect SRN was also essential in the beginning of our term to determine the representatives that would be going to academic committee meetings such as 'TALQAC', 'SPC', 'APC' and many other committees. I sit on these three committees with another student representative.

#### **3. Elected Reps Meeting**

Early in our term, Prof Kerri-Lee Krause who used to manage elected reps meeting was replaced by Sarah Wilson.

Together with other student representatives (GSA, UMSU Intl), representatives from UMSU including EdAc, President and GenSec goes to Elected Reps meeting to discuss issues faced by students directly to those involved in student life within the University. These are one of the most important meetings EdAc OBs can go to, to fight for student's welfare. It is also the meeting where WAM Adjustment, Extension of Library Hours, Study Spaces happened. Most of the updates on international students, vaccination and borders were also communicated by the University to us through these meetings.

- *Extension of Library Hours and Access Campaign:*

During Semester 1, we raised on library hours still being restricted and there being a lack of consistency across libraries. We pushed the university for there to be consistency and equal access to these resources across the faculties.

After receiving a disappointing response from the University regarding library hours, we launched a video campaign regarding library hours. We also circulated a form for

students to share their voice on the matter. A total of 500 quality data were collected.

We received support from different departments and clubs throughout this campaign which contributed massively towards its success.

Planning and I spent hours every day during this campaign circulating flyers in libraries to push forward this campaign.

Due to the snap lockdown in semester 1, safe study spaces were implemented instead. However in semester 2, library hours were extended according to government regulation.

- *WAM Adjustment Campaign*

This is possibly the biggest campaign that Education Academic department spearheaded this year. The WAM Adjustment Campaign was a 3-parts campaign in collaboration with GSA and UMSU Intl to push forward for the reversal of grade adjustment policy for these unprecedented times. The campaign involved the release of reports/statement, video and petition. My Co-OB who is a student member in Academic Boards fought for this during the meeting. We successfully got over 20,000 signatures for our campaign and through periods of gruelling back and forth with the University, we managed to revert the policy back in Semester 2. We also communicated our results through email and video.



- *Reduced Study Load Campaign*

This was a campaign we did early in our term. Over the summer, UMSU International and UMSU Education (Academic) received concerns around applying for reduced study load, special consideration, leave of absence and course deferrals. We had a meeting with the university where we urged the university to allow personal statements for such applications, making it easier for offshore students to access these services. Through arranging meetings with the University, we were able to receive positive outcomes from this

- *Exchange Programs*

Before the lockdown life, we received concerns and grievances from students regarding the cancellation of the Overseas Exchange Program that will commence prior to 27 February 2022. As such, we emailed the university on this decision and requested clarification on this decision given that there were a few questions that arose from the brief cancellation email sent to students. The email was sent before the travel announcement. The University then had responded back ensuring us that this was a matter they were currently looking into and will keep us and advocacy updated. Fortunately good news from the government translates to a revision of this decision.

#### **4. EDPUB x EDAC: Defend Our Education Rally Event**

This was a collaboration with Education Public department. Education Academic and Education (Public) held our UMSU Education x NUS Defend Our Education Rally on the 25th of March. It was to call for improved, more equitable, more accessible education. This was an incredible protest against the attacks on students and Education from both The University of Melbourne and the Federal Government. Our speakers gave insights into how job cuts and subject cuts have affected both staff and students, how specific populations of students are affected, and how the quality of our education has been worsened due to a prioritisation of profit over education. I had the honor to be a speaker during this rally.

#### **5. Anti-Racism Module with the People of Colour Department**

We worked in collaboration with the People of Colour Department to develop an Anti-Racism Module on campus to support for people of colour in the university.

This included producing a proposal for the University and a consultation with Prof Julie Willis on this.

After consultation with the University, we received positive outcome for this. An anti-racism module will be launched as part of their discovery module. This module will consist of multiple subsections

promoting the importance of inclusion and aims to address discrimination, there will also be a dedicated section to educate students on First Nations history

Two of the subsections aim to address racism on campus and responding to racism on campus, they acknowledge the University's racist past and link articles on that and are linked with further resources.

## **6. Academic Committee Meeting**

This year, I was the representative sitting on SPC, TALQAC and APC along with students chosen from SRN.

- *Selection Procedure Committee*

Normally during these meetings, review of endorsement of scholarships are done. As student reps, we must make sure these proposals are clear and equitable for students. One such concern that were raised this year was a major discussion on ongoing work in the 'Inherent requirement working group' and 'Grade equivalency' working group. Both UMSU and GSA raised concern on the proposal of inherent requirement around wordings that may deter students from enrolling in a course and lack of student consultancy within the process. The proposal was put to a vote and was not endorsed and the working group will review the work again.

We also had discussion on the Faculty's biennial WAM report. This report has been collated to identify possible bias in the method of translating WAMs from other institutions to a University of Melbourne (UOM) WAM (used as the 'Entry Score' in this report) that may advantage or disadvantage applicants from other institutions in the selection process.

- *Teaching & Quality Learning Committee*

These meetings involved discussing and ensuring quality education from the University. We discussed the yearly QILT result and kept University accountable to action steps they will be taking for enhancing their quality education. StudentLife Progress were also discussed with the committee and a few concerns regarding the initiative were raised. This included a lack of student consultancy during the early stages of the process. Questions on how the University will ensure there won't be a clash of programs during Orientation and how the University will keep offshore students included in their commencement were also raised. These are discussions

We also raised concern on the increasing email we received from students regarding assessments in SWOTVAC.

- *Academic Program Committee*

Academic Program Committee involves discussion on approval, suspension and discontinuation of courses/subjects. Some things that happened this year:

All languages (instead of only asian languages) was approved for Bachelor of Arts students. This was a huge win for us as it has been an ongoing demand from students for years

The grade equivalency report was brought to the APC committee for review. UMSU and a few members of the committee in the room raised concern on standardizing procedure to reveal median score alongside grades. The proposal will be reviewed again

During the initial proposal to the Introduction of Discovery Subject, there were several concerns outlined by academics and student representatives. Specifically, the subject overlaps with the orientation week for all University of Melbourne students. This brings up the concern of transitioning students from high school to University. It means that during this transitional week, students would be concerned about whether to prioritise their academic workload (10-hour commitment for this subject during O week) and the other activities of O week conducted by the University. We have received an outcome that the Faculty will withdraw their current proposal and submit a revised proposal that does not conflict with the orientation week.

- *Examination Subcommittee*

This committee only meets once every semester. the Exam subcommittee comes together to discuss problems faced by students to better improve the coming term's exams.

During my term, I raised concerns on technical difficulties that students faced during exams (Canvas crashing etc..) and the unreasonable amount of details they would have to provide to apply for special consideration afterwards. For some, when such incidents happen, adding to the amount of pressure of examinations, students might not be in the right headspace to be able to calmly gather evidence when these issues happen. We agreed that there needs to be better communication to inform students and simpler methods for students to handle these situations prior to examinations.

We also discussed cases where a subject coordinator decides to increase the exam time during the examination and how to best communicate these messages to students, considering they may not read email or open canvas announcements while doing their exams. I suggested popup message as an alternative, which are being investigated by the committee for future assessments.

- *Academic Integrity Campaign*

Due to the reports from exam subcommittee, we realised the amount of academic integrity allegations during the semester with many coming from lack of knowledge on what to and what not to do. As such, we released a mini campaign for academic integrity involving the release of booklet and social media post on our FB page and through promotion from UMSU.

## **7. Responding to Emails**

Responding to email concerns and queries from students and academics throughout the year. Closer to SWOTVAC and Examination period, there were lots of concerns of assessment in SWOTVAC week, we had to email each subject coordinator letting them know of the policy published on the University website and adjust.

Occasionally there are also concerns that fall beyond our portfolio. In such cases, we forwarded these concerns to advocacy with brief summary of the circumstances students are facing.

## **8. Keeping up with Social Media**

Throughout the year, we had to stay on top of our social media including Facebook, Instagram, Wordpress, Basecamp and Mailchimp.

At the beginning of the year during handover period, we had to change passwords for all social media account and provide pictures/ videos to introduce ourselves to students as the new Education Academic Officers. Kapwing was also an essential tool to learn for captioning all videos we released.

We also created group chats with EdPub and the committee members for communication purposes.

## **9. Education Committee Meeting**

Together with the Education Public department, we used when2meet to determine the timeslot in which most committee members and office bearers are available to have our update meetings.

During these meetings, we updated every committee member on our work and alternate between OBs for the role of minute takers and chairs.

## **10. Special Consideration BPO Workshop**

Planning and I have been part of the Specon working group where we provided student perspective on the process of special consideration to make it better. We were able to join interactive sessions with relevant stakeholders and identify current pain points as well as steps moving forward.

### **A word of appreciation**

I would like to show my appreciation to all the departments and individuals who have advised/helped us with our campaigns. We would not have been able to achieve what we did without your support.

I would also like to provide a massive shoutout to Muskaan, Kalyana, Allen, Hueman, Mohamed for the enormous amount of support and guidance they have showed me through my journey as education office bearer.

Of course, last but not least, a shoutout to Planning. I really couldn't have asked for a better Co-OB.

It has been a rollercoaster of a year but being able to learn and work together with all of you made it worthwhile

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

- Emails

As student representatives, it is very important to keep up to date with your emails. Most students will be reaching out to your inbox on their education related concern and queries. This year, we received significant amount of concern due to the pandemic. Some concerns such as 'Assessments during SWOTVAC' can be addressed through policies you can find in the unimelb page and further resolved through correspondence with the subject coordinator. However, there may be some that you would not be able to solve and those would require further assistance from advocacy team.

In such cases, email advocacy with a brief description of the student's enquiry and forward the email.

- Social Media

In this digital age, social media will be your best friend when launching a campaign. Facebook is also a good platform to know about student's concerns. Listen and talk to these individuals.

Also be familiar with kapwing, you will need it.

- Academic Committee Meeting

Take notes, raise your concern but also mention things you appreciate so the academics know when they are doing things right. Giving student perspective is always invaluable.

Don't forget to follow up afterwards.

- Record things you have done throughout the year and make smaller reports to compile them into annual report at the end of the year. Pretty sure I missed out on a lot of things in this report.

- Campaigns

Collaboration with other departments and other student body (GSA, UMSU Intl) increases your chance of a successful campaign

Lastly, be proactive in initiating meeting with relevant University people. You don't have to wait for a pre-arranged meeting to bring up concerns. Email them and discuss with them.

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Planning Saw**

**Education (Academic Affairs) Department**

**Key activities throughout the year**

**Academic Board on Special Assessment**

I started my term and attended my first Academic Board within a week of my appointment. It was a crucial meeting where the ex-President of Academic Board, Professor Nilss Olekalns, has proposed that assessment/examination result would be pending and unavailable to students who applied for a special assessment/examination. Representatives from both GSA and UMSU spoke out against the amendment. Disappointingly, the amendment was approved 57-42.

**Raising issues on student connectedness and mental health**

In our first elected reps meeting, I raised concerns on the University's plan on tackling student connectedness and mental health, and Prof Kerri-Lee Krause then discussed the development of the University Mental Health Framework, as well as current initiatives and programs. This issue would be followed up by us over the next few months.

**Introduction of Student Declaration form as support for compassionate or compelling circumstances**

During the summer of 2020, UMSU International and UMSU Education (Academic) raised concerns on reduced study load application, special consideration, leave of absence and course deferrals. We had a meeting with the university where we urged the university to allow personal statements for such applications, making it easier for off-shore students to access these services.

The outcome of this discussion was the availability of the Student Declaration option as a support for compassionate or compelling circumstances. This meant that students can provide a Student Declaration in the circumstance that they cannot obtain a medical certificate, health professional form or statutory declaration.

## **Addressing transphobia at the University of Melbourne**

We had spoke about the March and the open letter during our Elected Reps meeting, raising the need for the University to put tangible work to support the community instead of just talk. We then collaborated with the Queer Department to identify the ways to prevent the continuation of the Feminism subject in its existing form.

### **Extension of Library Hours and Access**

The reopening of libraries on campus has been a really positive change. However, for the past month, library hours remained restricted with Baillieu Library only open until 7pm, even though many students would usually stay beyond that timing in previous years. We believe part of returning our campus back to normal is to ensure that our students are able to return to normal study patterns which include studying after hours in the library.

During our elected reps meeting, we raised issues on the restriction of library hours as well as the lack of consistency across the different libraries. We pushed the university to be consistent and fair in their access to resources.

Such changes have been implemented.

### **Spaces for Zoom classes**

In Semester 1, we raised the issues that students that were coming back to campus were finding it difficult to balance in-person and online classes given the absence of spaces for them to be on Zoom in quiet spaces. Because of our push, the University then agreed to introduce designated spaces for the purposes of attending Zoom classes while on campus.

### **Preventing Bachelor of Fine Arts subject from overlapping with Orientation Week**

During my Academic Program Committee report, I noted that with regards to Bachelor of Fine Arts - Introduction of Discovery Subject, there were several concerns outlined by academics and student representatives. Specifically, the subject overlaps with the orientation week for all University of Melbourne students. This brings up the concern of transitioning students from high school to university. It means that during this transitional week, students would be concerned about whether to prioritise their academic workload (10-hour commitment for this subject during O week) and the other activities of O week conducted by the University.



During the meeting, I questioned those concerns and I have sent an email seeking a response from the faculty to address these concerns. GSA rep shares similar concerns on this and have sent in enquiries on this too.

We received a positive outcome from this. We have received an outcome that the Faculty will withdraw their current proposal and submit a revised proposal that does not conflict with the orientation week.

### **Special Consideration Business Process Ownership**

Students and Scholarly Services, SASS, embarked on the Business Process Ownership

Initiative to resolve inconsistencies in policies. Special consideration has been specifically

selected by SASS for this pilot following the implementation of the new SEDS structure, the

increases in the volume of special consideration applications received through 2020 and 2021, and the known variations in current practices.

Jennisha, I, and Phoebe from UMSU Advocacy first attended the 90 minute workshop to share our insights, then Jennisha and myself were invited to a series of workshopping sessions where we and other personnel from multiple divisions identified barriers in access, and prioritised strategies to support faster transition between services, and therefore less wait time for students.

### **Education Academic and People of Colour Department Review of the Joining Melbourne modules**

Jennisha, I and Mohamed had pushed the University for a module which informs on the issue of racism and supported the need for anti-racism strategies within our campus. In response, the University responded that such elements were already present within the Joining Melbourne Modules which would be fully released in Semester 1, 2022 to incoming students.

We reviewed the playpens for the two Joining Melbourne Modules so as to ensure that those modules are modified to better accommodate the needs of students.

2.3 Respect at university - Racism on campus explores racism and acknowledges that

universities do have a problem of racism. Although the Give Nothing to Racism video delivers a compelling message about racism, we believe it would be more informative to include the perspectives of our University of Melbourne students. This allows students to connect more with the idea that students experience racism on campus rather than it being a distance experience. For example, students

can recount their personal experiences of racism or accounts of racism that they have heard from other friends.

In 2.4 Respect at University - Responding to racism on campus, while we appreciate that there are allyship to prevent racism, it would be appreciated if there can be the inclusion of support services for those students who experienced racism and what they can do/who to approach in those situations.

In 2.5 Respect at University - Gender diversity, similarly, we believe that the inclusion of student perspectives such as representatives from the Queer Department would greatly increase the accessibility to the students. Topics such as the explanation of pronouns have been promoted by the Queer Department. We believe that including the voices of our Queer students at The University of Melbourne to speak on their perspectives and the challenges they faced would be greatly appreciated.

In addition, we believe there can be an additional subsection dedicated to our international students. Currently, the physical barrier between domestic and international students may give rise to the concept of two different populations rather than ONE university student population. Our international students that are onshore and offshore have shared issues as well as distinct issues that these communities would deeply appreciate if they are explored through these modules. For example, our onshore international students often had to decide to leave their family and friends in their home countries through this extended period of the pandemic for fear of never coming back to Australia. They have struggled with employability and strike a balance between work, studies and social, and both domestic and international students can appreciate these lived experiences. By sharing their stories, our students and staff would have a deeper appreciation of the struggles faced by each community and how we can be more empathetic with our struggles.

### **Vaccinations by 5th November**

Students would have received an email with regards to the need to be fully vaccinated (double dose) by 5th November to enter the University. This would apply to all services at the University, whether it is to attend a class or to visit the library.

The University is currently working on a system to verify the vaccination of each student, to be rolled out by 5th November. It is likely that to register for in-person classes after the 5th November would require the student to be fully vaccinated.

### **Unavailability to book CAPS appointment**

I have received concerns from students that have not been able to book CAPS appointments as first-time users and I have checked the system myself. I have sent an email to George Habib (Associate Director Wellbeing Services) to inform on this and to adjust capacity to accommodate increased demand.

In response, George has acknowledged the current issues in capacity and has redistributed support to accommodate increased demand.

### **Academic Integrity Campaign**

We launched a small social media campaign to raise awareness on academic integrity to ensure students are aware of actions that might lead to academic misconduct. We had received concerns that students were not aware of certain practices which constitute academic misconduct and therefore aimed to better inform them before the examinations started.

### **Cancellation of Overseas Exchange Program**

We have received concerns and grievances from students regarding the cancellation of the Overseas Exchange Program that will commence prior to 27 February 2022.

As such, we emailed the university on this decision and requested clarification on this decision given that there were a few questions that arose from the brief cancellation email sent to students.

These were some of the questions raised:

1. As each students' application to different institutions differs from one circumstance to another, we would like to ask for the rationale behind the specific cutoff date-27 February. Some students may have their program commencement only a few days before this date and if so, a difference of a few days resulting in the cancellation of the entire program would seem unreasonable.
2. Is there any space to give greater considerations to this decision and in consultation with students who have been accepted to University based on ranking and prestige?
3. Given that there are some special circumstances that have been made on the 'Permission to travel, travel safety and risk assessments' policy to allow students to commence their travel even to countries that are listed on 'do not travel', would the same circumstances be applicable to this situation?

4. Lastly, if there are alternatives that can be arranged, we would like to suggest the University to communicate that to students following their cancellation email as the current email does not have any indication that there can be alternatives nor space for reconsideration.

This email was sent before the travel announcement. The University has responded back ensuring us that this was a matter they were currently looking into and will keep us and advocacy updated.

### **WAM ADJUSTMENT SEMESTER 2, 2021**

Throughout the semester, we had been receiving concerns regarding the WAM adjustments. In response, we had been communicating with the University through meetings, emails, and developing reports which stated our justification for the WAM Adjustments. In Semester 1, we also launched a petition which gathered over 20,000 signatures, and we raised the weight of the petition again in Semester 2.

We're happy to announce that the University decided to apply the 'no-disadvantage' Weighted Average Mark (WAM) policy to subjects in the second half of 2021.

This policy means that only grades higher than a student's average will be included in their WAM calculation.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

- Would be important to have a good schedule of the different committees which you are part of. Education Academic officers tend to have membership or participation in multiple committees and there are a set of papers for each meeting for your readings.
- Have a good understanding of the policies and practices outlined in the meeting papers. I had a difficult time sieving through 300 pages of Academic Board papers, however, seek help from Advocacy and they can support you with key points to understand. Over time, I got better at understanding the information and sieving through the right information.
- There can be multiple platforms which students raise concern such as emails, Facebook page, and even UniMelb Love Letters. You have to decide how best to schedule your time so that you can have a good understanding of students' concerns and how best to respond and support them.

- Education Academic officers have routine Elected Reps meeting with the Provost, PVC Student Life, and Academic Board President. This is a great chance to understand concerns faced by other departments so that you can best represent the different student communities, and not only needs specific to education.
- Continuing on from my last point, Education often intersects with the agenda of other departments, therefore it would be good to plan collaborations with different departments at the start of the semester. Or, ensure that other departments can reach out to you so that you can best co-represent the students' needs.

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Hannah Krasovec**

**Education (Public Affairs) Department**

**Key activities throughout the year**

- No Cuts Campaign
- Collectives
- Stop the Menzies Institute Campaign

**Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

**No Cuts Campaign:**

I feel like I ran this campaign fairly well. We had 2 rallies. One was in line with the NUS National Day of Action on 25<sup>th</sup> March to Defend Our Education. We had a wide range of speakers and we held it outside/underneath the Raymond Priestly Building. Second rally was 14<sup>th</sup> April, where we demanded an end to the cuts to our education, and to staff – we held our rally as a pre-event to the NTEU rally to save the Systems Gardens team. This rally was more staunch and effective – we had more (non-stupol) students join us, and we marched around university etc. We did have a third rally planned for the end of May but we had to cancel that due to lockdown 4. We ran online events and open campaign meetings around the issue of course and staff cuts at Unimelb. This ended up turning into the campaign to stop the Menzies Institute, which I will discuss later. I feel like I worked quite effectively with the NTEU. Aside from collaborating on the rallies, we also worked together to save the Business Services staff. We made a video and spread the word, and my presence at meetings with University management scared them a bit which was nice.

**Collectives:**

We ran two collectives this year – Education Action Collective, and for the very first time, Rural, Regional and Interstate (RRI) Students Collective. RRI ran well when we were able to have in person collectives – we had decent attendance and it was a really good space for RRI students to have in UMSU. Unfortunately it didn't run so well online – much lower attendance. Education Action Collective ran really well – we had really good attendance both in person and online. I feel like this collective was very constructive and was integral in running our No Cuts campaign and the campaign to stop the Menzies Institute. Was great to see new members develop their activism skills over the year.

### **Campaign to Stop the Menzies Insitute:**

We started on this campaign mid-year, which kind of morphed out of the No Cuts Campaign. The reason for this was that we discovered that the Federal Government was spending \$7 million on the Robert Menzies Insitute (RMI), while they cut almost 10% of funding to universities in the 2021 Federal Budget. Obviously these budget cuts will result in more job losses and course cuts, so for the government to be spending millions on a conservative political institute to give their friends such as Peta Credlin another job is absolutely disgusting. I've worked with Monica Sestito and Brendan Laws from GSA Education on this campaign and its been so good to work collaboratively with them. We held an online rally with student speakers and interactive activities, and an online forum with academic speakers to give an academic insight. Both events had really good attendance, with many non-stupol students showing up to both. We've had several open campaign meetings which have all been good. Our main event is Thursday 18 November 3:30pm – the protest against the opening of the Menzies Institute. Originally the protest was going to be later in the evening but the end of the Menzies conference is finishing earlier than expected so we've pulled the time in line with that. Obviously I can't deliver a report on how the rally goes as the time for submission for this report is before the rally. However all COVID safety measures are ready to go, as are the speakers and the other logistical aspects of the protest.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

- In the COVID era, its good to alternate collectives between online and in person each week.
- If possible, working with GSA Education is great – brings a wider base of students into campaigns and it's great extra support, especially if you aren't getting the support you need elsewhere.
- Submit your Basecamp jobs ASAP – not even a day or two after. Sometimes it can take a bit longer than expected to get something done.
- Don't work more than your fair share – you will get activist burnout. I speak from personal experience.
- Keep working with the NTEU – they are awesome and the university gets scared when we work together.
- Try and plan events as early in advance as possible, especially if they're with an external provider.
- If possible, working with the Victorian Trades Hall and other affiliated unions more would be great. Contingents to union rallies and pickets is something I really wanted to do this year, but it was a lot harder with COVID and the aforementioned activist burnout.

**Education (Public)**

Tejas Gandhi

*Not Submitted*



**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Shuyan (Lynne) Bian**

**Environment Department**

**Key activities throughout the year**

**Close contact with all departments including GSA and substantiality team**

This semester, we have met up with Rav from the UMSU sustainability team and members from the GSA hoping to collaborate. After attending the UoM Student Groups Sustainability Network, we reached out to multiple projects, including the Climate emergency declaration. We have also been in close contact and supported our student collective especially the community garden. Disha and I meeting up with all the collective activity coordinator to discuss any new plans. We have also gotten in touch with student organisation both in and outside of university in the goal of inviting everyone to learn about environmental activism.

**Collaboration with creative arts**

After several meetings with the creative arts department. We agreed on a collaboration with the creative arts department where the environment department sponsored 200 dollars for the sustainability award. With this successful collaboration, we also worked together for the mask making workshop. We have also gathered materials and videos that will assist with the event from the UMSU sustainability team. We have also promoted the event on the environment and collective page

**Finding new ideas and new events**

Disha and I do weekly meet ups for any new ideas and brainstormed how we can mobilise students in supporting the environmental activism through education and events. We were able to put a couple of online campaigning and webinars into action.

We had the idea of organising an enviro magazine, unfortunately that did not end up coming true due to limited time and recourse.

### **Collaboration with edu public for NUS strike**

One of the biggest events we have done this year this the NUS strike for climate action. We met up with the edu public officers to discuss how we can collaborate together for the upcoming NUS strike. Four guest speakers from different areas of their profession is invited to speak on the topic of climate action and sustainability. It was a successful event with around 20-30 people attending, I have received really positive feedbacks from those attendees.

### **Collaboration with UMSU international**

In the collaboration between the environment department and the UMSU international. We are organising a vegan food contest to celebrate sustainability living, cultural diversity and providing more fun for student's life. We are still in the process of the event as I am writing the report.

### **Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

Overall, we had a good semester during our terms. There is a level of difficulty to organise online events and campaigns. But we were able to successfully work around it and we received better engagement from the students, make an important impact on the sustainability and climate change problem in general.

Disha and I started to work in this position half across the year. There has been a bit confusion from the start, but we managed to transit smoothly and continued on a lot of work that the previous officers have done.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

We still have a couple of projects that we wish can continue on from this year, such as the Ecosia project of switching the search engine of the university into Ecosia. We also wish to continue the great partnership between the environment department and the clubs department to ensure that every club in the university is running in a sustainable manner. We also value our collaboration with the GSA and the sustainability group it would be great if they can continue working with them in their term. I am sure the future office bearers would be able to do some great work!

Lynne and I (Disha) were OBs for the second term while Ann and James were the OBs for the first term. I would like to give a huge shoutout to Ann and James for the great work they had done! The way they handled the environment department was commendable! I would also like to thank other OBs for supporting us throughout our term! And our committee members, it was our honour to work with you all!!

### Key activities throughout the year

#### 1. Collaborations

- **Mudfest Sustainability Award**
  - Collaborated with the Creative Arts department for Mudfest Sustainability Award. Gave the winner a \$200 prize.
- **Vegan Food Contest**
  - Collaborated with UMSU International. The contest was from 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021. 5 winners are selected every week and they receive \$50 vouchers of Woolsworth and the 5 grand winners will receive \$150 vouchers of Coles.
- **Sustainability in Clubs**
  - Collaborated with the Clubs department for the sustainability in Clubs workshop which will be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021. The workshop will be facilitated by UoM Sustainability team and resources will be shared after the workshop. The participants will be given certificates and vouchers.
- **Sustainability Giveaway**
  - We plan to do a giveaway with the Bollywood club for sustainable keep cups and straws (100).
- **Reusable Menstrual Products Giveaway**
  - Ann and James collaborated with the Women's department to do a giveaway of reusable menstrual products that included cloth pads and menstrual cups of various sizes, safety razors, organic shaving soap, and reusable blades.
- **Student Sustainability Forum**
  - Ann and James collaborated with UMSU POC and UMSU Indigenous to conduct an in-person student forum which focused BIPOC voices in sustainability strategies.
- **Sustainable Art Making Session**

- Ann and James collaborated with the Creative Arts department for an in-person sustainability art making session for earth day.
- **Bring your Food BBQ**
  - Ann and James collaborated with Alternative Protein Initiative to organise an in-person sustainable BBQ where they served schnitzels, gluten-free burgers and satay.
- **Sustainability Fair**
  - Ann and James collaborated with UoM Sustainability team to introduces students to environment initiatives and information. The sustainability fair was an in-person event with free food and 10 stalls to help students get involved with environmental action.

## 2. Collectives

- **Community Garden**
  - A thriving collective which was active throughout the year and had multiple events.
- **Bike Co-op**
  - Due to the pandemic the collective could not function in the 2<sup>nd</sup> term
- **Rad Reading Group**
  - The collective was active in the first term.

## 3. Declaration

- a. **Climate Emergency Declaration**
  - Ann and James had passed a climate emergence in council.

## 4. Campaigns

- **School Strike for Climate**
  - Ann and James had organised an in-person contingent to School Strike for Climate. There were sessions where students designed and painted the banners for the strike together.
- **Contingent NUS Strike**
  - Collaborated with Education Public for an online strike which advocated and demanded for 100% Renewables by 2030, Just transitions for Workers and Industry, Sustainable Pathways for University Students and Resourcing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-Led Solutions that guarantee Land Rights.
- **ECOSIA**
  - We collaborated with GSA and the UoM Sustainability team for this campaign. It is a work in progress with the current stage being handled by the sustainability team. The campaign advocates the shift of search engines from google to Ecosia as it is much more sustainable in all the computers in the university.

## Evaluation of activities throughout the year

Overall, the Enviro department had various events which had high involvement. The events were interactive. We collaborated with multiple departments and student focus groups which helped us broaden our events and advocacy. We organised multiple online and offline events including giveaways and BBQs. The climate Strike was a massive success.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

1. *Collaborate with different departments*
2. *Sitting with the Communications team for an event is great, they give a good insight*
3. *Involve committee members in the events, they love to volunteer and have some great ideas.*

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Shanysa McConville**

**Indigenous**

**Key activities throughout the year & Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

**Welcome Back Event**

We had an amazing welcome back event at The Clyde Hotel in week 2 of semester 1. It was fantastic to see so many familiar and new faces as we enjoyed an evening of food, drinks, and socialising.

**Evaluation:** Original desired date for function was unavailable so we ended up with a later date/time, so getting an event like this sorted sooner than later is best. Some students also had events on at college on the same night, so checking college social schedules will help ensure as many people attend as possible.

**Indigenous Nationals**

One of the first things that the Indigenous Department was involved in in 2021 was the Indigenous Nationals Committee. The committee included UMSU Indigenous, Murrup Barak and MU Sport. Together, we planned try-outs, team selections, coaches, trainings, flights, accommodation and uniforms for the 2021 Indigenous Nationals competition held in Newcastle. Unfortunately, after all of our hard work all Victorian based teams were barred from competition due to a COVID-19 outbreak. While this was certainly a disappointing outcome, it was great to see the committee working together so well to support students and deliver an amazing sporting opportunity.

**Evaluation:** Committee roles need to be distributed from the get-go to avoid confusion and get the ball rolling. There were delays this year as MU Sport took on too many responsibilities that should have rested with UMSU, so these need to be re-evaluated.

**Merchandise**

Thanks to the help of the UMSU Design team, we were able to distribute some amazing merchandise to the Indigenous cohort at the Parkville and Southbank campuses in Semester 1. We produced a large selection of notebooks, glass water bottles and portable chargers. These were a big hit, which is why merch was restocked in Semester 2. We also produced 'Gundui Bunjil' caps and bucket hats to promote the UMSU Indigenous magazine which turned out really well. However, due to the June/July lockdown, we were unable to distribute this new stock so there will be plenty to give away in 2022.

**Evaluation:** BlueGum merch is fantastic and there's such a variety to choose from. This just needs to be sorted out early to ensure its available when you want to distribute.

### **Trivia**

One big event we hosted in Semester 1 was a trivia night in the Ida Bar. We had lots of people sign up and attend which was fantastic. We provided pizza, drinks and prizes to the winning team.

**Evaluation:** Despite advertising in-advance, we didn't have as many people attend as we would have normally. Because a lot of our announcements used to be made at the Murrup Barak Tuesday lunches, their infrequency this year made it really difficult to engage with students face-to-face.

### **Pottery Class**

Another event we held this semester was a Pottery Class with kits from Crock'd. These DIY clay kits were fantastic and easy to order. We had a handful of students come through the two sessions to make their own cups, bowls, ornaments, and jewellery holders.

**Evaluation:** There was a booking mix-up with this event due to the Info Desk team. We had it booked on a Friday that was a public holiday (meaning Union House was closed), but this slipped past the team and was only brought to our attention the week-of. Moving it a week back certainly impacted numbers as a lot of people who registered were unable to attend in person, choosing to pick-up a kit to complete in their own time instead.

### **MU Garden Events**

We were contacted by the MU Community Garden team about collaborating to produce a workshop in Semester 1. After some brainstorming, we decided to run an edible Indigenous plants session in the garden, encouraging students to come along to replant the edible Indigenous plants.

**Evaluation:** This was such a fun event! Though there were only a dozen students there, it was amazing to hear about all of the plants in the garden and contribute to its growth.

### **First Nations & POC Queer Party**

Thanks to the work of the Indigenous Queer Collective, Brittney Henderson, and the UMSU People of Colour and Queer departments, we hosted a First Nations & POC Queer Party in the Ida Bar. Food and



drinks were provided and Drag Queen Moxie Delite provided an amazing performance for all in attendance.

**Evaluation:** Attendance was also not fantastic for this event, but this was to be expected due to the late advertising of Moxie's performance. Nonetheless, the students in attendance were amazing and created a fun atmosphere.

### **NAIDOC Week Netball Comp**

As all Victorian teams were barred from attending the Indigenous Nationals Comp in Newcastle, Monash University decided to host a NAIDOC Netball comp for the teams that would have attended. It was a great afternoon of round-robin netball with the Monash and Swinburne teams, with Melbourne Uni coming out on top. The comp is set to be hosted again next year, so looking forward to seeing how we go!

**Evaluation:** Monash weren't super organised on the day. We arranged for a bus to pick us up at 8pm as we were meant to have a presentation and dinner at a nearby pub after the comp finished, but all of the Swinburne mob and the Monash staff organising ended up going home so we had to kill a few hours on our own because they didn't commit to that plan. Not a huge deal but something to think about checking in with Monash about in the future.

### **Gundui Bunjil Volume 9**

After producing two editions of Gundui Bunjil in 2020, we were excited to get into it with a new editorial team and make two more volumes in 2021. We had a three-person editorial team, and plenty of submissions to work with. Throughout Semester 1, we worked to edit submissions, create set pieces, follow-up key info. with contributors and create a design and colour palette that would inspire this volume. We were very proud of our efforts and our inclusion of the first ever perforated recipe page!

**Evaluation:** Was great to be working with PrintGraphics again. Since we knew their turn-around times, it was easy to lock in deadlines with the team so that the magazine was printed and delivered in time for Semester 2. There were, however, issues with the quality of the magazine this time around. We have only opened up three/four boxed but at least half of the magazines in each box have issues with the spine (pages starting to fall out). This will need to be addressed with Nigel (printer) who is aware of the problem and will be looking into it asap (was unable to get to the office because of the lockdown).

### **Gundui Bunjil Volume 9 Launch**

We had hoped to do a big in-person launch of Gundui Bunjil Volume 9 at the Ida Bar in the first few weeks of Semester 2, but because of the lockdown this was unable to go ahead. We initially pushed it back to the middle of the semester, but as the lockdown continued to be extended, we decided that rather than wait we would host a virtual launch with a few keen contributors reading out their pieces and reflecting on their experiences.

## **Annual Report 2021**

**Evaluation:** Despite our hesitancy to move the launch online, it was a nice intimate event. We received lots of positive feedback which is always welcome, and it was great to share our work with others.

### **Gundui Bunjil Volume 10**

Submission for Gundui Bunjil Volume 10 opened at the start of Semester 2. Though many students didn't see Volume 9, we still received a fair few submissions. The same editorial team worked away at editing pieces and creating a design plan this semester, but work will continue to finalise everything over the summer so that the magazine is printed in February and ready for distribution in Semester 1.

**Evaluation:** Was difficult to encourage more students to submit to the magazine, especially first years, as they were unable to get any hard copies of the magazine due to the lockdown, and many did not attend the virtual launch either. Hopefully there are no more issues in 2022 and everyone will get to see two amazing editions that inspire them to submit to volume 11.

### **Indigenous Sovereignty and Bla(c)k Liberation Week**

After a very hard semester transition back to online learning, we were able to provide an amazing selection of events in collaboration with the POC department. The first ever *Indigenous Sovereignty and Bla(c)k Liberation Week* was very successful, especially since we had to move it online after it became apparent an in-person on-campus event was not feasible. We had some amazing guest speakers, including Celeste Liddle, Neil Morris, Shonae Hobson and our very own Lauren Scott!

**Evaluation:** By the end of Semester 2 a lot of people (Mohamed and I included!) were sick of online events so we knew not to expect very high numbers. That being said, we think we did very well as lots of people attended or asked for copies of the recordings due to clashes with class. Definitely recommend hosting this again in 2022, and creating a big food/music event to end the week like we originally planned.

### **UMSU Sexual Assault and Harassment Working Group**

This was my first year being a part of SA/SH, and it was a worthwhile experience, especially since you get to see all of the impressive work the Women's department continues to do to improve the lives of Women and non-binary peoples on campus.

**Evaluation:** Working with this group was fantastic, keep up the momentum in 2022.

### **Grants**

Like in previous years, UMSU Indigenous offered grants for emergency support, sport, art, and entrepreneurship. After developing a set of criteria, applications opened in Semester 1 to all Indigenous Students. We received a handful of grants and did not exceed the budget set aside for this. However, as we were plunged back into lockdown in Semester 2, we had a lot more applications. Wanting to help as

### **[Annual Report 2021](#)**

many students as possible, we pulled from the Sem 1 Indigenous Nationals budget line once the Grants funds were utilised.

**Evaluation:** It was tricky to keep track of applications across the whole semester, so setting in some closing dates would be beneficial in the future. While I always looked over applications, they were discussed in the Indigenous Committee to approve funds, but they remained anonymous in that setting which worked really well.

### **Collectives**

We were lucky enough to revive the Blak Queer Collective in Semester 1, as well as launch two new spaces, a Weaving Collective and a Blak Collective. Each collective met regularly, communicated via Facebook groups, and all proposed activities were brought to me to approve funds for. The Queer collective went to the Miss First Nations drag show, the Blak Collective went to the Mabu Mabu sit-down dinner event, and the weaving group caught up three times with expert weaver Nikaylah Bamblett on campus.

**Evaluation:** While the collectives ran smoothly in Semester 1, they dropped off in Semester 2 due to the lockdown and difficulties with ordering and posting raffia for a virtual event. Ensuring people can join these groups and participate in 2022 will be vital.

### **On Wednesdays We Wear Blak**

This year, we've supported Trading Blak's *On Wednesdays We Wear Blak* campaign! This initiative started in late 2020, encouraging everyone to wear their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander merch on Wednesdays, sharing new businesses that others should support. I hosted a weekly Facebook comp for Indigenous students, asking people to comment a photo of themselves in their Blak merch every Wednesday to go in the draw to win a \$50 voucher to the Blak store of their choice! We had at least a dozen contributions each week which was a fantastic effort and gave away over \$1,000 worth of vouchers to Indigenous students to spend at Blak businesses.

**Evaluation:** This was very successful in the Facebook group and allowed lots of different students to get involved however they say fit! Expanding this next year to the wider University community would be a great idea though, to get all students and staff, Indigenous and allies alike, to buy from Blak businesses.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

#### **Murrup Barak**

Definitely recommend getting in touch with Murrup Barak early on to ensure you both know when the other is planning to host events. While Murrup Barak are meant to organise academic events, leaving social gatherings to UMSU, they tend to overstep and book in social events, so going to them with a complete social program for each semester will be very beneficial. You'll need to get in contact early on

to discuss sponsorship funds as well. Maintaining a good relationship with the team will be beneficial in the long-run, especially if you want to make announcements at lunch or get some Ambassadors to help you with event set-up/pack-down.

### **Indigenous Nationals Committee: Roles and Expectations**

Despite trying to address this issue last year, there was still a lot of tension amongst the committee as I wanted UMSU Indigenous to take on more responsibility, which was a reasonable request considering the event has been organised entirely by our department since we started attending. While MU Sport are very handy when it comes to booking spaces for try-outs and trainings, because they do not provide any funds for flights, accommodation, uniforms etc., their role should reflect their financial input (which is less than UMSU and Murrup Barak).

### **Gundui Bunjil**

You'll need to get an editorial team sorted asap to keep volume 11 on track! It was hard to find people interested, so using MB's newsletter to get the word out is a good idea, but so is connecting with students directly and chatting one-on-one about it at MB lunches. We tried to get a fourth editor on board this year, who would have been dedicated to set pieces, but it fell through at the last minute so definitely try and get as many roles filled as you can! Will make everyone's life easier if there is one person for editing, one for design, one for set pieces, and one for all engagement with students (who then assists with editing and set pieces as required).

Since we were unable to have an in-person launch in 2020 or 2021, having a launch for volume 10 will be absolutely amazing! This will not only encourage more students to contribute to the magazine, but you'll get to show us the amazing 10<sup>th</sup> edition of Gundui Bunjil.

### **Student Emails**

You'll need to contact MB at the start of each semester to receive a list of all First Nations student's email addresses. Setting up an 'audience' in MailChimp with these will allow you to quickly contact the entire cohort and update them about your activities and campaigns throughout the year. As Murrup Barak don't always send out notifications about UMSU events, this is a good way to let students know what's happening.

### **Indigenous Department Committee**

As there weren't enough students interested in being on the committee this year, you'll need to reach out to the Indigenous cohort to see if anyone is interested in joining. It's much easier to pass all of your \$\$ at Indigenous Committee meetings than it is to do it in Council.

## **Annual Report 2021**

### **Collaborations – POC**

This year we hosted *Indigenous Sovereignty and Bla(c)k Liberation Week* with the POC department which was a fantastic event! Strongly suggest you collaborate with them to deliver this event again in Semester 2, 2022. Keeping in regular contact with them from early on will allow you to figure out if this is something you all want to do or not.

### **Collaborations – MU Community Garden**

Working with the MU Community Garden team was so much fun this year, so strongly suggest you collaborate with them again. They're easy to connect with on Facebook so it can't hurt to see what their plans are for 2022 and if they have capacity to host another event with you, like the edible Indigenous plants session.

University of Melbourne Student Union

Annual Report 2021

To Students' Council 18(21)

Lauren Berry

Media Department



### Key activities throughout the year

#### **Hiring & Training**

We opened applications for students to join *Farrago* and *Radio Fodder* teams and positions in November and closed them mid-December. We received hundreds of applications in total, and spent several weeks sorting through and finalising positions. We assessed applications through several means:

- Quality of application
- Potential or Experience
- Space on team (e.g., some individuals were easily admitted to smaller *Fodder* teams)
- Second-Round Tests (for subeditors and reporters); made by each OB (e.g., I created a creative subeditor test which assessed individuals' abilities to subedit poetry and prose)
- Interviews (for manager positions); at least two OBs attended each interview to assess fairly

Once teams were finalised, we ran training sessions for each team. For teams where we had hired team managers, we included managers in running the session. I ran the following training sessions where I went over responsibilities for team members, expectations, code of conduct, contact details and etc.:

- Creative Subeditor Training
- Satire Team Training (with managers Sweeney Preston and Charlotte Armstrong)
- Radio Training (with manager Mark Yin)
- *Radio Fodder* Blog Training (with manager Janelle Del Vecchio)

Training sessions not only helped get the ball rolling on working on Edition One and preparing radio shows/content, but were educational and an opportunity for volunteers to get to know each other and ask questions. I made and distributed information sheets and induction notes so that volunteers could revisit them at any time and feel comfortable in their roles.

## **Making Farrago**

Media OBs are required to produce print editions of *Farrago Magazine*. This is our biggest and most strenuous responsibility, and most of our teams are formulated with achieving quality and timely magazines in mind. Due to the strain of having a three-person OB team, we decided to produce six editions—which still left plenty of opportunities for students to submit. For reference, *Farrago* editors used to produce eight editions a year. In 2019, this was decreased to seven, and in 2020, this was decreased to six.

The process of making each *Farrago* edition was as follows:

- Choose an aesthetic theme for the magazine
- Edit and confirm Style Guide
- Open Submissions
- Respond to pitches and questions
- Commission any regular written work, such as news stories from reporters and headlines from satirists
- Callout for cover submissions
- Close Submissions
- Each editor chooses submissions for their respective sections (upon consultation with Design Editor for layout)
- Send out acceptance and rejection emails
- Design Editor templates magazine
- Assign subediting and illustration assignments/commissions, with attached
- Receive work back
- Forward feedback to rejected writers
- Prepare returned work for proofing session
- Hold proofing session with Media Collective (online or in-person)
- All editors write editorials and follow up additional pages such as OB Reports
- Design Editor uploads final work to InDesign
- All editors proofread the magazine
- Update errors
- Send to General Secretary for approval
- Then send to printer
- Two-week turn-around for printer
- Receive print magazines
- Upload online copy to Issuu

- recommendations/notes and content
- warnings
- Give extensions where required
- Receive cover submissions & choose cover
- Organise launch event and launch magazine (in-person or online)

The order of these steps differs from edition to edition. For instance, we lengthened the working period for Edition Four as it stretched over the exam period. Each editor has their own individual tasks in this process, and we relied on illustration managers to help create design briefs for illustrators for most of the year (although we felt comfortable on our own for the final edition).

### **Launches**

After finishing a magazine, we held a launch party to celebrate and share it with the Media Collective. We were fortunate to hold two launch parties in Semester 1 this year—for Editions 1 and 2. These were both held in the Ida Bar. We liked our experience working with Kyle, the Ida staff, and the space so much, that we decided to hold our second launch there as well. Launch parties involved venue booking, deciding a bar tab, organising a theme, food, and associated decorations, making a playlist, getting a photographer (usually a photography team member), organising activities, and helping with preparation and clean-down before and after events.

These launches were so enjoyable, and we received positive feedback from contributors. We also held online equivalents of both launches, which were nice, though turnout was fairly low as most people attended the in-person events.

The pandemic affected our ability to hold our third launch (intended for Semester 1, Week 12). We decided instead to hold a combined launch for Ed 3 & 4, but this was also postponed due to another lockdown. After postponing a few times, we finally decided it was cursed, and held it online. Mixing our retro and gothic themes, organising readings, music and games helped to make the event a major success! We had a great turnout for an online event. Due to Zoom fatigue, we decided to combine Ed 5 & 6 into a single online launch as well.



## Radio Fodder

I was the OB looking after *Fodder* this year. Accompanied by Mark Yin, who was a spectacular Station Manager, I think we managed to revive *Fodder* somewhat from its state last year.

We held a full program of shows in both semesters (Weeks 1-12, broadcast online on [radiofodder.com](http://radiofodder.com)), with many shows returning for a second season in Semester 2. All shows were pre-recorded remotely. We introduced new additions to *Fodder*, including producer roles for students, and music rotations alongside traditional radio shows. *Fodder* members and others in the Media Collective also contributed to playlists featuring at the back of *Farrago* editions. *Fodder* also ran a number of successful workshops with special guests.

I spent a lot of time working with AV Melbourne to organise repairment of the studio and equipment in Semester 1. While the studio was just about ready for students to return, a sudden return to lockdown for the rest of the year impeded our plans. *Fodder* DJs would also have made an appearance at Open Day and Farmer's Markets, alongside, potentially, Summerfest and Winterfest. But these opportunities did not arise in 2021.

The *Fodder Blog* also got off to a great start in the first half of the year. As a previous blog manager, I was keen to see where the blog manager (Janelle) would take it! Content was thought-provoking, interesting and radical, which was wonderful to see. I was also keen to increase student engagement with *Fodder* by inviting blog writers to interview radio hosts and write up promotional pieces for feature in *Farrago*.

I was quite disheartened when the blog manager dropped out midway through the year. I intended to have more of a role in running and reviving the blog from then on, but was unable to give it significant attention due to being overwhelmed with other responsibilities. Luckily, Mark and the blog team writers were super passionate to keep it going, and continued making amazing content. After significant

demand, subeditor positions for some students were even created. I have great expectations for the future of the *Fodder Blog*!

## **Above Water**

We spent over six months producing *Above Water*, the annual creative writing competition and anthology, with the Creative Arts department. We opened submissions midway through Semester 1 and closed them on June 11. Despite not knowing a heap about *Above Water* before this year, I was dedicated to making it really solid and different to previous years. As such, I took the opportunity to handle most of the managerial side of producing it. It also made sense as *Farrago's* Creative Editor usually takes a big role in *Above Water's* production.

*Above Water* is a competition. As such, all submissions are blinded and assessed based on quality. Pieces are also not subedited. It is usually produced in a small A5 magazine format, and printed on similar paper to *Farrago*. While previous years included anthologies of up to 80 pages+, I decided that a smaller publication would make for a better and more focused competition. It also meant that featured work would be of the very best quality. We reduced our page numbers to 48 pages. The editorial team consisted of the Media and Creative Arts OBs. The Creative Arts OBs and I mainly assessed submissions, while Ailish managed design. I also involved myself in the design aspects of the magazine, although the incredible layout that you see is Ailish's magnificent work. We spent a session together assigning pieces to illustrators. Merryn and Vaishnavi organised the fantastic online launch event in Semester 2 (which had a truly spectacular turnout of contributors, supporters, friends, family members and pets!). This usually takes place during Mudfest, but Merryn and Vaishnavi were handling a lot at this time and we all needed a bit more time to focus on *Above Water*, so we delayed the launch. They also contacted and hired our judges, organised prizes and wrote our *Thank You* pages.

I was responsible for choosing and managing this year's Editorial Assistant. Our EA this year was Helena Pantsis. Many applied for the position, but Helena really stood out. She did an amazing job handling the email account where submissions were coming in, as well as doing blinding and admin for the competition.

## **Annual Report 2021**

*Above Water* production respected the following approximate timeline:

- Confirm submission guidelines
- Open submissions
- Open applications for Editorial Assistant position
- Find judges
- Open EOIs amongst *Farrago* illustration team for those interested in helping out with accompanying illustrations
- Callout for cover submissions
- Hire volunteer Editorial Assistant
- Close submissions
- Editorial Assistant blinds applications
- Editorial team (Media and CA OBs) read and assess applications
- Editorial team finalises shortlist
- Editorial Assistant unblinds applications and emails successful and unsuccessful applicants
- Design Editor begins templating
- Judges begin judging shortlist to determine prose, poetry and art winners and runners-up.
- Send out illustration commissions
- Plan launch party and prizes for winners
- Receive cover submissions; and choose cover
- Receive illustration commissions back
- Write *Thank Yous* and additional pages
- Design Editor uploads final work to InDesign
- Editorial team proofreads anthology
- Update errors
- Send to General Secretary for approval
- Upload online copy to Issuu
- Hold launch event
- Send to printer
- Two-week turn-around for printer
- Receive print magazines

## **Events & Workshops**

We ran a number of Events and Workshops throughout the year, particularly in Semester 1. Pavani was responsible for overseeing these.

Alongside magazine launches such as *Farrago* Editions and their online equivalents, we had presences at Summerfest and Winterfest. Ailish represented us at Summerfest's in-person event, whilst Pavani and I manned the Hopin fort! While turnout was fairly low, it was still a great opportunity to connect with students, as well as get to know our fellow OBs! There was a lot of virtual stall hopping throughout the day, which was hilarious and lots of fun.

## **Annual Report 2021**

We also planned to hold workshops for each of our teams throughout the year, to keep team members engaged, help them to develop skills, foster opportunities, and give managers the chance to be leaders. We held lots of workshops for photography and illustration teams in particular in Semester 1 due to demand. We also held video and radio workshops with guest speakers. While holding these workshops was exciting, we ran far too many in Semester 1 and got overwhelmed. We did significantly fewer workshops in Semester 2 to accommodate lower turnout and Zoom fatigue. Running fewer events proved to be a smarter move, as it boosted anticipation, interest and turnout.

## **Website**

Developing a new website was another massive project we decided to take on this year. We started planning for this long before we got into office, as we knew that the website at the time was a weakness of our department needing addressing.

Upon consultation with UMSU Comms, we decided to work with the company who is also designing UMSU's new website. We began negotiations in January, and after several delays on MSL's end, we were finally able to launch our website in October. It was not supposed to take quite so long, and we were still disappointed with a number of issues we found when MSL handed the redesigned site over to us. Ailish especially has already discussed our troubles with the website at length in OB reports. Ailish and her partner who works in IT spent a long time ironing out issues leading up to our launch. It's still got its quirks; however, it beats the old WordPress site by a mile, and for that we're pretty grateful.

Some of the features we changed/updated in the new website include:

- Better user interface and experience
- Clearer parent pages
- Cleaner, more professional looking site
- Better colour palette
- Social media features and links
- Incorporation of online *Farrago* editions (Issuu) into the website (so that all *Farrago* content is in one place)

- Nicer fonts and appearance of written work (i.e., more professional, less “blog”-like)
- More supportive of graphics and artwork
- Scrolling news bar and other interactive content
- Incorporation of *Radio Fodder* radio player and blog content into the *Farrago* website (to improve *Fodder’s* exposure to students)
- Incorporation of *Above Water* Issuu link into the *Farrago* website (to improve *Above Water’s* exposure to students)

All *Farrago* content was also transferred from the old site to the new.

## **Elections**

Ailish and Pav took over most planning for Elections. Media plays an interesting role in the Election period as it is a *Farrago* responsibility to report on it, create the Election Guide, and host the Presidential Debate. I did some work in helping sort through photos and statements submitted by tickets for the Election Guide, and helped with the running of the Debate. However, as the Creative Editor on the team, Elections weren’t as much my responsibility.

Producing the Election Guide is a department responsibility. Because Elections ran online this year, we accordingly decided to publish the Election Guide online (instead of in print). We received an unprecedented number of views on Issuu on this publication—setting a record for our department!

## **Media Regulations**

Ailish managed most of this planning, but I’ll provide a summary in any case since we had a whole lot of meetings and discussions on this one this year.

Since January, we’ve been working with two General Secretaries on proposed new changes to Publishing Regulations, Student Media Policy, and Social Media Policy. Since these documents are binding to our department, the Media Department pushed for greater respect of our editorial independence, finding that both the current and proposed regulations awarded too much power to one person to determine

## **Annual Report 2021**

what we publish. After multiple drafts—and month-long gaps as the General Secretary position passed hands—we reached new arrangements that satisfied both departments. This included:

- A 3-day turnaround for the General Secretary to respond to requests to publish print content.
- Media OBs notifying the General Secretary whenever online content has been published (with attached link), without needing prior approval.
- Social media content does not fall under content requiring approval.

### **Competitions: Creative With COVID 2.0. & Media Library**

To make up for running fewer workshops and events in Semester 2, we were looking for smaller ways to keep students engaged with our department.

We decided to relaunch Creative With COVID, a competition launched by last year's OBs as an attempt to encourage students to keep making art in the pandemic. As a manager last year, I had the opportunity to judge the audio/music submissions, so I knew quite a bit about the competition. Accordingly, we decided to relaunch Creative With COVID with a special focus on the areas of our department we hadn't had a chance to highlight as much during the year—photography, audio/music, video and illustration (i.e. not written media). We launched this in the latter part of Semester 2, closing submissions in Week 12. Our photography, radio and video managers helped choose the winners in each section and we released results in mid-November.

We also ran a Media Library competition after an idea from our photography managers. This encouraged students to submit photography and illustrations to be included in our library. This library of graphics means that we have work ready to accompany pieces when we are unable to commission original art or photography. Over three weeks, we set a new theme, and received submissions in response.

### **Merchandise**

I was responsible for managing our initiative to produce new *Farrago* merchandise for 2021. It's been a few years since the Media Department launched new merchandise, and seemed like a cool way to finish off the year. Last year's OBs started making plans, so we decided to continue with them. However, after discussion with Comms and Nikki from Design, their plans were more complicated than they needed to be. Nikki suggested Redbubble as a more efficient and suitable supplier, which enabled us to design, upload, edit, and put up for sale our merchandise ourselves. This would mean that we didn't need to make orders on behalf of students—they could simply purchase from Redbubble at cost price. Additionally, we (OBs) wouldn't make any profit. I worked with Nikki over several weeks to develop designs for hoodies and tote bags, and I'm so pleased with the result!

### **Fitzpatrick Awards**

As our final event for the year, we plan to host the annual Fitzpatrick Awards on December 2. It will (hopefully) be an in-person event held at The Provincial Hotel in Fitzroy. Hosting the Fitzpatrick Awards is an annual tradition of our department which celebrates the hard work of all those who have contributed to student media throughout the year. Prizes are awarded to students for outstanding contributions throughout the year, across *Farrago* print, online and *Radio Fodder*. Food and a bar tab will be provided. If it is able to take place, we're looking forward to it being a stellar night!

### **Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

#### **Hiring & Training**

Overall, I believe that applications and training went smoothly and successfully, despite three stressed OBs. As our fourth office bearer resigned at the start of our term, sorting through applications was an arduous process for the three of us, particularly as none of us had significant design experience. Having only three OBs meant that each of us had to take on more teams relative to previous years. But we managed to pull together and assist each other, with at least two of us attending interviews, and seeking support from past OBs for knowledge, guidance, and reassurance. Most of the teams ran consistently throughout the year, however we did have a few issues with team managers. Despite testing well in interviews, some of our managers dropped out or were difficult to work with.

## **Annual Report 2021**

I had 20 subeditors on my Creative Subeditor team this year, and despite this being perhaps a too large group for me to manage, they were all amazing. They all came from diverse backgrounds and had different levels of experience, which catered well for the array of submissions received. I encountered no issues with individual subeditors, and only a few minor problems with writers they were working with which were quickly resolved (—these issues mainly included writers being unresponsive to emails or reluctant to make edits). Overall, it was a positive experience and I feel so fortunate to have had my amazing team. The satire team also ran well, considering satire team members are usually pretty lax. I attribute this to having two strong, experienced managers and sustaining team members' interest through setting small, achievable tasks and opportunities (e.g., contributing single headlines to the Satire-In-Brief section of the magazine). Overall, I consider this to be one of the most successful years for satire at *Farrago* so far.

### **Making Farrago**

Absolutely the most fun and stress I've had in my life. As each edition went on, and we grew more comfortable in our tasks and responsibilities, everything started to work like clockwork. We'd finally grown super comfortable making mags by Edition Six, and then suddenly it was all over! Even during a pandemic, we were blessed to have the continued passion and support of our contributors, subeditors, reporters, teams, photographers, illustrators and managers who turned out top-quality content and helped us proof 80 pages every edition. We overall got really positive feedback, especially in regard to the design and aesthetic of each magazine.

We occasionally faced a few issues, mostly to do with proofreading. On occasions, names were misspelt, enjambment was altered in poetry (because of transfer from documents to InDesign), and other grammatical errors. There were also issues with InDesign which affected the formatting of pieces—though Ailish did really well navigating this with her bag of tricks. As a small editorial team, we'd often be extremely tired, stressed, and working to a tight deadline to get the final magazine to the printer on time. As such, we didn't have the capacity to make proofing as thorough as it could have been.



## **Launches**

All of our launch events were surprisingly successful given pandemic anxieties. After the year that was 2020, we put in a lot of effort to make our events super special. The in-person events were a hit, especially with a sizeable bar tab and a fun theme. Everyone was just happy to be interacting in person again. The Ida staff were also a riot and helped to make those nights super enjoyable and easy. After great in-person launches, we were worried about making our Zoom events enjoyable. After seeing what amazing events other departments were holding (such as Creative Arts) and their techniques for keeping people engaged, we felt more confident. As such, we included a variety of activities such as music, planned readings, magazine flick-throughs, chat time, and games.

## **Radio Fodder**

I believe this was a fairly strong year for *Fodder*, especially after last year. I didn't know a lot about the on-air side of things, so I definitely learned a lot over the year. I really wanted to accomplish more in terms of making use of the studio, training students to DJ at University events, getting involved with local and student bands, and etc. But the pandemic impacted our ability to even get close to achieving these things. Mark Yin was a real lifesaver. He was so dedicated to his position as Station Manager alongside his studies, and really kept the place going. I wish that us three OBs had had more training and experience going into the year in how to use and manage *Fodder* equipment and software. I was pretty overwhelmed trying to oversee things myself and didn't have much time to get actively involved in the day-to-day running of things. I mainly focused my energy on official documentation, organising payments, check-ins, planning for semesters and workshops. Still, not nothing. But it would have been better to have a few of us learning the ropes, instead of just one OB and a student volunteer.

## **Above Water**

Making this publication was smooth writing-wise, as we only picked the highest quality content, and it was a competition so there was no subediting involved. I felt pretty overwhelmed at times, especially as I was the one on the Editorial Board with experience as a Creative Editor. As such, I felt obligated to make all the final calls. I also did most of the thorough proofreading at the end as I knew what to look for (pesky enjambment!). After the other OBs had finished their proofing, I spent two more days finding

## **Annual Report 2021**

errors! Additionally, Ailish had to manage a lot doing the Design for this anthology, alongside her other *Farrago* responsibilities (timelines often overlapped). We also faced some issues getting illustrators to return work on time. But it all worked out okay in the end.

To be honest, making the magazine was a bit of a blur. We only saw how good it turned out to be at our launch event and on social media, where we received a lot of praise. Overall, I'm SO pleased. I have no regrets about any of the decisions we made.

### **Events & Workshops**

Workshops are a really great way of providing opportunities for students and various teams to develop their skills and network with guest speakers and hosts. This was especially effective for our radio, photography and illustration teams who are looking to develop very specific skills in non-writing areas of media. Some of our team managers and members also had the opportunity to run workshops themselves and get reimbursed for their time! This was great as it allowed them to build their confidence, managerial skills, and gain experience acting as an expert in their area.

Whilst we did lots of workshops in Semester 1, we did significantly fewer in Semester 2. This was because of low turnout for multiple events for a single team. Running fewer workshops per team enabled more anticipation for them. Us OBs were also starting to feel overwhelmed running so many events constantly, especially in-person ones which required an OB to be present.

### **Website**

Working with MSL was interesting. We were really impressed with them in the beginning as they took us seriously as a client, and made plans to address all our wants and needs at a convenient budget. But they then started taking long times to reply to requests, and the quality was not always what we had asked for. They also had difficulty transferring content from the old website to the new—one of our biggest priorities—and left us with new issues we didn't want. However, Ailish and her partner's

technical expertise helped us to iron out many problems ourselves. We launched successfully, and are getting so much positive feedback!

MSL did provide us with great training and resources for managing the new website, which set us up really well—so we're grateful for that side of things.

This redesign was a crucial and important thing to do, as it set the department up with a strong website that will last for years. We're really excited to leave it with the incoming OBs.

### **Competitions: Creative With COVID 2.0. & Media Library**

Overall, running competitions were great ways to keep students engaged with our department in different ways this year. I therefore consider our three competitions—*Above Water*, Creative With COVID, and the Media Library—to be successful initiatives. While our department already works 'round the clock to pump out print magazines, online content, and radio shows, I didn't have a lot of faith in the power of competitions before now. But seeing competitions' ability to pique the interest of students struggling to remain engaged with the University community during the pandemic definitely changed my mind. Our managers also benefited from the extended responsibility and involvement that judging these competitions brought.

The most important shifts in our department also came from these competitions—many of our applicants/contributors, and indeed winners, were students new to our department. In this way, they enabled us to grow our student community.

### **Merchandise**

This was a bit more of a random initiative that my co-OBs wanted to do this year, and which I ended up taking over. I believe it to be successful because of the effort that was put in to making designs and clothing as appealing and representative of our department as possible. Since students are required to

pay for merchandise, I wanted it to be worth the purchase. The response has been amazing. Many people have since purchased merch and provided us with incredible feedback. Overall, it was a good way to immortalise our year in physical clothing, and allow the Media Collective to feel included in the department. It would be nothing without Nikki's killer designs—thank you Nikki for going with my weird ideas!

## **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

### **Hiring & Training**

- Open applications as early as possible. Start sorting through applications before the application deadline.
- Be sensible about how many teams you oversee. It's really exciting at the start of your term, but make sure you're spreading the workload with your co-OBs.
- Perhaps hold additional application rounds throughout the year, to fill spots where people have dropped out, and to give newly-interested students (such as first years) the opportunity to join a team.
- Start preparing tests and training documents early.
- Use handover documents as a guide, but make up your own documents, training notes, and rules to ensure teams are running how you want them to.
- Run well-planned interviews. Try to have at least two OBs (if not the whole team) run it with you to properly judge if someone is right for a position. Also, be open-minded. We were often surprised to discover who our strongest managers and team members turned out to be.
- Run multiple training sessions if needed, to meet demand and accommodate different time zones.
- Depending on the situation, try to run in-person team sessions as well as online ones. In-person meetings build the foundations for stronger first impressions and relationships you will need to sustain for a whole year.
- Regularly check in with team managers. Just because someone performs well in an interview does not mean that they will pull their weight the whole year.
- Listen out for people's needs and requirements—particularly your co-OBs.
- Reach out if you need help and support.
- Be mindful that the department is comprised of volunteers. It is your duty to look out for their welfare and recognise that they are not being paid to do a position.
- Allow yourself to set boundaries, too. Be present and interact with people as much as possible, but recognise that you are not obliged to be friends with everyone. You deserve your own work-life balance.

## **Making Farrago**

- Plan how many editions you want early, and plan these out on a year timeline. This is the only way to keep you on track, as editions often overlap.
- If you're working in the office (in-person), contribute to the InDesign process—perhaps by helping to format pieces with specific requirements (such as enjambment). Otherwise, it's really demanding on the Design Editor.
- All editors should contribute to proofing. For that matter, get as many people involved in proofing as possible—there's always things missed.
- On the other hand, learn when to let go. I got a bit obsessive with my sections and on numerous occasions, Ailish would just say “enough” and send it off to the printer, because she's a boss.
- Don't leave editorials and other regular pages to the last minute. It's easy to consider them a “last minute” thing, but my writing was always a hot mess.
- Depending on your launch abilities (in-person vs. online), would recommend uploading to Issuu online before sending it to the printer. This was a lifesaver for us in terms of people coming to us with spelling mistakes and errors. When it's printed, that's it, it's immortalised.
- Make sure the Issuu link is downloadable and embedded correctly on the website.
- Also upload each piece to the website. Recommend creating an upload timeline or assigning people pieces to upload. Uploading and formatting correctly can take some time so schedule it in.
- Recommend making website-friendly graphics. The ideal is to have the illustrator design graphics for print and an online equivalent, but this can be a lot to ask.

## **Launches**

- Plan in advance. Get comfortable using Basecamp. You can get events approved quickly if you're early and responsive.
- Include a variety of activities, especially if launches are held online.
- Make an effort to talk to new people, include them, and make them feel comfortable!
- Consider safety—don't hold in-person launches too late at night during winter, for example.
- Advertise widely—it's in the department's interest if you can convince new people to attend..

## **Radio Fodder**

## **Annual Report 2021**

- All OBs should try to get training in *Fodder* equipment and software. This way, if there is a station manager vacancy or no capable student volunteer, *Fodder* has people able to run it.
- Don't leave *Fodder* responsibilities to just one OB.
- AV Melbourne are the one stop shop for all things *Fodder*. Isaac set the studio up, and is super great, so definitely go to him for questions, help, advice and training. Other UMSU Staff (Comms) also have knowledge and experience and can help you out.
- *Fodder* is as much a part of the Media Department as *Farrago*. So actively make plans for it and promote it as much as possible.
- Hold audio/radio-oriented workshops and events. There's a surprising number of students interested in media content other than writing and illustrating. So, there's an audience for you there.

### **Above Water**

- There are two OB teams working on this publication (five-six people), so make sure work is distributed evenly and fairly. Work out roles early. You'll likely be making it at a busy time.
- However, definitely be aware of strengths and use them to your advantage. The *Farrago* Creative and Design Editors will automatically have more experience producing creative publications.
- If making the publication in-person, consider collaborating on design and shortlists. You'll get a lot done a lot quicker.
- Start planning early. Get judges and Editorial Assistants involved early.
- Recommend having long submissions periods AND/OR increasing promotional efforts to reach more students.
- If there's time, consider involving more students on the design team than just *Farrago's* illustration team. Use Creative Arts connections to expand for more opportunities.
- Take care with proofreading. Pay attention to issues with formatting and enjambment—this really affects a poem's intentions.
- Experiment and make changes if you want to!

### **Events & Workshops**

- It's sad but running in-person events and workshops beat online ones by a mile.

- At Summerfest and Winterfest, make connections with new students and other OBs. Make a conscious effort to talk to more different people—Media is a huge department which caters to lots of interests and skillsets.
- Vary types of events and workshops. Get creative with activities, even online. Have different guest speakers and accommodate different skills sets other than writing.
- Allow certain students to have a shot at hosting workshops!
- Book things early!

### **Website**

- Definitely establish and grow *Farrago's* online presence, and take advantage of the new website's groovy features.
- If producing more online content, make sure you plan and schedule it. Producing print editions and uploading that work is time-consuming enough. Incorporate online initiatives in broader planning for the year.

### **Competitions**

- Definitely consider running a few competitions in your year. They're a great way to get new people involved, generate interest/awareness of the department and produce new/different content.
- Focusing on audio/music, video and other content which doesn't get much exposure in *Farrago* is a good way to expand the scope of the department.
- Use comps as opportunities to involve your managers; they'll benefit from the added responsibility.
- Recognise that running additional tasks/competitions will add significantly to your workload. Take care!

## Media Department Recommendations

Item Description	Amount (\$)	Budget Line	Comment
Additional costs for merchandise for Managers and Editors	600	Special Projects	<p>We previously underestimated the price of our merchandise, which includes taxes and shipping costs due to current issues with Australia Post.</p> <p>Consequently, we are needing more money to cover the costs of purchasing and shipping free hoodies to managers —as a token of gratitude for their hard work as student volunteers. We'd also like to extend this to the editors as a goodbye gift, since their term is almost up.</p>
New design hard drive	150	Special Projects	Every 4 years, the Media Department requires a new harddrive to store design files and artwork for the Design editor. This harddrive allows them to work remotely or from the office. It is time to purchase a new drive for 2022.
Archiving	700	Special Projects	Archiving is a legal responsibility of the Media Department. This money will go towards making bound copies of our magazines that are then distributed to various libraries for archiving. As per tradition, the Media Officers also receive a bound copy themselves.
Food and Drinks for the Fitzpatrick Awards event	1500	Special Projects	An additional \$1,500 to go towards food and a bar tab for the Fitzpatrick Awards event on December 2. Since this will be our last (and also one of our only) in-person events for 2021, we would like to splash out and make this experience the best we can for students.
Printing certificates for Fitzpatrick Awards recipients	200	Printing	\$200 to cover the costs of printing certificates for students receiving Fitzpatrick awards.
Issuu Monthly Subscription	90	Special Projects	To cover the cost of the final monthly payment to our digital publishing service, issuu, for Nov-Dec period.



Image Library Prize Money	100	Special Projects	To cover costs for additional Image Library prizes
---------------------------	-----	------------------	--

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council**

**Ailish Hallinan**

**Media Department**

### **Key activities throughout the year**

#### **Website Redesign**

One of the biggest tasks undertaken by the Media Department this year was the redesign of the *Farrago* website. I took the lead on this project and spent nearly 10 months coordinating with web designers and members from the UMSU Comms team to arrange this. It required briefing the web designers on how we wanted the new site to look and function, and meeting regularly with them to review their progress. As someone without a background in design, this was a super challenging task but the response from students to our new site has been fantastic and made it all worth it!

#### **Volunteer Training & Management**

An ongoing task all Media Officer Bearers have been responsible for this year is the training and management of our student volunteers. Our Media Collective contains almost 500 students, so this was no small feat.

This year, I was responsible for the following volunteers:

- News Reporters
- News Subeditors
- Illustration Team Managers
- Illustrators
- Photography Team Managers
- Photographers

Training of these volunteers happened in a series of induction sessions in early January. I prepared and delivered an induction session to all of these volunteer teams, which included outlining their responsibilities as volunteers with UMSU and their role within the Media Department.

### **Annual Report 2021**

Throughout the year, I caught up frequently with these volunteers — via email, Zoom or in-person — to check in on them and offer any assistance they might need.

## Summerfest

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, our Summerfest activities were very lowkey this year. I represented the Media Department at a stall at Summerfest, where I had copies of magazines for students to look at and take home, as well as posters inviting them to join our Media Collective. I also helped answer any student questions about student media at UMSU.

## Publishing *Farrago*

Our core responsibility as the Media Department is to publish *Farrago* Magazine. This year, I held the roles of News and Design Editors for *Farrago*, following the resignation of our fourth Media OB on the first day of our term. We produced 6 editions of *Farrago* this year, each of which was 80 pages long.

My key responsibilities for *Farrago* included:

- Creating and following publication timelines
- Organising content lists
- Assigning news pieces to reporters
- Taking notes on news pieces and assigning them to subeditors
- Templating pages so that illustrations could be commissioned to accompany pieces
- Sending illustration commissions to the illustration team
- Chasing up subediting and illustration commissions
- Chasing up OB reports
- Proofing final pieces and implementing proofing changes
- Laying out the magazine with final pieces / illustrations
- Creating proofing copies to share with my co-OBs
- Sending final copy to the Gen Sec for approval
- Coordinating with our printer to print and deliver magazines (either to Union House or directly to students during lockdown)

## Student Workshops

Our team decided to focus on providing students with lots of workshops this year so they could learn new skills and meet new people outside the *Farrago* print cycle. We ran several photography, art and video

## Annual Report 2021

workshops, with a focus on having skilled student contributors facilitate these workshops. This was a great way for these students to share their knowledge with their peers whilst also being paid for their time and skill.

## Election Reporting

As is tradition for the News Editor of *Farrago*, I oversaw our Department's coverage of the 2021 UMSU General Election. I decided to be a bit more ambitious with regard to the extent of our coverage this year so that students could be better informed about the candidates running to represent them. I was responsible for producing most of this coverage and overseeing the student volunteers who interviewed the Presidential candidates.

Our election coverage this year included:

- A Presidential Debate between all candidates via Zoom that was also live-streamed to Facebook
- An UMSU Election Explainer infographic, shared across socials
- Published interviews & profiles on each of the Presidential candidates
- An 84-page Election Guide which was sent to every student in the same email as their voting link

## Above Water

*Above Water* is the annual creative writing and art anthology co-produced by both the Media and Creative Arts Departments. I was responsible for designing and producing the anthology, which is made up of student work chosen by an external panel of judges.

My key responsibilities for *Above Water* included:

- Creating and following publication timelines
- Selecting students to be on the *Above Water* illustration team
- Designing the publication's format
- Templating winning pieces so that illustrations could be commissioned to accompany pieces
- Sending illustration commissions to the illustration team
- Chasing up illustration commissions
- Laying out the magazine with final pieces / illustrations
- Creating proofing copies to share with my co-OBs and Creative Arts
- Sending final copy to the Gen Sec for approval
- Coordinating with our printer to print and deliver magazines (both to Union House and directly to students during lockdown)

## Annual Report 2021

## Image Library

The Image Library was a new initiative launched in the second-half of this year to develop an ongoing library of images that the Media Department could lean on to accompany articles or use for social media. To incentivise students to submit their work to the library, we ran several fortnightly competitions based on the types of content we wanted submitted. I was responsible for setting up and coordinating the Image Library with our Photography Team Managers. At the end of Semester 2, we chose winning images based on all the submissions we received and the students who submitted these received prizes.

## Creative with COVID Competition

With many students reporting that they felt like they were in a creative slump because of COVID, we decided to run the 'Creative with COVID' competition that was introduced by last year's Media OBs again. There were 4 categories: audio/music, photography, video and visual art. I was the OB responsible for organising and overseeing this competition.

My key responsibilities including:

- Designing the structure of the competition
- Coordinating with the *Farrago* social media team & Comms team to promote the competition
- Competition administration — such as sorting submissions, emailing students, organising prizes etc.

## Evaluation of activities throughout the year

Despite a turbulent start and many COVID-related disruptions, our department had an **INCREDIBLY** successful year. We achieved basically every goal we set out to achieve (with the exception of some small events that weren't possible due to COVID restrictions). Even though we only had 3 OBs (one of whom was overseas), we still managed to produce 6 jam-packed *Farrago* editions, *Above Water* and the *Election Guide*, as well as have a functional student radio station and (perhaps our biggest achievement) create a **BRAND NEW WEBSITE!**

Student feedback to all our publications, events and initiatives was overwhelmingly positive, despite many activities having to move online. We also still managed to achieve high turnout at all our online events and launch parties. The high number of submissions we received to our competitions also proved that students were still keen to participate in our Department, even if they physically could not come to our Media Space.

## Annual Report 2021

Election coverage was also something I was particularly proud of. These stats were presented in my report to Council 15(21) but I want to reiterate them here:

- *Farrago* Facebook reach during election time was up 70.1% compared to the month before. Given that the majority of our posts were about elections during this period, this significant increase is more than likely a result of this coverage.
- Our department's 'Election Guide' received 4077 views (!! ) — for comparison, the most recent edition of *Farrago* received 469 views
- Over 140 people attended our Presidential candidate debate. We opened questions to the public and had to close them within 5 minutes as we had already received over 30 question submissions.
- The recording of this debate was published to our Facebook page and received 969 views.

Overall, I could not be more proud of our Department this year and what we've managed to achieve under these circumstances.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

Many of my recommendations have already been passed on to the incoming OBs during our handover, but I will reiterate the key ones here for Council:

- 6 *Farrago* editions, as opposed to 8, has proven to be a more sustainable workload for both our Department and our student volunteers. I would recommend that future OBs continue with 6 editions next year.
- Having adaptable timelines and backup plans for all your activities is crucial. Having these plans made in advance prevents you from having to cancel on students and means you can still offer them your services during a pandemic.
- When considering future coverage of the UMSU Election, please consult the report & recommendations I provided to Council 17(21).
- Consistent engagement with students in the Media Department is crucial to ensure your activities actually represent what students need. There is no point planning events and spending money if you have not consulted with students beforehand to see if your plans align with what students are looking for.
- Ultimately, the role of student media is to ensure that both the University AND members of UMSU are held accountable. While asking questions and chasing up story leads might not make you a lot

of friends, you are fulfilling the responsibility of your role and ensuring that students are well-informed about how THEIR SSAF is being spent.

**Media**

Pavani Ambagahawatta



**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Mohamed Hadi**

**People of Colour Department**

It has been beyond my pleasure being the POC officer this year, this department means so much to me and I'm so happy I got elected to run it this year. It's been quite challenging, I was overseas for the first half of the year and when I did come back, Melbourne was plunged into lockdown, plus being a solo officer for most of the year is a challenge of its own!

Yet I still managed to achieve a lot. I'm so proud of the barriers broken this year and the progress made for BIPOC students this year. My goal for the year was to restart the department and fill in the gaps that previous officers failed to address. Being the first Black officer of the department, I had a lot to prove and a big agenda to achieve, especially with the department's anti-black history, I'm ending my term with ease knowing I won't be the last. I hope I've served the BIPOC community well this year.

To my successors, aim for the stars, and shatter ceilings, I have full faith in you. This is a big role to have, but one that has an even bigger impact.

Thank you to everyone who has supported me and my work this year, it's an experience that I will never forget.

Note: a more detailed version of this report will be in the archives,

**Summerfest**

For Summerfest, since it was online, I organised a panel discussion on active anti-racism, featuring students of various positionalities to speak on topics related to racism to new bi poc students. Since its online we didn't plan anything outside the actual Summerfest event

It went extremely well, with almost 30 participants joining in, some old students, many new, a few names stuck out with us during the year and it was so heart-warming to see! We even went overtime during the discussion and got kicked out of the Hopin video platform.

Recommendation:

**[Annual Report 2021](#)**

Having a banger of an initial event is very important as those people would stick with you throughout the year and participate in your events., workshops, etc. I would recommend having a more of a social event so you can interact with the students and socialize with them rather than an educational event. This will attract a bigger number of BIPOC students and its much more relaxed and less draining on people's mental health

In addition, be ready for Summerfest early, there are 2 elements to Summerfest: Stall day where you meet students going through orientation, and a Summerfest event to attract students. Both are extremely important and can set the tone for the whole semester.

Decide what kind of goodies and merch you'll give students to get them interested in the department, order it early as well as how will you let them know about what we're all about

TLDR: Have a big social event and a small educational event for Summerfest, this caters to both types of people who interact with the department; however, students need to feel a part of the department through these social events, so they are empowered to host workshops, get involved in myriad or any other initiatives

### **Collectives:**

Collectives are the heart and foundation of the department, providing spaces for BIPOC who have different interests and identities that the department caters for, each collective is run by volunteer coordinators from the respective communities, they manage the collective's activities and decide what to do and which food to get etc. Each collective is run by 2 students (except for POC collective which **both officers must run together**), the responsibility of the officer is to promote the collectives and ensure that they comply with all COVID and safety procedures and file the reimbursements or invoices for the collective expenses.

### **POC collective**

**Times: Wednesday 1-3 PM**

This should be the biggest collective the department has hosted, unfortunately this year it has been sub-par, this is a relaxed social collective where BIPOC students can socialize, play games, interact over some free food.

## **Annual Report 2021**

The caterers we used this year were:

Nene Chicken

Zambrero's

Pronto Pizza

Adonai Foods,

Trio Pastry

In semester 1 this collective started after midsem break at around week 8, and semester 2, it ran 2-3 times because of lockdown, and instead of food, prezzy gift cards were given out to students who came in as a replacement

I wasn't responsible for this collective, however, the execution was very poor, this should be the epicentre of the department and it was abandoned, it's heartbreaking that it turned out like this.

#### Recommendations:

Invest so much energy into this collective, plan the food schedule weeks ahead of schedule and look for BIPOC owned restaurants to cater for the collectives, there are games available in the office and at info desk to be used. Be sure to promote it very well and use your friends to bring in their BIPOC friends to the collective.

#### **Queer People of Colour Collective**

Times: 12.30 PM every thursday

This collective is a fortnightly/weekly collective for Queer BIPOC students, it's one of our smaller social collectives, the coordinators really handled it well this year and I didn't need to intervene much in its activities, it had a collective budget of 1800 split between the two departments. It's also the most consistent collective we've had!

#### *Recommendations:*

None really!

### **Bla(c)k Collective (Weekly, with online events every 2<sup>nd</sup> week)**

It was established in 2019 for First Nations and African Diaspora students to connect, socialize and create a community. It ran fortnightly this year and had 3 coordinators managing the activities of the collectives. In semester 1, the collectives ran in hybrid mode with fortnightly in person collectives with food and 3 games nights/ online collectives with prezzy gift card prizes for those who can't make the in-person collectives (where a lot of effort went into them). The collective really runs itself with the coordinators take all major responsibilities of advertising, games night theme decisions etc.

#### Games nights:

Chat and chill

Family Feud

Musical edition

#### Evaluation+ recommendation

It was great overall, with a solid attendance at the collectives, a lot more people connected during in person events, however, I felt that the coordinators were quite overwhelmed with both organising in person events and online events. However now that were moving to live with COVID, I recommend moving most of the events of the collective in person, and having the new coordinators do 2 online events a semester which they get paid for, I paid the collective coordinators around \$60-\$75 each for each game's night, but could go even higher to you and committee's discretion

Also, It's quite important to use UMSU channels to promote Bla(c)k collective, this year has been the first where the collective got advertising so I recommend doing promotion twice in a semester through the UMSU channels via basecamp.

### **POC x Media (Fortnightly Wednesdays 3.15 PM)**

This collective is a collaboration between POC and media departments to create a space for BIPOC students involved in media/ interested in media. This is one of our smaller niche interest collectives which we tried to make bigger, we did this by having different topics/themes for each collective and bringing speakers in! this unfortunately didn't help much, mainly because these types of collectives don't work well online, they would work better in person with more live engagement from people.

In semester 1 we had Journalism in Colour workshop with Ayah alkhars, Max Mok, talking about Multiple cultural identities and the media, and Mohamed Khairat talking about Egyptian streets.

### **Annual Report 2021**

With lockdown in semester 2, it kind of got transformed into a community forum for the media department, which I didn't mind but it shows that this collective cant realllyyy work online.

Recommendation:

Truly evaluate next year with the media OBS about what should the collective really be about, (Bipoc media contributors focused, or people interested in bipoc rep in media focused)

But I do suggest letting media primarily handling it if the former is the case, I don't recommend terminating this collective since it rose from student grievances of the whiteness of the media department

**Activist Collective (Fortnightly Fridays 1-2 PM)**

This was our newest collective this year, aimed at being a place where people interested in activism can have an autonomous space to organize for rallies, create contingents and be involved in activism

This year, the activist collective organised a banner making session to stand in solidarity with Palestine, organized funds for Afghanistan, as well as contacting MPs and support the afghan community abroad as well as multiple themed discussions

Recommendation:

Keep the collective and direct people there from POC collective, either by having it right after poc collective or promote it during poc collective, however this is to your evaluation.

**Southbank Collective**

This unfortunately didn't happen this year, due to multiple reasons, however its extremely important to have this, the previous Southbank OBs wanted to hold a diversity forum for all autonomous departments where students essentially share their grievances with the officers and Southbank faculty, not sure what will happen this year but there must be something done for Southbank BIPOC students, I've heard some really horrible stories about the racism that goes on in Southbank and there is a dire need for something to be done

Recommendation: hold Southbank collective at least 2 times a semester and work with the Southbank OBs to ensure that the collective is promoted well. This should be promoted where students can share grievances and well relax and socialise

### **Film screenings/Reading groups**

Recommendation: Discontinue the Film screening/reading group and merge them with POC collective.

These could be done as activities during PoC collective, students can get food and watch a movie and that way you don't need to think of weekly activities. Could alternate between games, a movie and just food

### **Anti-Racism Workshops**

This years' workshops

1. Decolonising the body positivity movement
2. Unpacking Medical Racism
3. Racism in the Sex worker Industry
4. Journalism in Colour workshop (ran during Poc x Media)
5. Islamophobia onscreen and online
6. Systemic Racism
7. Deconstructing the POC identity
8. Racism & Migration: The Refugee Crisis
9. Misogynoir
10. Women of Colour in the workplace
11. Diversity without Inclusion

The plan was to start holding these workshops on week 3,5,7,9 a semester with 1-2 workshops each week (either Tuesday and Thursday or Wednesday and Friday), this is done to not overload students and give each event a chance to shine! Mind you there will almost always be another event run by the POC department on the same day.

Most of these workshops went well with a few hiccups here and there, most notable a racist man came during the misogynoir workshop and said the very things the workshop was advocating against. Most had good attendance with those that discuss 'simpler' topics had a lot of attendance. For example, the "what is Systemic Racism" workshop had around 30 attendees.

### Process of accepting a workshop

I found that the old way the department hosts these workshops really kept the committee out of being involved with the decision-making process. So, I revamped the way we deal with applications, where officers have no authority on accepting or rejecting workshops and giving that responsibility to committee

1. Workshop application received via online form
2. Workshop application is vetted initially by the officer to make sure the content doesn't contradict the departments' values
3. The workshop applications are presented to committee in an anonymised format (name and email redacted)
4. The committee is to discuss whether the application is informative enough of the direction of the workshop
5. The committee votes on whether to accept, reject, or direct the officers to follow-up with the speaker for more information about the workshop
6. The officers act in the manner which the committee decides

This newly adopted procedure ensures transparency with the committee and empowers them to make decisions on what the department authorizes

After a workshop is accepted for production, make sure that the speaker gives you 3 things:

1. A title of their workshop
2. A short 50-word description of what they're presenting about (which you'll use to promote the workshop)
3. A longer rundown of their entire workshop which includes all the points they're discussing

Point 1 and 2 will also be used by the comms team to promote the workshop so make sure the presenter sends those in at least 2 weeks before their workshop is scheduled

### Terms and conditions

## **Annual Report 2021**

Terms and conditions for presenters and workshops should be adopted by the committee at the beginning of the year and made public on the application website. This is to make sure no workshop presenter acts up and has unrealistic demands in terms of payment or the duration of their workshop

Currently the adopted T&C's are:

- One application for one workshop topic must be submitted at the time of applying.
- The speaker's presentation must not extend beyond 1 hour and must include a Q&A/discussion/activity segment either during the 1 hour timeframe or after.
- If two or more presenters would like to jointly present a workshop, payment must be equally split among the presenters, as it is assumed that the labour to create the workshop elements is divided equally among the presenters
- Payment is done according to the degree level of the applicant and scales up accordingly, this is done at the discretion of the People of Colour Committee.
- Workshops must be held in Weeks 3,5,7,9 of the university semester calendar **unless** circumstances require the presenter to do a workshop outside of these times, this must be known to the office bearers as soon as possible and the officers will str.
- Officers reserve the right to cancel a workshop if notice of these circumstances is given less than 1 week prior to the intended workshop date
- Applications submitted for the anti-racism workshop program must be reviewed and approved by the People of Colour committee before the officers may coordinate the logistics of said workshop.
- If the applicant seeks to appeal against any of these terms and conditions and have strong reasoning to do so, they must appear in front of the People of Colour Committee to plead their case. This can be done by emailing the department and requesting the details of the next meeting to be forwarded to them in order to join.

adopted by the People of Colour Committee on 8th of July 2021 – Meeting 12(21)

#### Recommendations:

- Open and promote the anti-racism workshop applications 2 weeks before the semester starts
- Adopt the procedure above to accept workshops to ensure transparency with committee
- Encourage collective and committee members to do their own workshops after attending them
- Adopt a new payment schedule for workshop presenter remuneration of \$150 for undergrads, 250 for masters and 400 for PhD students (where their work is relevant to what they're presenting about)
- Make sure to record the workshop and post it in the event in case someone can't make it during the time!
- Adopt the terms and conditions above by committee and update them as you see fit, make sure they're on the webpage where students apply to present a workshop

#### **Merchandise**



Merch and brochures are very important to give students something lucrative to remember the department by and create some sense of community so to say.

What we currently have is:

1. POC branded Keep cups
2. Myriad
3. Tote bags
4. Brochures & bookmarks that summarise what the department is about
5. Random goodies from Flora and Fauna

The keep cups were purchased from the keep cup company with POC branded bands from Bluegum. There's a good supply of keep cups present (around 160 keep cups), which should be enough for Summerfest (assuming they're distributed all there). There's also lots of random items in the office that can be given away during Summerfest.

Brochure/Bookmark design

Recommendations:

- Decide on items you can brand using the POC department branding (notebooks, pens, pins idk really) they should be items that students can use regularly rather than just leave them to be lost
- Students love free stuff, and they will come back if you do it regularly and support you during campaigns etc. because they'll stay in touch.

### **Myriad Magazine**

Myriad is the departments annual magazine, for BIPOC, by BIPOC, its produced in semester 2 but the process starts as early as April. My goal for Myriad is to make it as big as possible, I wanted to reach the target of 50 submissions from students, Glad to say we got around 40 submissions for the magazine!

Timeline:

Editor EOI's opened

Subeditor EOI's opened

**Annual Report 2021**

Content list released

Submissions open

Submissions close

Launch party

### Editor Solicitation

We started the solicitation of Editors in April, we opened editor applications for 2 weeks, for 1 Graphics, 1 Commentary and 1 Creative editor. The process was for them to submit their CVs, 2-3 pieces of work as part of their portfolio and a cover letter. After that we held interviews for each person who applied to be an editor asking them all the same set of questions to figure out their workload, responsibilities and what their work demeanour would be.

The eligibility criteria and responsibilities are all on the website. we had a LOT of applications for editor applications, which was around 21 across the three roles present

Editor interview questions:

We asked each applicant these questions and an extra personalised question based on their work submitted or if something jumped to us from their CV.

Q1. Myriad tends to be a pretty big publication, 2019 magazine had around 50 pieces published, how do you manage your workload?

Q. Have you had the chance to read any of the past myriad editions? What did you like/not like?

Q. The responsibility of being an editor is essentially a leadership position where you have your own crew, what experience/examples do you have of managing people and leadership?

Q. The BIPOC community is a very large community the hosts people of multiple identities and intersectionality's within it, how do you suggest that when editing the stories experiences and intentions of those outside your community are preserved?

Q. How would you define a successful editor? What qualities should they have and what should they aim to achieve by the end of their term?

## **Annual Report 2021**

We had a lot of applicants for Commentary and Creative editors, however there were much less applications for graphics, which is not surprising since there's a specific skillset required for it.

Editors:

- Commentary: Joanna Guelas
- Creative: Xiaole Zhan
- Graphics: Kaley Nguyen

Note: for graphics our initial pick was someone else however they opted out of the role due to other commitments, Kaley initially applied as a graphics sub-editor but we asked her to become editor

The applications were truly amazing, and everything came in close but what made us select the three mentioned editors were unique aspects that put them ahead of everyone by a bit, example, Xiaole founded and ran a magazine in highschool which was something quite unique and those skills were desirable so to say.

Recommendations:

- Don't give everyone an interview, take the best submitted applications and offer them an interview, aim to shortlist 50% of applicants into the next stage. This also depends on how many people apply for each role.
- Make the interview a welcoming place for the editors to be, the whole interview should be more of a conversation rather than a very stressful interview, it should be a maximum of 30 minutes
- Maintain payment at \$400 for the editors
- Solicit 2 Graphics editors, the workload is huge for one person (assembling the magazine and making graphics)
- Create the callout for editors in mid-April and open it for 10 days, and open sub-editor EOI's immediately after. Hold interviews when all applications have closed to make an informed decision
- For Editors that didn't make it past the interview, take them into consideration as subeditors but don't automatically accept them, you'll receive a lot of subbie applications and it wouldn't be fair to exclude most of them if some of their work is good enough for them to be subbies

Subeditor solicitation

I viewed the role of subeditors as people who help the editors, but those who are still in the learning stage or want to develop their skills. In general, the subbies are people who show potential to be editors or have the drive and learning capacity

**Annual Report 2021**

In total we had 6 subeditors per editorial team and a total of 18 subbies. The application process for them was simply to submit their CV and 1-2 pieces of work and from there we contact them if successful in their application, some of the subbies originally applied to be editors

Recommendation:

- This is a good method to keep since there's a lot of people who apply to be subeditors, this saves you the energy of

### The magazine

Overall, it was good, except for the graphics being made on canva, I didn't know that magazines were assembled in software like indesign and how canva makes the graphics a lot darker when printing, which was disappointing but at that point it was too late to do much about it

Recommendation:

- The magazine must be made on InDesign, the graphics editor must know how to use it and build the magazine there
- Allow at least 3 weeks to assemble the magazine after submissions close but tell the editors and subbies to start editing as submissions come in
- Show the editors the magazines from previous editions to see how the style works and what it can look like
- Ask the Media Officers to have training session for the editors and remunerate them for their time

### The Launch Party

The program was as follows:

- Introduction by officer
- Speeches by Editors
- Introduction of the magazine to attendees
- A few readings
- A Comedy performance by Annie Loeuy
- Some more readings
- Editors' choice awards

So, editors choice awards were essentially the best pieces of the magazine as per the selection of the editors in their categories, the award was a \$100 voucher to Amplify bookstore

Recommendation:

- Since next year it would be an in-person launch, money for the food, performance, and having physical magazines would be more expensive
- Always have a performance or two during the launch! In 2019 we have a DJ come in and play some tunes at the end of the launch

### **Giveaways (prezzy)**

During semester 2, we had some prezzy giveaways to support students through Melbourne lockdown. This was done in collaboration with welfare

### **Campaigns and Advocacy**

#### **Halal food policy**

Back in march/april, I worked with the Muslim community to pass a motion mandating halal food options in UMSU, the motion is presented below:

Expanding halal food options in UMSU

Preamble:

There's a lack of accessibility for Muslim students when it comes to halal food options, while the union has ONE halal catering shop (which isn't all that good tbh) it really isn't enough for a large Muslim body, there has been a lack of engagement by the wider Muslim community with UMSU BECAUSE of this. we can consume vegetarian alternatives, yes, but why would we? This union has the capacity to provide halal options in each of its events where meat is served, we shouldn't be forced to consume vegetarian options if we aren't vegetarian. Halal food can be consumed by anyone, non-Muslims are allowed to consume it but this small change has a big positive effect on the Muslim community, it shouldn't be a mission to snag a sausage on campus and it shouldn't be the sole responsibility of Muslim-majority clubs and societies in UMSU.

In consultation with the Islamic society at umsu, we've worked on a few action points to mitigate this issue. Starting with establishing a policy for all big umsu events to have options accessible to Muslim students, encouraging clubs and societies to do the same, and the purchase of a grill to be used for any entity for grilling halal sausages, patties, etc.

Actions:

Direct all UMSU departments who intend to hold medium to large-scale events (with 15+ Attendees) that serve primarily meat-based catering to have halal meat options for Muslim students.

Direct the C&S Officers to spread the supplied halal food caterer/supplier list to all clubs and societies

### **Annual Report 2021**

Direct all UMSU departments to establish a food labelling policy where food which is either vegetarian, vegan, halal, etc. is clearly labelled as so, and this extends to promotional material, for example, a BBQ promotional material having “vegetarian options, halal options available”

Move \$1500 from the whole of union funds for the purchase of a grill to be solely used for halal food only. (and be properly labelled as so)

### Recommendations:

- Work with the C&S Officers to implement something similar to all clubs as well,
- Work with the Muslim community and other communities to see what other concerns there are on the accessibility of clubs
- Reintroduce this motion in 2022 council meeting to remind and reaffirm this.

### **Diversity and inclusion module**

This project has been ongoing since the beginning of the year, I wanted to create a module to educate incoming students about racism and how to become anti-racist, I looked at using Hue: Colour the conversation to consult and essentially create the module, it was a long process since they're quite busy and time was running out.

I worked with the education academic and Indigenous departments to create a framework and outline for this module, and we scored a meeting with the chair of the diversity and inclusion committee to discuss the submission and module

Essentially, the uni was very resistant to letting us handle the majority of the module in terms of design and content of the module, in the end, the uni essentially took what it chose from the submission and made it into the module

This module consists of multiple subsections that promote the importance of inclusion and aims to address discrimination, there will also be a dedicated section to educate students on First Nations history.

Two of the subsections aim to address racism on campus and responding to racism on campus, they acknowledge the university's racist past and link articles on that and are linked with further resources.

I'm honestly pleased with the successful outcome and implementation of this module, however, we would like to acknowledge that the module has issues, it is not student-centered enough and

### **Annual Report 2021**

doesn't address racism as a systemic problem or as extensively, it's not exactly what we had in mind.

Yet this is a significant step in the right direction, it's a start where future officers can advocate for specific improvements such as including international student experiences, the effects of racism on mental health, how racism can manifest in classrooms, and more.

### **Racism at unimelb report**

This all began when ANUSA's BIPOC department sent around their racism on campus report, filled with stories of students facing racism at different levels during their study. It inspired me to do something similar for unimelb students. I ran a survey and collected responses compiling it into a report. The survey was open for 7 days and gathered 51 responses. It will be presented to the university and the result of that meeting will be updated to council and this report for the archives.

Recommendation:

Conduct this survey annually for students and utilize umsu resources fully, this time we didn't get to put this on the UMSU mailing list which was a shame.

### **Indigenous Sovereignty and Bla(c)k Liberation week**

In collaboration with UMSU indigenous & Bla(c)k collective we worked on a big themed week full of events, speakers, music and different activities to celebrate all things Bla(c)k, this is to give some hypervisibility for First nations and Bla(c)k communities the program will be as follows:

#### Original Plan (assuming it was going to go ahead in person)

Tuesday:

1. Welcome to country
2. indigenous dance performance with Murrup Barak
3. Bla(c)k Liberation Seminar with panel of speakers (in person with livestream online)

Wednesday:

## **Annual Report 2021**

4. Billibellary's Walk

5. First Nations geared seminar (in person with livestream online)

6. Alumni/excellence night inviting past alumni to come and network with current First Nations and Bla(c)k students.

(to be done in the old quad)

Thursday:

7. HUGE food event at concrete lawn with First nations and Bla(c)k caterers invited to be a part of it and give away free food which we would pay for entirely from whole of union funds and have a lineup of Djs and musicians to play during the event. Possible distribution of free merchandise. this is on concrete lawn

### Final plan (due to covid restrictions it had to be held online)

Tuesday:

On the Quest to Bla(c)k liberation seminar with Djirri Djirri Dance performance

Wednesday:

1. Billibellary's Walk

2. Feminism and Indigeneity with Lauren Scott

Thursday:

1. Cook along with Mabu Mabu
2. Alumni/ Bla(c)k excellence night

### Recommendations:

- Start very early on this (at least 2 months in advance), we started very early and had to rush things at the end because theres a lot of things to pin down
- Have potentially 3-4 events in total
- Try to have the food event, shanyasa and I were so excited to do it, but alas, covid.



**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Emily AlRamadhan**

**People of Colour**

**Key activities throughout the year**

**1. Ramadan Iftar**

There were several Ramadan Iftars hosted throughout the month of Ramadan (which coincided with the Gregorian months of April and May) anywhere between 5:15-6:15pm or 5:45-6:45pm (depending on the day). Students were required to pre-register for food packs that included a hot main meal, a drink, and an extra (either a side of fruit or a mini dessert). The food sourced was halal approved. Given the nature of fasting times and prayer times, we also booked Mary Cooke A and Mary Cooke B to serve as temporary prayer spaces as the Musallah (where students usually pray) was located on the other side of campus. For the designs, we were able to provide Arabic translations, increasing accessibility especially for those whose first language is Arabic.

**2. Eid Al-Fitr**

As for Eid celebrations, we booked the Woodward centre for the 15<sup>th</sup> of May (not the actual day of Eid). It is important to note that the Islamic Calendar, i.e. the Hijri Calendar, is very tentative as it relies on the moon cycle. We started the day off with an opening ceremony featuring a Quran recital by a student and a speech by guest speaker Imam Abdul Kader from the Board of Imams in Victoria. After that, there were several open activities for attendees to engage in such as a henna stall, several arcade games, and even a Kahoot game! The event was complete with simple brunch items. The closing ceremony ended the event with a performance by Emkew Music and a live art show by Berays Art.

**3. Goodness Giveaway**

In a collaboration with the Welfare department to create welfare packages for those affected by the pandemic, the 'Summer Welfare Packages' project turned 'Goodness Giveaway' came to life. Consisting of self-care and hygiene products such as bamboo toothbrushes, vegan lollies, deodorant, and vegan snacks (e.g. mac 'n' cheese and soup), 150 personalised packages were sent throughout Australia to University of Melbourne students.

## Evaluation of activities throughout the year

### **1. Ramadan Iftar**

Overall, this was one of our most successful collectives. Unfortunately, on the first day there were not many attendees but that was the only day where food was purchased without paying attention to registrants. At the end of the first night, we still had some remaining pizzas which were distributed to students on campus. The second day, we had approximately 13 registrants and, although most did not come, we connected with the small group who had attended. It was a good start as those attendees have been registering and attending most, if not all, of the other Ramadan Iftars that we have hosted. On the remaining days, we continued to almost entirely book out. Despite some registrants being no-shows, all the remaining food was still distributed to those who did not sign up but came to get a pack (I always purchased a few extra meals for this exact reason).

### **2. Eid Al-Fitr**

Mixed emotions on this one. Although this event was successful, it is admittedly not successful in the way I had hoped it would be. I had a great time and really hope that the attendees enjoyed it as much as I did. This was the first time that the Student Union has attempted an Eid Al-Fitr event of this magnitude, and I couldn't be happier with the way I dealt with it. I really hope that this event is continued in the future and all of the learnings we've amassed in relation to this event and how it runs are taken into consideration for Eid Al-Fitr with UMSU 2.0.

We started off with a really small group, as anticipated, seeing as that the first hour was dedicated to the religious aspects of Eid. Following that, there was a slight increase in attendees who left around 12.30pm for the Palestine snap rally that ended at 3.00pm. While the Palestine rally was happening, there was much to do for those who stayed: getting henna at the stall, playing the carnival games, competing in a series of Kahoot games hosted by UMIS, and generally just relaxing and chatting with their fellow attendees. Those who left for the rally did return at 3.00pm, when lunch started, with many more people joining them from the rally, which I appreciated. We finished off with a closing ceremony where we had: the amazing Berays used pastels to make a spectacular piece of artwork that will be displayed in the People of Colour office; the talented EmKew perform a selection of his pieces that heavily tied into his experiences as a person of colour; the selection of the raffle winners'; and a few thank you speeches here and there. Given as this was the first event of this kind, many things were tentative and had to be changed last minute.

### **3. Goodness Giveaway**

The first project that was initiated during this year by this department was the Goodness Giveaway. It took a long time to get this project up and running but it was amazing. Given that it

was one of the first few projects, several things made it such that it ran over a long course of time. But these were all points that lent to the success of future projects.

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

#### **1. Preparation is key**

Have as clear cut a plan as you can have in regard to events. If you don't know exactly what you'd like to do, then find out before it's too late to gather the required resources to do it! It's handy to break up your tasks into little tasks and those little tasks into smaller tasks and so on and so forth; this makes it much easier to know exactly what you need to do before progressing with any part of your plan. It also helps to have a breakdown in terms of dates and to always leave room for mishaps.

#### **2. Social Media and Marketing**

Ensuring your target audience has knowledge of your event way ahead of time is no joke and in my opinion, it is one of the most important factors in the success of an event. Following through with the previous point, include dates for social media posts to be sent out to ensure maximum engagement.

In summation, better to be overprepared.

**University of Melbourne Student Union  
Annual Report 2021**



**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Amelia Bright**

**Queer Department**

**Preamble, or “Alexa play Guillotine by Death Grips”:**

The University of Melbourne is a thoroughly conservative institution, intent on governing itself with its reputation at heart, and that alone. I am yet to be convinced it can ever change.

However, there may be more to life and to unionism than overhauling the systems that oppress us. This is a long, arduous, seemingly impossible process, and in the meantime we must find meaning in the communities formed in the bonds of oppression.

A union’s job is not only to bargain and protest, but to protect its members and foster a community of people with far more in common than different. Never have I found that more important than whilst holding this autonomous constituency. Despite all we have faced this year, the fights we have lost (or just not yet won), the hurt we face at the hands of the Morrison-esque chancellery that governs this institution, we have bonded together and formed a strong community of students, activists, and loving human beings.

For this, I will never be more thankful to the queer community. After 12 long months, engaging with TERFs can leave me bedridden for a day, but with or without me, the queer community continues the fight. They find new ways to make our efforts a little less fruitless.

I am defeated, but WE are not.

**CAMP Magazine:**

This was one of the most successful operations of the UMSU Queer Department in 2021, and it can hardly be attributed to us as Office Bearers. We relied heavily on advice from Farrago’s Ailish Hallinan, who walked us through opening up expressions of interest for editors and sub-

editors, who (again with Ailish's mentoring) performed all of the duties associated with producing the magazine.

Lucinda Janson, Zoe Keegan, Hannah Winspear-Schillings, and all sub-editors and contributors of CAMP 2021 should be thoroughly proud of what they produced this year. At the time of writing the stunning magazine has been launched digitally and (at time of writing) will be printed and delivered in the coming days. Physical distribution will be largely relegated to 2022 when on-campus activity resumes.

Improvements from the OBs can definitely be made. We ought to have opened up EOIs for the editorial team sooner. We were pretty lost on how to make the whole thing happen, and I just wish we asked for help sooner. This would have allowed for more deadline flexibility, meaning that all three autonomous magazines can release in their own time without as much overlap. Nonetheless, a success.

### **Collectives:**

I feel this is an area which did not receive satisfactory attention from us OBs this year. Online collectives are difficult to engage with, which resulted in a decrease in collective attendance overall. I do believe this issue could have been mitigated by strengthening collectives during the on-campus times to provide them with momentum to carry through the lockdown times.

This could have been achieved by improved advertising efforts and a clearer Collectives Calendar (including a graphic). There were efforts made to this effect, but perhaps it was too little too late.

### **Queer Political Action Collective:**

Content Warning: Racism, Eugenics, Conversion Therapy, mention of Paedophilia, all with no specific detail. Transphobia, Police, with some specific detail.

The University of Melbourne has been a hotbed for Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist "academia" from Germaine Greer to Sheila Jeffreys, to Holly Lawford-Smith. Several generations of the UMSU Queer Department have fought against this, and 2021 was no

exception, with the fight ramping up a bit and gaining some public attention. I have structured this section as a numbered timeline of events and our response to them, with some notes for the incoming OBs, who have both been significantly involved through the entire year.

1. To kick off the year in January, the Queer Department released a statement supporting the then forthcoming Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020. We also lobbied to undecided Members of the Legislative Council. I'm not convinced our lobbying changed any minds, but the Bill passed with a majority nonetheless, and I got to hear a lecture about paedophiles from a Justice Party staffer.
2. At the end of February, Dr. Holly Lawford-Smith published a website, "noconflicttheysaid.org", which claimed to be collecting stories (as a supplement for a lack of data) on the impact of transgender inclusion in women's spaces, on the premise that transgender women are degrading the integrity and security of these spaces.
  1. This project entailed all elements of a research attempt, with the only exception of not using the word "research", alongside the fact that she used her university position in crediting herself, so should surely go through the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity, and be subject to academic standards. Spoilers - it was not.
  2. Despite this, it was quickly cited by columnists and researchers as if it were a genuine peer-reviewed research process.
  3. Seeing this as a gross misconduct and seeing no action from the university, staff write an open letter which is signed by more than 1,000 staff and students
  4. University defends Dr. Lawford-Smith's citing "academic freedom". In response, QPAC hosts a massive rally on campus to protest this response, with endorsements from NTEU and NUS, making the following demands:
    1. The University must publicly oppose the transphobic website "noconflicttheysaid.org";
    2. Remove content from courses and tutorials that is clearly transphobic, causing harm to transgender and gender diverse students;
    3. Stop selectively applying Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policies to protect hateful misconduct. Academic freedom is not the freedom to spread misinformation and hate.
3. Duncan Maskell invites myself, Andie Moore (NTEU delegate) and the co-chairs of the Pride in Action Network Committee to meet with himself, Russell Goulbourne, Julie Wells and Julie Willis to discuss this and other related issues.
4. We walk out of this meeting with an agreement that the NoConflictTheySaid website is transphobic behaviour that "*might*" warrant action. We are promised quarterly meetings with Goulbourne, Willis, and Wells.
5. These meetings never come to fruition, no public condemnation of NoConflictTheySaid, and Russell Goulbourne remarks that "so far he sees nothing wrong" with the subject PHIL20046: "Feminism", after we raise the issue.
6. After a number of weeks of the University acting as though the matter is settled, we host a follow up rally on Transgender Day of Remembrance with updated (but identical in spirit) demands.
  1. An external group attends this event, with a drove of cops following them. Attendees chanted "cops off campus" and Ciara O'Sullivan negotiated to have the police leave the campus.
  2. A few TERF counter-protestors attend as well. Following the speaking, external group ignores the consensus agreement to ignore the counter-protestors (unless

- they attempt to escalate), and arguments begin to escalate. The situation becomes volatile, and we attempt to de-escalate.
3. This is eventually achieved by coaxing people to get a drink at the Ida Bar event planned for immediately after. Some of the external group remain behind to continue bothering the counter-protestors but the situation is not at risk of becoming violent, so we leave them.
  7. Some counter-protestors record the escalated portions of the protest including the faces of organisers and attendees. These recordings are later aired on Sky News with commentary (I refuse to call it journalism) from Rita Panahi. The selective use of footage, clearly biased coverage, and referring to transgender women as “blokes” was unacceptable and though we intended to lodge a formal complaint, we simply did not have the time and resources.
    1. As a result, I moved a motion at Students’ Council installing some basic guidelines for UMSU protests, including a principle of de-escalation and the requirement for a police liaison to negotiate the removal of police.
  8. Not long after, The Age requests that I write an opinion article on the issue of UniMelb’s forthcoming (now implemented) Gender Affirmation Policy, to be printed alongside a counter-piece written by Dr. Lawford-Smith. Hesitant, but keen to drive the narrative, I wrote and submitted the piece. It was not printed due to concerns it may be defamatory (despite all claims being easily supported by evidence), and despite being told I would be offered a chance to resubmit – we have been ignored ever since. Dr. Lawford-Smith’s article was published without challenge.
  9. From here, we focused our efforts on the PHIL20046: “Feminism” subject. With some massive help from members of QPAC, I compile a report into the complaints and transphobic rhetoric involved in the subject coordinated by Dr. Lawford-Smith. You can read the report at [tinyurl.com/FeminismReview](http://tinyurl.com/FeminismReview).
    1. After more than month of ignored emails and “thinking time”, Russell Goulbourne delivers his response to the report via email (despite our request for a meeting). He determines that the subject is “totally consistent with the Faculty’s standards” and “students may use the official complaints system”. Either he did not read the report, or the Faculty’s standards require significant review. Either way this spineless coward does not wish to cooperate with activists.
    2. I recommend next year’s OBs attempt to disinvite him from the Midsumma March. I believe the Pride in Action Committee has the biggest say in this, so I would start there, followed by a public campaign. Either way, the campaign for improved standards of Teaching and Learning on TGD-related topics must continue.
    3. The next steps for the PHIL20046: “Feminism” subject in particular should be to have the case heard by the Academic Board (something we been trying to achieve in Semester 2 but UMSU Advocacy & Legal, from whom we were getting a lot of advice, have surely been swamped in work for students). I’m hoping the incoming Queer and Education (Academic) OBs can make this happen.
    4. When the Academic Board inevitably refuses to act, we will have grounds to submit the report and a formal complaint to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Association (TEQSA).
  10. At this point, QPAC shifts focus to a campaign to have campus buildings currently named after racists and eugenicists renamed, and the Gender Affirmation Policy.
    1. UMSU Queer was totally locked out of negotiation on the Gender Affirmation Policy, only able to hear updates through the Pride in Action student co-chair. However, following public complaints from prominent TERFs (remember Dr. Lawford-Smith’s Age article?), an important clause was removed so that the

University didn't have to ever assess the "harm" caused to TGD staff and students. It was replaced with a segment from the existing Freedom of Speech Policy.

2. The result is a Gender Affirmation Policy that fulfils one of its core goals – to provide TGD staff and students with a clear and supported path to transition at the University. However, no clarity is offered on what transphobic behaviours are considered unacceptable in university spaces. We consider this a great failure, but by the time we learnt of this the University was taking no further input. We wished to rally for amendments the lockdown made this barely possible. I recommend the incoming OBs continue this fight in 2022.
11. Returning to the Building Renaming Campaign, I convened a meeting of a variety of UMSU OBs to begin working on the campaign.
    1. We determined a list of buildings across all UniMelb campuses named after categorically awful people (mostly eugenicists). We also tasked each autonomous department with suggesting new names for this building. Queer considered Dr. Penny Whetton, a transgender woman who was Australia's leading climate scientist a Lead Author of the Nobel Prize winning UN IPCC Reports. She worked mostly with the CSIRO but the University of Melbourne is her alma mater. She died suddenly in 2019.
    2. I met with her widow, Senator Janet Rice, to seek support/permission to continue the campaign using her name, and Janet and her family were very supportive. We agreed we would attempt to rename the Frank Tate building in her honour.
    3. Recently, there has been a significant development in this campaign – QPAC members contacted the University and discovered they are currently already in the process of evaluating building names and Deans of Faculties will be responsible for suggesting new names. This is likely to take an unacceptably long time and the University may not assess all of the buildings we determined to be problematic, so QPAC and other UMSU departments should consider actions to keep them in check on this.
    4. As far as having a building named after Dr. Whetton, the strategy from here would be to pitch the name to the Dean of Science. We have the support of honorary Professor David Karoly, who worked closely with Dr. Whetton, in making this case. Professor Todd Lane, Head of SoGEAS is also supportive.
  12. In the final weeks of Semester, Dr. Lawford-Smith popped her head up again. Early in Semester 2 we were informed that a subject in the School of Historical and Philosophical Sciences would be hosting a debate discussing "Should gender identity replace sex in policy?". Speaking for the affirmative, was Dr. Cordelia Fine, and for the negative, Dr. Holly Lawford-Smith.
    1. QPAC co-signed a letter with the Pride in Action Network co-chairs addressed to the subject coordinator, asking them to consider the potential impact of this debate on TGD students and to reconsider the topic and/or the invited speakers.
    2. After the subject coordinator insisted no changes were necessary, it was escalated through the University's formal complaints system. The Pride in Action student co-chair was treated with absolute disgust and condescension by these bureaucrats. This, alongside the whole year of no allyship from the university, drove them to resign, and has contributed to an overall lack of morale in the Pride in Action Network Committee, who were just coming into their own as a helpful advocacy body.
    3. The debate when ahead and it was as awful as we expected. It happened at an awful time, and we simply couldn't do much in the way of action at this time of year – not least because of my sheer exhaustion. We obtained a recording of the



debate and produced a transcript. Action on this might continue into 2022, but at least we have (even more) evidence of the blatant transphobia enabled by the faculty.

13. On the evening before submitting this report, I was notified of a YouTube video released by Dr. Lawford-Smith which contains some extremely concerning claims. Alongside the usual derogatory and increasingly deranged claims about transgender people, she may be making incorrect claims about the activities of UMSU (particularly the Queer Department) which could amount to defamation. I am currently getting in touch with UMSU Advocacy & Legal for further advice.

1. Congratulations Holly, you finally made me cry.

### **Queer Collaborations:**

This has been the subject of significant uncertainty throughout the year, but at the time of writing I am glad to say it is intended to go ahead in December 2021. My involvement in this has been less than that of the RUSU Queer counterpart, but I have attended regular Queer Collaborations Organising Committee meetings for some time and assisting with communications, event bookings and other planning. A motion later in this council pertains to Queer Collaborations funding and contains more details.

My suggestion to 2022 OBs is to avoid being the ones responsible for hosting it in 2022, as I have barely had the resources to manage this in 2021, and I hardly think it would be fair for UMSU to host two years in a row. Nonetheless there is significant value in being on the Organising Committee, so I recommend they remain in touch on this one.

### **SASHWG:**

Content Warning: Mentions of sexual assault/harassment, no detail.

The Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment Working Group is a paramount initiative and I thank the UMSU Women's Department for giving all UMSU departments the opportunity to be involved in decision-making. I am mentioning it here to report on my attendance, offer reasons for the lack thereof, and suggest some solutions.

Like many OBs, Queer is involved in a variety of committees and such bodies (such as the Pride in Action Network Committee) and has additionally lacked human resources this year. Sexual assault/harassment is an emotionally heavy topic and also very heavy on policy and written material, making it a difficult thing to add to the workload of office bearers, especially those who already spend significant time working on traumatic issues related to autonomous identities, such as Queer. I have felt the compulsory attendance (which I was not informed of

during 2020/21 handover) produced feelings of shame for non-attendance which were magnified by a difficult working environment with other relevant OBs.

My proposed solution to this is not to remove the requirement for attendance/representation of each department at the working group, but rather that each department be allowed to delegate the responsibility to a volunteer from their committee.

### **Special Projects/Events:**

#### **G&Ts With the LGBTs:**

This is always a favourite social event in the Queer Department, and this year was no different. There is not all that much to say about it this year except that it remains popular, and Kyle at Ida Bar has been brilliant to work with as always. It has not run all that much in Semester 2 as it is a much less attractive event when held online and I could not devote the human resources to it.

#### **Bubble Teas With the LGBTs:**

Little to say beyond that it remains popular – I would even run it more often. The 2022 OBs have been provided advice on tea-making methods in handover and I can't wait to see it happen next year.

#### **Midsumma Pride March:**

This was particularly difficult in 2021 due to two facts. One, that UMSU has historically marched with the University of Melbourne contingent; and two, that there were limited spaces offered to each contingent for covid-safety (20-30 to my memory). Of these limited spaces, UMSU Queer was offered just three to allocate to members of the queer student community. Believing this was unacceptable and not wishing to select just three students from the entire community, we opted not to march. Instead, we had hoped to have a picnic near the finishing point of the march in St. Kilda but were not allowed.

To avoid this in 2022 and beyond, I have registered UMSU Queer as its own contingent in 2022 and recommended to the new OBs that they do the same at this time of year. Just note that the deadline to do so is in November, so it cannot be left to the following OBs. This is long enough after the elections that it can be done (with permission) under the incoming OBs names.

## **Annual Report 2021**

### Queer Gals and Enby Pals Movie Night:

I cannot wait for this event to return in person at the Rowden White Library. In Semester 1 we ran it on Zoom using the streaming service Kanopy, which all UniMelb students have a subscription to. Unfortunately, the selection on Kanopy is extremely limited and is mostly educational content. The 2000s high school documentary on sexuality & gender was very entertaining, but not what anyone came to watch. In Semester 2 we attempted to run it through sponsored Netflix subscriptions, but all four of the organising office bearers were burnt out or unavailable to run it so it was postponed and then cancelled.

Advice to incoming OBs: look after yourselves please.

### Queer Gym Nights:

Laura and I were very passionate about making this happen and so pleased that it turned out the way it did. We were given exclusive access to MU Sport's Lincoln Square venue and four queer/ally instructors ran four exercise routines across four weeks. The attendance at each was a variety from around 5-15 attendees. I consider this a success.

We strongly considered spring-boarding off of this to make a Queer Health & Wellness collective that could regularly work with MU Sport and use their gyms. The Semester 2 lockdowns shut down that idea this year but could totally happen in 2022.

### Queer Ball:

Another positive note of the year! We were determined to make this happen in one form or another, and for a while it was looking like an in-person event could happen. As such, Laura did a spectacular job of chasing up the previously held deposit at Bobby McGee's, preparing catering and venue hire, before everything went downhill, and in-person Queer Ball was no longer a reality.

And so... Online Queer Ball was born! And it was actually very good. We hired local legends The Titwitchez to deliver an online performance, as well as big-time DJ Cloudy Ku to perform

## **Annual Report 2021**

via Twitch Stream. We gathered volunteers (many thanks to you all) to run party games in breakout rooms, and we greeted the Spooky Season with the theme “Villainous Couture”.

I’m quite proud of how Queer Ball went, and feel it offers some hope for the success of online events going forward, with or without a pandemic.

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Laura Ehrensperger**

**Queer Department**

**Key activities throughout the year**

Summerfest

Collectives

- Trans, QPOC, QPOF, Queer x Disabilities, Queer x Southbank, Ace/Aro

Queer x Disabilities stress ball making

Queer x Womens Queer Gals and Enby Pals Movie Night

Queer Lunch

Queer Gym Nights

QPAC No Transphobia in our Tutes events

Winterfest

Bubble Tea with the LGBTs

Queer Ball

**Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

All Activities

- Amy and I went through prior to the semester budgets and planned out all the events we wanted to run and when we wanted them to run
- This was put in an excel spreadsheet which was great to keep track of as a calendar and budget tracker / organiser

## Summerfest and Winterfest

- These were a lot harder to run as I was in Canberra for both events and unable to come to Melbourne
- The items created were good, especially the keep cups which were very popular
- Winterfest was more relaxed so we did a videogame Twitch stream, this was good to passively engage audiences while discussing the Queer Department.

## Collectives and G&Ts with the LGBTs

- For most of the year our collectives were run online
- When collectives were in person Covid-safe food was done via separate and pre-packaged Woolworths orders. These were good as collective heads were able to grab snacks prior to going to Training Room 3 for the collective
- Online was harder to get attendance for, and attendance issues occurred consistently across all collectives.
- Originally we postponed Southbank Collective, however brought it back within a few weeks. It would have been beneficial to consult with the previous collective Heads and the Southbank Department before deciding to stop the collective. To address attendance issues Southbank was held once every two weeks, and food was catered on Southbank campus
- For Queer People of Faith collective there was consistently no turnout, so after consulting with the collective head (who recommended cancelling it) it was cancelled. Instead a one-off event in the Semester replaced the collective.
- G&Ts with the LGBTs was held at Ida Bar, with the same drinks vouchers and set-up as the year before. This was held every Thursday and had good turnout.

## Queer Lunch

- Pronto Pizza was used as our food source for Queer Lunch. They were great with catering to dietary requirements
- Food was also great to pick up as we were serving the pizza just up from Pronto Pizza. This was easy for pick-up, organising, and pack-up rather than holding Queer Lunch on South Lawn. It was also a good area for socialising while also being somewhat secluded, with decent noise levels, and accessible.

## Queer x Disabilities stress ball making

- This was a good event that had a small turnout but was pretty wholesome. The Queer and Disability OBs were present, along with about 5 attendees.
- The equipment for the stress balls were easy to get, however the floor was hard to keep clean of rice.

## Queer x Womens Queer Gals and Enby Pals Movie Night

- Run once in Semester 1, in Semester 2 had to be cancelled as everyone was sick and unable to host.

- For legal reasons we used Kanopy to stream the movie, which all University of Melbourne students have access to but the streaming service was not great.
- For Semester 2 we planned it so that those who did not have a Netflix subscription were able to get a month paid for by the departments for Netflix Party

### Queer Gym Nights

- These were really great events which focused on safety and autonomy
- These gym nights ran once a week for four weeks, which was a great training session.
- All staff who instructed were LGBTQIA+ and were really great at explaining the exercises and promoting safety and autonomy
- Held at Lincoln Square at MU Sport

### No Transphobia in our Tutes

- This involved rallies which were held first and second semester. The turnout was really good. I was not present for the second semester rally which is where there were a few issues with conduct.
- The first rally had great turnout, amazing speakers, and very few issues.

### Queer Ball

- There were two Queer Balls
- The first was organised as an in-person event at Bobby McGees. No new deposit had to go through as this was already paid by the previous Queer OBs.
- It was around \$15,000 to pay for the venue, a drinks package, and canapes (which were required for alcohol safety)
- A DJ and photographer had to be organised separately.
- Due to Covid, we instead cancelled the original Queer Ball event and organised an online one instead. This involved volunteers being leaders for different online games. This also involved an online comedy sketch by the Titwichez, as well as a twitch livestream of DJ Cloudy Ku.
- The turnout for online Queer Ball was great, with most adhering to a theme. There were around 60 attendees consistently.

## **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

### General Events

- Always have food catered for dietary requirements: gluten free, nut free, vegan, vegetarian, halal, etc
- For events that involve other departments and people be sure to check if any major changes are occurring
  - o i.e. if you are postponing a collective be sure to check with the collective heads

- Utilise the people in your collectives to help you run and maintain events
- When asking for money, with budgeting or passing money, be sure the amount you ask for is justified by figures and research
- Be sure to have online options for those outside of Melbourne who cannot participate during covid

#### QPAC events

- Be sure to have a backup person
- Ideally have both Office Bearers involved in political action, information, and events

#### Pride March

- Registrations close around November/December for the following year so sign up early
- Coordinate with other units such as the Pride in Action Committee

#### Summerfest and Winterfest

- Have tote bags, badges, keep cups
- Make sure you get heaps of keep cups because they are popular. Able to be distributed at other events too
- Be prepared to do the Zine early on, ideally a month or so in advance before O-Week
- The livestream videogame was good for online accessibility and having audiences engage in something passive while discussing the Queer Department

#### Documents

- Keep all your important documents in a shared drive, e.g. meeting minutes
- Also can put receipts and other important things in here
- For payments which are large and consistent consider getting the UMSU Card automatically signed up if reimbursement is an issue
  - o For collective heads OBs may have to pay for things and get reimbursed instead if there is a financial strain or issue

#### Queer Ball

- Must have canapes of food due to alcohol safety
- Be sure to organise this months in advance with the venue and budget – not as much of an issue if the budget is for the full year rather than per semester.
- Office Bearers should not drink at this event
- Have to find a private DJ and photographer for this event
- Be sure to book early so you can get a nice location near University campus on a day which suits. Be mindful of busy weeks such as election week in Semester 2



- Would be good to have an RSA, Mental Health First Aid training course / certificate completion, and potentially a First Aid course. Otherwise workers at the venue would have these and would be able to support if there is an issue.

#### Bubble Tea with the LGBTs

- Super popular event, around 100-200 will likely come.
- Use pre-brewed black tea, too difficult and time consuming to brew your own
- Don't use pearls, they are also time consuming and difficult to make without the proper equipment. Use jelly instead which is easy to buy and distribute
- Be sure to get cups and thick straws or the jelly
- Set up a marquee and have committee members doing individual jobs in the production line

#### Queer Gym Nights

- Would be good to run again. Probably only weekly for four or so weeks, rather than once a week for the whole semester.
- Be sure to use Lincoln Square Sport again as they were great

#### Advertising Events

- Do these via Facebook scheduled events (which can also be linked to Instagram posts)
- Can also get Facebook boosting to improve advertisement

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Hue Man Dang**

**Welfare Department**

Dear my fellow UMSU Community,

Before I continue with my annual report, I want to take a moment to have some thank-you to those who have helped me get to where I am. Take this letter as my farewell and a UNIMELB Love Letter to you all who are named in this.

- **Brigit Doyle** – Thank you for being a girl’s best friend. You have been my rock and corner stone of both my academic and UMSU work journey. You have been an amazing and thoughtful friend, and I want you to know that you’ll always have a place in my heart. Thank you for showing up and being my friend and amazing co-worker throughout the events that we have ran together at UMSU. I am going to miss seeing your face every day and I am going to miss us working together so closely, but I am glad that you’re off to do amazing things. I know you will be successful wherever you go, and I can’t wait to hear all about it over the phone. Thank you once again for your contribution and support of myself and the Welfare Department throughout 2021.
- **Allen Xiao** – Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your life, Allen Xiao. Thank for giving me the pleasure of being able to work with you, learn from you and grow alongside you. You have been the best co-worker and younger brother that any sister can wish for. Every single time your name escapes from my mouth, all I have are nothing but praise and admiration for how incredible you are as a person. You have grown so much, and I can’t wait to see you become a successful doctor. The world is your oyster Allen Xiao and when you wake up to your fullest potential, the things you achieve will be spectacular and beautiful. Once I was asked “Hue Man, when you walk away from all of this, who will you want to bring with you?” without any hesitation I simply said, “Allen Xiao.” Thank you once again for your contribution and support of myself and the Welfare Department throughout 2021.
- **Three Amigos (Allen Xiao, Archit Agrawal, Ciara O’Sullivan)** – *Where would I be without you three?* I’ve been spending a lot of time reflecting on my journey with you three. I doubt you will be reading this, but if you do happen to read it, I want you to know that when I walk away from all of this, I will only be carrying the love, hope, and wishes that we shared together. I will cherish the good memories that we have shared throughout my time as the Welfare Officer for a very long time. You three as a collective have given me something to carry on with, and for that, I want to

thank you from the bottom of my heart, thank you. Thank you once again for your contribution and support of the Welfare Department throughout 2021.

- **The Dream Team (Muskaan Hakhu, Jennisha Arnanta and Kalyana Vania)** – I don't even know where to get started with this! Thank you to you three amazing people. I do have to admit that we make an incredible team. From Clash of Clubs to all the amazing activities that we ran together, I have looked upon you for love, support, encouragement and skill, and all you three have delivered on it. I love how we worked so well together, and I love how you just always knew how I was feeling. I'm going to miss all of our conversations together, and I'm going to miss seeing you every morning that I come to work Jennisha. I want to wish you the best of luck next year and know that I'll constantly be rooting for your success in the background. Thank for your love and contribution to the Welfare Department throughout 2021.
- **Mohamed Hadi** – More than myself winning the seat of Welfare Officer, I was much more excited to know that you had won Mohamed. Throughout the year it has been my absolute pleasure to work with you be in your presence. Seeing you become a strong leader has been something that has warmed my heart. I'm sorry that I wasn't always around to be the support that you needed, I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me. Please know that you are a talented and amazing young man and wherever you go, you will be able to contribute positively to the work that you do, just as you have this year. I hope that one day when I see you again in the future that you can tell me of the amazing things that you have done, and when we do, I will shout you a meal to congratulate you. Please forgive me Mohamed and thank you for your support and contribution to the Welfare Department throughout 2021.
- **My Future and Hope (Lynne Bian)** – The joys and burden of the Welfare Department are now in your hands. I want to wish you all the best and I know you will be a lot more successful and talented than me. I can't wait to see what you achieve in the welfare office and see you enact your vision into the department. I hope the rest of this annual report will be useful and help you on your journey. I know in the past I have not been the best mentor and support for you, but from the bottom of my heart, there will be a time when I will, and I hope you can wait for me until then. I will try my best to support you as you have supported me.
- **My OG Welfare Office Pals- (Michael, Aleksandra, Joseph, Rachel and Justin)** – Thank you to my favourite pals in the world. You have taught me the meaning of friendship and brought incredible joy and hope into my world. You have brightened my life with your smiles and your '#yolo' attitude. The world out there is cursed, and you have been the blessing for me. Seeing you come into my office, spend time with me, share my burden and comfort me has made this journey a lot more bearable. Thank you for your support of the welfare department and to me. Love you heaps my favourite pals.
- **My Extended Family (Lauren Scott, Raymond Wu, Planning Jay Vynn Saw and Clea Porteous Borthwick)** – I'm going to miss bumping into you now and then. I have found lots of enjoyment when working with you throughout the many activities that we have un throughout the year. Had we not been stuck at home so much, I would have loved to have you all spend more time with me at my office, that would have been such an enjoyable thing!

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND EVALUATION

When I think back about my key activities this year, there are so many, I'm not quite sure where to start with them!

### UNION MART



This year I launched Union Mart, which has provided thousands of meals to students throughout the year. Every lockdown this year the shelves that I have filled and stacked have been emptied so that students can get the food that they needed, when they needed it. At times, I myself have made the packages that have been used to hand out to students. As a vegetarian I have always hated how food didn't meet dietary requirements and have been humbled in the process of curating the food at Union Mart to make sure it has vegetarian and vegan options as well as gluten free and low sugar options. I only ever wanted to buy the best food for students and the best resources for students throughout the entire process and never for a moment want to do differently.

Union Mart was built on my own lived experience of growing up poor in Australia whereby the choice of food was limited by how much money you had in your pocket. That is something I deeply cared about rectifying and worked to build in choice, variety and enjoyment into my food model at Union Mart. I

wanted every student who walked through that door to feel like home and feel that there was no shame in wanting to eat well, and that being poor shouldn't mean that you must sacrifice your health and wellbeing. If I had more time and more time on campus, I would have done so more. I hope Lynne will do better than myself!

The Welfare Department wouldn't be what it would be without the lovely volunteers who build the vision and help make the dream a reality. For example, during the August 5<sup>th</sup> lockdown, even when the UMSU building was getting shut down, so many amazing people went out to work with students such as Planning, Archit and Lynne who were there until the last minute to hand out food and supplies to students. They also gave out things like winter clothing in front of the Baillieu Library. Thank you for your contributions!



I'm glad that I could make a difference to the lives of students that I have worked with – within Union Mart, below are some of the direct testimonials from students with represent the work that I have been able to achieve throughout my time as the Welfare Officer;

**Student Testimonial** *"I first found out the existence of the union mart through the uni's welfare handbook and it has been a great help ever since (ive visited it just twice tho xd). Since the pandemic begin, it has brought about many uncertainties in life and in particular my casual work which leads to a certain degree of food uncertainty. I am just grateful that Union Mart provides me some baseline to fall back onto and give us students a helping hand when we really need it. Aside from the awesome goodies, they're staffed with nice and easy to approach people too from various faculties and various stages of study coming from different backgrounds. The diversity makes an international student like me not feel left out whenever I am visiting it. Good food and good company, really couldn't ask for more. Totally looking forward to future visits there!"*

**One of my favourite social media posts that I made (27<sup>th</sup>**

**May):** ❤️ In a time of crisis, your Welfare Department and it's Officer - Hue Man is here! We're proud to have been there to support students who need us. Today we have almost wiped out our shelves to provide \$2000 of staple and needed food supplies / hygiene products (and even toilet paper 🧻 ) and an additional \$1800 of winter clothing and products to over 250 students to prepare them for the snap lockdown happening tonight. This is something that we couldn't do without amazing volunteers such as Joseph who is also pictured below! We are proud to be able to be there for all of you and we want to wish you all the best. Please stay safe. ❤️



**Household Appliances**

I also launched a new pilot program to make sure students had access to household appliances that they might need such as kettles, toasters, hairdryers, sandwich presses, kitchen utensils, cutlery and crockery. Previously, most items were donated but when I entered this year, I really wanted to push this program so that students could get new products that they could use for a longer period which would be a really nice addition to their homes, and I'm so glad I could do that for so many students at UNIMELB.

### **UMSU Welfare x USMU Disabilities**

UMSU Welfare and USMU Disabilities teamed up with Learn Auslan to provide free Auslan classes to UNIMELB students! These classes are a perfect place to start or refresh your Auslan skills. You'll explore the basics of sign language including alphabet, expressive and receptive signing skills. To make the classes

### **Annual Report 2021**

as accessible as possible, I ordered an online course so students can work through at your own pace over an extended period. I have had such a great time throughout this year working with UMSU Disabilities and the myriad of projects that have gone through the department.

### **UMSU Welfare x UMSU People of Colour**

By far, one of my favourite collaborations was with the POC department. I partnered with them to bring students vouchers over \$4000 in vouchers which allowed students to either purchase a meal, buy food and groceries, books and other household appliances. I have very much enjoyed working with you Mohamed, you have been an absolute gem and gunner in the work that you have done. Let's not also forget all the other great events we did including Giveaway Goodness!

### **UMSU Welfare x UMSU Environment Department**

It has been a great time working with the Environment Department earlier this year. There were so many great activities that we did together. I must admit, one of the most enjoyable ones was 'Bring Your Friend BBQ'. As a vegetarian, there is nothing that I love more than being able to see others enjoy vegetarian food, and that event that you ran Ann, was a supper great one. I am so pleased to have been able to contribute to the work that you have done.

### **UMSU Welfare x UMSU Activities x UMSU Clubs**

Where do I even begin! Gosh! Let's not forget the iconic Clash of Clubs that was run! As well as the AGM and the amazing activities that went with that! (Who can forget the one of a kind - \$30,000 giveaway (probably one of the biggest that have gone through the doors of UMSU for a while). I adore your hard work and vision, and those three / four days working with the Clubs Department, being able to contribute to Clash of Clubs and letting more clubs know about the Welfare Department has been such a positive contribution to the Welfare Department and my time running it. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work with you all in this aspect.

### **FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS**

When I look forward towards of those who are going to replace me in the future and my recommendations for those who are entering, I just want to say – the road forward is tough but don't be bogged down my those who find enjoyment in tearing you a part. It says a lot more about those people, then it does about you.

There are several things that I hope those who enter after me will be able to do:

- Continue Union Mart and bring choice and personalisation into the giving that we do within the community
- Continue the voucher system that POC and Welfare set up together.
- Continue the many collaborations that were set up this year. Work with other departments constantly to run bigger and more financed events. They generally reach more students and have greater reach and impact.
- Post more on social media so that people know what you're doing. Post real stories of students and people and humanise the process of Welfare.
- Break the stigma of accessing support by showing vulnerability in your work.
- Live true to who you are the vision that you have for what you do. Lynne you're a talented and committed young person and so I hope that you will continue in the work that you do. I will be watching with a happy smile in the background.

Lastly – encourage more volunteers! They are the backbone of this organisation.

**Let's not forget that Lynne started as a volunteer:** "Hi! My name is Lynne and I'm one of your volunteers for the Welfare Department. I am passionate about helping students in need. I started volunteering last month to provide free food through the breakfast and lunch program with the Welfare Department. My favourite flavour of Up and Go is chocolate (Did you know that Welfare Department also have Dairy and Sugar-free Up and Go?). I really like the fact that there is warmth in the Welfare Office and there are overall good vibes! I've connected and made a few friends with the Welfare Department and right now I'm busy planning one of the exam support programs being released by the Welfare Department. Look forward to seeing you soon! Also, a friendly reminder to come to the Welfare Office (on Level 1 Union House) to get your comfort food and take care of yourself during SWOTVAC!"



I flit, I float, I fleetly flee, I fly  
The sun has gone to bed and so must I  
So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, goodbye.



University of Melbourne Student Union

Annual Report 2021

To Students' Council 18(21)

Srishti Chatterjee

Women's



*"Justice is what love looks like in public."*

What an incredible year! I've done a lot of good things in my life - a few degrees, awards, good grades. I have fallen in love, too - twice. Being one half of UMSU Women's 2021 has been the biggest honour of my life.

I will start with a few thank yous - firstly, my family, to my late grandmother - the foundation of my feminism, my father - forever my favourite rally/picket line comrade, and my mother - the love I practice, my sense of community, and everything I am.

My chosen family - Leyla - my love, rock, and solace. Chels, Zach, Abby and Emma - my children, the most incredibly caring, competent people who inspire me, every day. My best friend - Annalyce, for being my housemate and home (those are distinctly different), Liv and Sarah - our little family is still the best thing UMSU has given me, and Mayank - for feeding me and holding me through 9283838848390 breakdowns.

The better half of Women's - Mickhaella, for being the strongest, most inspiring, loving partner OB I could have ever asked for. You made all of this so, so worth it, and there is no one else in the world I'd have rather done this with. Dr. Patrick Tidmarsh, for adopting two very excited young kids who wanted to change the world and making sure they did.

My UMSU family - Goldie, Naomi, Phoebe and all of UMSU staff - the grown-ups I want to be, and Ailish, Pavani, Merryn, Vaishnavi, Brittney, Jack, Hannah and Mohamed, the young people who bring me faith in our ability to change.

My organiser family outside of UMSU - Annette, Apsara, and all my wonderful asylum seeker and detainee friends who are still in detention, ex-detainees, and comrades at Fight Together for Justice - for keeping me accountable, competent and loyal to my communities.

To everyone in both tickets I ran with, whatever we feel about each other now, thank you for believing in me, and campaigning for me. To every colleague and friend from a different ticket, thank you for seeing me for me and not my (erstwhile) faction.

And to myself - for carrying me, for falling apart, and for coming back together. And to a certain unnamed person - for as far as my many *secrets* to success go, you're by far my favourite.

After 2 years, for one last time,

**KEY ACTIVITIES:**

**Annual Report 2021**

## **1. SAFETY ON CAMPUS - Where do I begin!**

After we had to speedrun this campaign following the Age article on Alan Lopez, overnight, we ran a petition, filmed a video and organised a rally - within the week. Following this, Mickhaella, Patrick and I were in an endless lot of meetings and consults, and finally got the ball rolling on the Sexual Misconduct Policy. A few rounds of to and fro of drafts, responses, watered-down policy, more responses, we are so proud to have won us the **University's first standalone Sexual Misconduct Policy**. It is by no means the best, but it is a HUGE step to a safer campus.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT WORKING GROUP:** The last one of this is next week, where I will be making a wrap-up Chairperson's report - but this group has been beyond productive this year. We also added permanent representation for colleges, the media, and the arts in the group this year, and I truly believe in the great potential of this group to do great things.

**TOWARDS SAFER ACTIVISM:** Earlier in the year, when we had in-person rallies, I sent all my speakers a 'trauma-informed speaker brief' - reminding how to make a moving speech while keeping in mind the safety of the people in the audience. Despite constantly talking about really traumatising things, we have opened to more people than ever this year - I'm so proud, and it will only get better.

We also ran in a good balance - always having fun events, relaxed events, to make sure people have a chance to breathe, and to know that we're more than fights. We're people. We're tired. We love.

We ran the Uni's Refugee Justice contingent to the State Library and showed up to different protests across the city. We condemned 'Women's Day' protests that were SWERFY-TERFY. We did activism our way - bringing our communities to every table, and breaking tables that will never have a seat for us. We make our own furniture now, besties.

**SAFER, ONLINE, AWARE, AND RESILIENT:** While really confoundingly named, this committee was a flagship online safety pilot project - that I sat on with stakeholders across the University and managed to have a draft plan for a safer online experience for students - as an extension of the public sphere of the University. It also makes our overseas students safer online, and for that I'm so, so glad.

## **2. NON-BINARY PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATION. IN EVERYTHING.**

I was the first non-binary person to have run this office - a complicated precipice. I'm very happy to note that I'm not the last OB to be having a gender crisis while in the Women's Office, it is but a beautiful legacy of how an office about gender justice should be run.

**JUDY'S PUNCH**, for the first time, had more non-binary and gender diverse editors than not.

**UNGENDERING MENSTRUATION**, was something we would have liked to have done more, and COVID threw a wrench on that, but our workshop earlier this year with blood themed cupcakes, was still our favourite event of the year.

## **3. LANDMARK INTERSECTIONALITY**

Neither Mickhaella nor I are Citizens/PR. We are both young, Asian femmes - and the first Women's OB pair that were also both people of colour. We spearheaded one of the biggest policy changes in this white, colonial institution. We watched faces contort and people wallow in discomfort because we challenged them - and it was fun. Very happy to note that this will continue into next year.

All **JUDY'S PUNCH** editors were people of colour. All workshop runners this year were non-binary people. Our rallies always had a majority of speakers of colour. We always involved other departments working on

similar projects - when I walked up to Queer for Trans Day of Visibility and did the RISE Refugee Justice Contingent with PoC. As one of only two openly trans OBs this year (out at time of election), and as the only trans person of colour in office, I would have liked to have done more, but the burden has always been mine - which it should not have been.

#### **4. ART**

We got permanent representation for Arts and Media on the SA/SH Working Group. Our Judy's was the first to have a permanent website, and publish performance art. Our Open Mic had 10 performers, all women and non-binary people - because when we said we'd amplify everyone's voices, we meant it.

Mickhaella and I bonded over our love for art - for theatre, pretentious indie storytelling, and bisexual lights. Art was our soft-corner, and our solace.

#### **5. MUTUAL AID**

Mutual aid organising is central to collective justice - pride in y/our collectives, remember? This year we ran a mutual aid drive - to redistribute some of our sweet SSAF cash directly to our community. There can never be enough of this.

We also established a precedent of paying our contractors much higher than before (and otherwise this year, too). Judy's editors were each paid a total of \$750 over two instalments - owing to paycheck-to-paycheck livelihoods of student creators. All workshop runners were students, and they were all paid.

-----  
When we ran for our office, we said we would make space for art, academia, and activism. Over this year, I have felt very isolated, alone and tired - bringing pain, grief and trauma, new and resurfaced. As I look back, not only on my time as Women's Officer, but in my entire time at UMSU - I see a jaffy OB-elect who wasn't expected to win, a disabled, trans, brown student who was tokenised for their 'expertise', who watched everyone mollicoddle international students while actively harming me. I also see a powerful femme who refused to let anything come between them and their work - leaving behind a legacy that will better lives of people who will never get a chance to know them. I see a scared child who should have been protected, and I see a mum-friend who is a fierce protector - and I would never have seen and loved all of me without my two years at UMSU.

I have been a survivor my whole life. I did not know of that word in an advocacy context until three years ago, but I have been a survivor of different things for over twenty years. This office, above everything else, was my love letter to survivors, and to the survivor I neglected the most - six-year-old me. I see my life today, so much of it because of UMSU - so many people to love and be loved by, so many hands to hold, so much writing, speaking and advocacy to cherish, and a legacy to leave behind - and I'm telling six-year-old Srishti this now -

*It will be okay, mostly. And when it won't, you will fight. And because you are very, very lucky, some incredible people will fight by you, and you will win.*

## Joint Recommendations

1. **Foster good relationships with community members, stakeholders, and external organisations:** If you've got a point of contact with literally anyone that could be a potential collaborator, help point etc - list it down. It's like a cute little family of allies you'll be able to fall back on. Especially if a last-minute cancellation happens - IT IS VERY COMMON.
2. **Understand that you cannot, and must not, DO EVERYTHING:** We're guilty of this. Don't bite off more than you can chew. Do important things, do some fun things, let some things slide. Do not comment on some child's assignment unless they are doing ground-breaking work.
3. **Continue representing more intersectionalities - but do fall into a trap and be everyone's bipoc disabled femme token.** Lots of people will try to tokenize you, and your lived experience. Don't do this. You're important. Your story deserves love and care, and if you're not getting that, don't go there.
4. **KILL FOR VICARIOUS TRAUMA TRAINING:** Please, for the love of God, IMMEDIATELY GET VICARIOUS TRAUMA TRAINING, before March when Survey Results come out. We will leave behind resources - follow through and do them.
5. **Your media department is your best friend** - Always respond to Farrago - when they ask for comments on issues that concern your department. Involve them with the production of Judy's Punch, because they are good at magazines, they make 6.
6. **Object every time your gut feeling doesn't agree** - Sometimes, you will feel like the person pointing out too many mistakes. You will sound like the person who has a problem with everything, the one with too many ideals. In chancellery meetings, as often the youngest person in the room, you will feel like the 'too politically correct' Gen Z menace. Good. Be the menace - that's the job. Be annoying, ask questions, object to gaslighting bureaucratic procedure. You're doing a good job.

And this is for the rest of the OB-Elects:

7. **UNDERSTAND** that your Women's Officers are often constantly marinating in trauma they have experienced. Just because we have signed up for this doesn't mean we must pay ourselves up as a price to protect people, in a way WE should have been protected. Ask them how they're doing - check up on them. Show up for them.

You will see if you read carefully, that the first letters of the recommendations join to spell 'FUCK YOU' - when anyone hurts you, threatens your work, say that, and move on. That's the best recommendation we can give you - all of you. As I have often said, about 50% of the Women's Department's work this year has been done purely out of spite, it is a rather spicy motivator.

You are so loved, cherished, and cared for. Factions mean very little to us, and we'll always be here to help you. The biggest reason why Women's has been the most consistently competent department in the Union is that - in a fight between our department and our (erstwhile) faction, our department, and its people, have always taken precedence. We hope that it will be the same for you.

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Mickhaella Ermita  
Women's**

I've had an incredibly challenging year as one half of UMSU Women's, trying to simultaneously write my Honours thesis and, well, be a human being during the pandemic. Yet, it was incredibly rewarding and I'm so, so thankful for the people who've been there for me, especially Srishti—who's so brave, and loving, and inspirational. We've shouldered an immense burden together and I really don't think I could have done it (or even survived this year) without you.

Before I begin, I want to make clear that this isn't be a step-by-step account of the entire year—I've already submitted extensive reports that are available for reading, if need be. Instead, it's intended as something of a succinct summary. Additionally, aside from a few remarks I make here and there, please see Srishti's report for our official list of recommendations for the incoming Women's OBs.

*tw: mentions of sexual assault and harassment in no explicit detail.*

### **SAFETY ON CAMPUS**

The primary focus of UMSU Women's in 2021 was **Safety on Campus**. The official start of this was in March, when in response to an Age article on a University of Melbourne professor, UMSU launched the **Zero Tolerance for Zero Action Campaign**. We filmed a video with Jack, organised a snap rally and created an online petition, calling for the implementation of **UMSU's 10 Priorities**.

This initiated months of legal consultations and committee meetings with the Chancellory, culminating in our Department's greatest achievement: **the creation of a standalone sexual misconduct policy**. It is by *no means* perfect—and we, alongside Phoebe from Advocacy and Legal, have submitted our official feedback calling for improvements in transparency and accessibility (among other things). But it is a monumental step forward on the long journey towards achieving Safety on Campus, and I'm incredibly proud and grateful towards Srishti and Patrick, as well as the Women's Officers before us, for working so hard to make it happen.

However, throughout this whole process, we've been circulating updates and information through the **UMSU Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment Working Group**. In recognition of the fact that sexual misconduct is *not* a women's only issue, this Committee has representation from all the autonomous

UMSU Departments and a few councillors. We've also added **permanent representation for Creative Arts, Media and colleges**, because their voices are incredibly important. While these meetings were already open to all students, we also fostered community engagement through the **Feminist Action Collective**.

For a short while, I also sat on the **RESPECT Community of Practice**, however, due to the University's bludgeoning bureaucracy, these meetings were gradually petered out in frequency and cancelled for the whole year. I was, however, able to get the RCOP to commit to investigating UMSU's second Priority: **the formation of a standalone Health and Wellbeing Centre** or, in other words, getting the Safer Communities Program moved out of Stop 1. I **recommend** that the next Women's OBs continue working on this objective to make it happen.

Meanwhile, the second half of this year was predominantly spent preparing for **the National Student Safety Survey (NSSS)**. First, we worked with Madeleine (the Women's Officer from the Graduate Students' Association) on a joint video statement from both our organisations to explain in plain language what it is, how students can participate and what support resources they can access. Additionally, we facilitated a number of safety-related workshops and events: a Writing Intersection into Policy workshop (for Srishti's birthday), a Consent 101 workshop (with Naomi Smith), an Art Relaxation workshop (with UMSU Disabilities, UMSU Creative Arts and Nicola De Rosbo-Davies). The survey concluded in October, but the results will be out in March, and I **recommend** that the incoming Women's OBs organise around that.

## **ARTS AND ACTIVISM**

One incredibly cool thing about working with Srishti for the past year is the fact that we're both writers, and thereby appreciate how important and powerful art can be as a form of activism—one that's accessible and deeply personal. And, given how fatiguing and distressing our primary work in Safety on Campus has been throughout the year, art has often been our solace—both for students and us as OBs.

As aforementioned, we ensured permanent representation of Creative Arts and Media on the UMSU SA/SH Working Group. However, in addition to this, we've integrated art into the Department through a number of events, such as our WinterFest **Art Journalling Workshop**, **NSSS Art Relaxation Workshop** and what is most likely our best (and certainly my favourite) social event of the year, our **Mic Drop for Feminism**.

### **Judy's Punch**

But I can't talk about arts and activism without mentioning Judy's Punch, our autonomous departmental publication. I'm so proud of the work that our editors—Yasmin, Chelsea and Carmen—have produced, with extensive help from Ailish and Srishti. I'm also so thankful towards everyone who sub-edited and

contributed; it truly wouldn't have been possible to make this without you, and I appreciate how much harder it was given that we're in a pandemic. The theme for the 2021 Edition of Judy's Punch was **Collectivism. Care. Cottagecore**, and I urge that everyone picks up our beautiful magazine and work of love.

We switched up a few things too, and I **recommend** that the returning OBs maintain these changes, including: **increasing the pay of the three Editors to \$750** (split across two payments), and **creating a website** to accompany the physical magazine (where you can put performance art and multimedia content).

### **INTERSECTIONALITY**

I'm so proud to say that Srishti and I are the **first pair of Women's OBs who are people-of-colour**, and that it's been an incredibly honour serving alongside UMSU's first non-binary OB. Much of our work has been about breaking narratives and ensuring that we centre the voices and experience of BIPOC as well as trans and gender-diverse students in the Department.

Alongside this landmark representation, however, we've put intersectionality into practice. We collaborated with UMSU Queer on **Trans Day of Visibility** to organise a Southbank Lawn Party, Rally Against Transphobia and Trans Pride Event at the Ida Bar. Additionally, we ran a **Menstruation Beyond the Binary workshop** to challenge its essentialist association with womanhood. Finally, all our **Judy's Punch editors** were people-of-colour, and the majority were non-binary and gender-diverse students. Genuinely, it was so rewarding and fulfilling to see our communities grow and become more reflective of the actual and beautiful diversity of the student population.

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Leyla Moxham**

**Southbank Campus Coordinator**

**Key activities throughout the year- Evaluation of activities throughout the year-Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

**Orientation week and stalls day**

Orientation is a week in which new and incoming students come to campus and participate in a variety of activities and group building exercises to get acquainted with the Southbank Campus and the VCA/MCM community. UMSU runs a series of Host tours, a stalls day in which production society, music student society and UMSU departments are encouraged to attend and engage with the campus.

Due to Covid the orientation had to be held online and in person host tours were cancelled. An introduction to campus video was shot by one of our OBs and the Host tour crew. There was a plan to do another festival style o week in April but that never came to fruition. UMSU OBs spoke to the incoming students about the function of UMSU and activities that year.

Recommendation: This is the first time that students will have a chance to hear from UMSU, so make it count. Depending on the format, Deans and Heads of Fac will be in audience too, so keep that in mind. Make some noise, pour red paint all over the place, burn something, have fun with it!

**Guide to student life booklet**

Continuing from last year's OBs we released own guide to student life booklet in which we introduced the union and its core members, some of what we do, projects, BBQs, and important campus know how such as where to get cheap coffee and how to access counselling, advocacy, and academic support.

Recommendations: Spend time on this one, expand it, explode, double check prices, tips and tricks. Talk to other OBs and students about what they wish they knew about the campus and uni sooner (like, did you know you can get free travel to school cards if you speak to UMSUs financial councillor?).

**Town Hall Talks**

This year we launched a platform for student led discussion on campus.



Town Hall Talk One was run by the ever-fabulous musical theatre students Milo Harthill and Sherry Watson. A subsequent article was written by member of the vca community Rhys Kierkegaard which had real implications on the entry requirements for musical theatre students (the requirement for a general medical history form was removed from the admissions process). I hope to see run into next year.

Recommendations: curate this platform parallel to campaigns and conversations you'd like to have on campus.

### **Constitutional Working Group and SGM**

The increased number of students on the Southbank campus since UMSU's acquisition of the VCA Student Association has increased to over 2,000 students. This number does not include the thousands of additional students who study breadth subjects at the campus each year. Along with the addition of programs such as Student Enrichment, Student Life, new managerial staff and new facilities, the result is an increased demand on the responsibilities of the UMSU Southbank Department, particularly its student representatives.

When events related to other UMSU Departments are hosted at Southbank, the amount of additional responsibilities required of the Events and Activities Coordinator exceeds responsibilities of Officers based at Parkville. The Coordinator is expected to liaise with security, operational staff and building managers on campus. At Parkville these responsibilities are avoided due to the centralised nature of UMSU within Union House, where the majority of UMSU Staff are situated. This can translate into hours of additional work expected from the student elected to this role.

The centralised communications staff at UMSU are also unable to communicate relevant information directly to Southbank students. Feedback from students often highlights a consistent request that the student community at Southbank be stronger to encourage collaboration across disciplines.

Communicating catered information to Southbank students often falls under the responsibility of Campaigns Coordinator. For example, in 2020, communications that were integral to the formation of the fee relief movement needed to be crafted and distributed internally to reach Southbank students directly.

Southbank students are currently not represented with voting powers on the Students Council. Students studying at Parkville are unaware of the unique requirements and experiences of Southbank students. Southbank students need a voice on Students' Council who have lived experiences of life at the Southbank campus. This will ensure that decisions made by Council account for students from all the different campuses of the University.

With the SGM we made changes to the constitution to account for these matters. Our OB positions are all joint positions, and paid too. Our definitions of Southbank membership has changed to include students who study part time on campus, we have a voting representative on council and the electoral regulations was changed to allow for online elections. Thankyou thankyou for everyone who organized fiercely to make it happen.

Recommendations: The constitution in its current standing does not take into account the reality of studying and organizing on Southbank Campus, we made a good start with constitutional reform this year however there is always more work to be done to make the union a fairer and more equitable place which works for students.

### **Arty Party**

Arty Party was an event hosted by the Creative Arts team and consisted of a showcase from student artists, musicians, and student union affiliated groups. It was great to hear about all the creative endeavours thriving up on the Parkville campus and share art with humans from all over.

Recommendations: Creative Arts and Southbank should collaborate more as wonderful things happen when the two forces of artistic integrity and liberation combine.

### **Printers**

After the university had a tiff with fuji or whoever supplies our printers, they decided to remove a printer from the bottom floor of the library, leaving one for the 2000 odd students who attend campus. Will and I wrote and then shared an open letter addressed to the Deputy Director of Student and Scholarly Services to increase the number of printers for the students at the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music and with over 150 signatures the campaign was a success. Not only was the original printer returned but another one ordered.

Recommendations: Chase up the extra printer with Scholarly Services. This little campaign was a great example of how to engage with student pop and the real-life implications of a university that doesn't know shit about its students.

### **Advocacy Officer**

Since 2019 Southbank UMSU has been pushing to have an Advocacy Officer stationed at the Southbank Campus. A consultant was hired by UMSU in February to assess the need for an officer on campus at least part time. As a satellite campus many of our students do not have access to the services of UMSU and cannot travel to Parkville easily. This puts them at a huge disadvantage. Southbank students need increasing support as they enter industries which have been ripped to bits by Covid and face an insecure workforce, housing etc.

Recommendations: Push to have an advocacy officer on campus. It is only fair.

## **Annual Report 2021**

### **Student rep on faculty committees**

Education Academic foresees the student rep on boards.

Recommendations: Use the student reps on academic boards in organizing and campaign strategies. I feel this year we did not enough, but I think with the expansion of the Southbank UMSU team it will be more possible to do so.

### **Know Your Rights Workshop**

Know Your Rights Workshop is to equip students with industry knowledge that is course specific. We held one this year in collaboration with the music student's society and it had a good turnout, I hope to see more collaborations with creative unions in the future!

Recommendations: Keep this up.

### **Trans Day of Visibility**

Queer, Women and Non-binary OBs and friends from Parkville came down to Southbank to celebrate Trans Day of Visibility. The sun was out, the stars aligned, and the spirit of resistance sang softly on the warm wind. We ate bagels, made friends (and badges) and engaged with students from all over campus. It was a hit and from this event we've learnt a lot on how to next structure future collaborations with Queer.

Recommendations: Southbank students schedules are all over the place, however there are a few sweet spots, eg Wednesdays 12-3 in which most of the campus will be out and about. Keep this in mind when doing on campus activities.

### **Subcommittee Meetings**

During Sem 1 every two weeks we held a subcommittee meeting, an open and accessible platform for students to come organise, air their grievances, access UMSU services and for us OBs, it was place to listen, engage and share.

Recommendations: Towards mid Sem we struggled with student engagement.

### **BBQs**

Perhaps Southbank greatest hits, the BBQ is not to be discretised to engage with the student pop. We catered for our vegan and gluten free friends by providing alternative food options. Due to Covid we had to take extra precautions such as QR codes and social distancing.

Recommendations: promote the event widely, have extra hands-on deck to help, have someone managing the que for social distancing. Remember to eat.

## **Annual Report 2021**

## **Building Campaign**

So Melbourne University is built on a bedrock of racist pricks. One of the many ways you can tell is all the bloody buildings are named after them. Queer is currently leading a campaign to rename the buildings. Apparently, the university is considering how not cool it is to name your buildings after a bunch of eugenicists and is toying with the idea of changing them but we know how long that takes and how they might just name it after another racist prick. See Queers report for a more indepth report on the going ons of the campaign.

Recommendations: Follow this one through!

## **Bread Bin/ Pandemic Relief Voucher**

My sweet child, The Bread Bin, is a food and dry goods pantry to help support our friends as they work, study and make art. Sometimes we collaborated with welfare to fill the pantry. It has been a hit so far, providing valuable and essential support for students especially right before periods of lockdown. The shelves would be clear in a matter of hours. In periods of lockdown, we started a voucher scheme in lieu of the bread bin which was a life saver for many of our fellow Southbank friends.

Recommendations: Expand the budget for bread bin and get some more shelves. It takes a ridiculously long time to pack those shelves as one human, enlist the help of others. I would have loved to make the bread bin a more sustainable endeavour and perhaps make it a space for students to share zines, book, information ect.

## **Climate Strike**

On May 21 we endorsed and formed a VCA/MCM contingent for School Strike for Climate, writing to heads of faculty to encourage them to support students and staff who attend and waive any penalties that come with missing class. We also endorsed the School Strike 4 Climate are demands which were:

1. Resource Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led solutions that guarantee land rights and care for country.
2. Fund the creation of jobs that fast track solutions to the climate crisis and help communities recover.
3. Fund Projects that transition our economy and communities to 100% renewable energy by 2030, through expanded public ownership.

Recommendations: Start planning this one early, hit up our friends in Southbank NTUE and joining forces for the contingent.

## **Annual Report 2021**

## **Permit System**

We worked with students to push for a permit system that would allow students to attend campus in line with government regulations and with covid safe measure in place, so they could access studios, workshops and specialised areas ect. It was a success and within weeks the permit system was up and running and feedback from students has been phenomenal.

## **Consent training workshops**

Frequently we met with Katrina Skewes McFerran- Associate Dean for Students and Patrick Tidmarsh-UMSU Sexual Harm Response Coordinator to discuss course imbedded consent training workshop, training for staff regarding sexual harm responses on campus and a 'wellness and reporting' space on campus. Using the dance forum platform, a discussion was had for 'consent, sexual ethics and body sovereignty: expanding conceptions of safe dance practice' which from feedback from students was intense but necessary. Consent and sexual harm are a cultural issue on campus and fact is many students do not feel safe reporting to the university and do not know how. See handover doc for greater detail, meeting notes and contingency plan.

## **Fee Relief**

The definition of our movement for 'fee relief' is always in flux. We started out seeking formal fee remission through a process that involves federal government bodies and a valid claim that the education provider had not followed through on their end of the contract. This limited the discussion to the parameters of consumer law, where degrees are looked at as products that the university has an obligation to provide in a satisfactory form. When we began hearing how the difference in experience and opinion on this matter, we tried to broaden the term to encompass something that can relate to more than a refund or partial refund of course fees. Fee relief stands as an important part of a movement to push back against the dwindling integrity of tertiary education in Australia. Creative courses like the ones offered here.

As with a lot of other areas of society, COVID-19 highlighted some of the pressure points and already emerging problems in the university sector. A diminished standard of education has been a gradual process that involves a commodification of education to its most marketable form. Degrees have become shorter; class sizes have grown and faculty are facing increasingly insecure working conditions which threatens the important relationships they can have with students. All of this comes with a management style and ideology that is always making changes under the guise of 'streamlining' services and systems, when the actual result is hoarding massive wealth for executives and the 'estate' at the cost of all else.

“Ultimately, we feel we have been cheated of the true University of Melbourne experience,” reads the grievance letter lodged to the Academic Registrar. “There is no doubt that our educational experience was severely diminished this past semester.”

Since 2020 three separate grievances have been launched with the university, none with the desired outcomes. We took one case to the ombudsman which was not taken further. There are a few next steps we can take including involving TESQA and a class action case.

See handover doc and supporting papers for contingency plan and notes.

**University of Melbourne Student Union**



**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council**

**Jungwoo (Jamie) Kim**

**Southbank Activities**

CW: Mentions of racism, no explicit detail

### **Key Activities Throughout the Year & Evaluations**

#### **An open letter regarding the number of available printers at the Southbank Campus**

The motion “*That the committee directs OBs to draft an open letter directed to the relevant authority concerning the number of printers available at the Southbank campus*” was carried without dissent at the Southbank Committee Meeting 3(21). We wrote and shared an open letter addressed to the Deputy Director of Student and Scholarly Services to increase the number of available printers for the Faculty of Fine Arts & Music students. The petition was a success. About 130 students signed our open letter directed to the Business Services Team, and a new printer has been installed at the Southbank Library.

#### **2021 Semester 1 Orientation Week & Summerfest**

UMSU Southbank OBs met with the Faculty of Fine Arts & Music Student Enrichment team to discuss collaborating for events, as well as with clubs that are based at the Southbank campus. We were asked by event staff to ask other UMSU departments if they would be interested in hosting a stall at the Southbank campus for the orientation week. However, unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, *Stall Day* could not happen. In-person host tours at the Southbank campus were also cancelled. Nonetheless, the former Southbank Campus Coordinator, Will Hall, filmed a video regarding the Southbank campus.

**Annual Report 2021**

## Town Hall Talk 1

Milo Hartill and Sherry Watson from the Music Theatre cohort had discussed representation of People of Colour [POC] in artmaking practices on campus for UMSU Southbank's first Town Hall Talk. It was a major success. Milo and Sherry spoke candidly about their experience at the Victorian College of the Arts as POC and the systematic racism that they have experienced.

Refer to the following article written by artist and researcher Rhys Kierkegaard in Farrago: [Farrago » 'Can we get a cheer for systemic oppression': Talking racism within the VCA \(farragomagazine.com\)](https://farragomagazine.com)

## UMSU Southbank Free BBQ Lunch

We organized and conducted 2 *Free BBQ Lunch* events at the Southbank campus in 2021 Semester 1 to provide vegetarian/vegan/gluten free food to students under a COVIDSafe environment. We had liaised with the UMSU Events team, Southbank Campus Services team, GSA, etc. to promote the event widely. The events were very successful, serving over 300 gluten free burgers and flaxseed & soy schnitzels to students. Although we were hoping to hold more Free BBQ Lunch events in 2021 Semester 2, due to the COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria, they could not be held.

## 2021 Semester 2 Orientation Week & Winterfest

Leyla and Jamie talked to Manda and Dove (Faculty of Fine Arts & Music senior enrichment officers) to discuss preparations for the semester O' Week, as well as the Winterfest. Due to a small number of new students at the Southbank campus, the plan for UMSU Southbank was to attend the morning tea ceremony on Wednesday, July 21st, to meet various new students and introduce themselves as Southbank students representatives. UMSU Southbank also planned to distribute free stuff to students. However, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the event was cancelled.

## **Annual Report 2021**



### Pandemic-Relief Grocery Vouchers

The Southbank Campus Committee has passed a motion to spend approximately \$4000 AUD for pandemic-relief grocery vouchers to provide necessary financial support to Southbank students. The art industries are still significantly affected by the lockdowns in Victoria, and a large population of the students are casual workers who require further welfare and financial services. Via this project, we have provided the vouchers to multiple students.

### UMSU Southbank Students Showcase Night

UMSU Southbank hosted “Students Showcase Night” to give students the opportunity to meet the other students across the faculty, as well as showing off their artistic talents. The event was conducted on Tuesday, October 12th, 2021 online (Zoom). Leyla and I facilitated the event. I created PowerPoint slides to utilize for the event for accessibility needs. We began promoting the event via UMSU Southbank and UMSU Creative Arts Facebook pages, as well as the Faculty of Fine Arts & Music Student Community group on the LMS. The Expression of Interest form to showcase was closed on Friday, October 1st, 2021. We received 8 responses from the students in total, across visual art, performing art, music, short film and interdisciplinary. I emailed the people who had notified me that they would showcase their work/performance for the event to confirm their participation, as well as the order of the performances. We also talked to the UMSU Design team regarding the promotional images for the event. It was fantastic to see such wonderful and inspiring works at the event! As a music student, I was fascinated by everyone’s incredible creativity. We thought that the event would take about an hour in total, however, we finished about 35 minutes later than we anticipated. We will note to the incoming UMSU Southbank OBs to host a students showcase night for an hour and half in the future. I had also been liaising with the showcase participants regarding advertising and uploading their work on our official facebook page. As a result, I have uploaded two of our performers’ works on the page as highlights of the event!

### UMSU Southbank X Creative Arts Trivia Night

UMSU Southbank and UMSU Creative Arts hosted a Trivia Night event in Week 12. Thank you very much, UMSU Creative Arts department (especially Vaishnavi and Merryn), for deciding to collaborate with us for the event! I have updated *kahoot* questions to make them more art and

Australia-related. The day before we hosted the event, Vaishnavi, Merryn and I finalized the *kahoot* questions. We were hoping to place everyone at the event in breakout rooms for them to have a casual conversation and get to know each other after the trivia, however, there was not enough time. There were about 8 participants, and since the committee has passed a motion to spend \$500 for the prizes (art supplies vouchers), which is more than enough, we decided to provide the vouchers to all participants (the winners of the trivia will receive a voucher with a higher value than the other participants). For the participants who are currently overseas, we will give them a voucher of a higher value too, as the UMSU regulations imply that we cannot give them cash as a prize.

### 2021 Mudfest

We would like to thank Merryn and Vaishnavi, UMSU Creative Arts OBs, as well as many other people, regarding the 2021 Mudfest. Thank you very much, Merryn and Vaishnavi, for reaching out to us earlier this year and asking if UMSU Southbank would like to collaborate with UMSU Creative Arts for the event.

### Trans Day of Remembrance

We are collaborating with UMSU Queer to host a Trans Day of Remembrance event on Saturday, November 20th, 2021, from 7.30pm to 9pm at *Script Bar & Bistro*. The Southbank Campus Committee has passed a motion to spend \$500 from the “Queer Lunch/events” budget line for the event.

### Bread Bin

We collaborated with UMSU Welfare to give free food and drinks to Southbank students. The project has received amazing comments for providing lots of free food for students at the Southbank Campus. We cannot thank UMSU Welfare enough for their help and support with this initiative, they are truly a department that understands the needs of students at our campus. Our most recent delivery has put a smile on the face of many struggling artists.

## **Annual Report 2021**

## **Recommendations for Future Office Bearers**

### **Potential changes to music practical/performance subjects assessments**

UMSU Southbank has liaised with Jennisha and Planning, UMSU Education (Academic Affairs) OBs, regarding requesting the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music to potentially adjust the current assessments system of their music practical/performance subjects. There has been an anonymous inquiry that points out the current assessments of the subjects are worth 100% (end-of-the-semester practical/performance examinations), and that the marks that students get from these examinations/subjects can influence which subjects they can choose to study when they are in their second or third year of Bachelor of Music, because some ensemble/chamber subjects consist of a condition (e.g., scoring at least 75% (H2A) in MUSI10221 *Practical Music 2* to be able to take MUSI20013 *Chamber Music 1*). UMSU Southbank believes that this system should be changed to acknowledge that students' practical abilities should not be solely judged and assessed on one of the days of their examinations. We hope that the incoming UMSU Southbank OBs will address this at a meeting with the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music.

### **On-campus/Online Activities & Events**

Please do not hesitate to liaise with the Faculty of Fine Arts & Music Student Experience staff to plan and prepare hosting on-campus or online activities and events. Collaborating with other UMSU departments for activities and events is also recommended.

### **UMSU Southbank Students Showcase Night**

UMSU Southbank held a Students Showcase Night event in October, 2021. We thought that the event would take about an hour in total. However, we finished about 35 minutes later than we anticipated. Therefore, we recommend the incoming UMSU Southbank OBs to host a students showcase night event for an hour and half in the future.

We also encourage the incoming OBs to deliver activities and events with accessibility (e.g., captions) and have at least one person acting as a moderator to run activities and events smoothly, as well as emailing the Faculty of Fine Arts & Music Student Experience staff to promote activities and events widely.

### UMSU Southbank Sub-Committee Meeting

On Thursday, April 15th, our first UMSU Southbank Sub-Committee meeting occurred. We presented about the Fee Relief campaign, and only three people attended the meeting. Hence, to engage more students to be involved, we encourage the incoming OBs to think about changing UMSU Southbank sub-committee meetings to *Southbank Collectives*.

### Southbank X Disabilities Collectives

I have virtually met with Brigit and Lindsay, UMSU Disabilities OBs, to talk about potentially organizing and holding Southbank X Disabilities collectives at the Southbank campus. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, the collectives have not begun yet. I recommend the incoming UMSU Southbank OBs to talk to the incoming Southbank Campus committee members or current Faculty of Fine Arts & Music students who may be interested in being involved in the collectives, as well as being in charge of it. I also encourage conducting the collectives online, as there will be more engagement and resources.

### **Budget Expenditure**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Comment</b>
----------------	---------------------	-------------	---------------	---------------	----------------

Number		Description	Passed	Line	
8(21)	September 14th, 2021	UMSU Southbank 2021 Semester 2 Trivia Night event prizes (art supplies vouchers)	\$500 AUD	Social Events	<p><b>Mover:</b> Jungwoo Kim</p> <p><b>Seconder:</b> Hannah Gill Bowles</p>
9(21)	November 16th, 2021	UMSU Southbank 2021 Semester 2 Trivia Night event prizes (art supplies vouchers)	\$100 AUD	Social Events	<p><b>Mover:</b> Leyla Moxham</p> <p><b>Seconder:</b> Jack Doughty</p>

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Annual Report 2021**

**To Students' Council 18(21)**

**Kaitlyn Hammond**

**Burnley**

**Key activities throughout the year**

**R Workshops**

Our R-efreshers workshop series was a huge success! We reached dozens of students who learned heaps and were excited about the materials and instructors. We were able to reach more students doing the workshops online than we were in person, so this was a fantastic outcome!

**R Book**

This amazing work in progress is the follow up to our workshop series and will help us to reach more students and provide a useful resource for students to use outside of the live workshop series. This book will have worked examples that are relevant to Burnley students and next year's crew can expand on the idea and fill out the book even more!

**Mocktail Class**

This was such a fun night for everyone involved! The materials were sent to our doors and the instructors provided useful tips and insights for cocktail making in general as well as specifics for 3 yummy drinks! Tickets were snapped up in a matter of hours, so this is something that would be great to run again next year!

**Painting Class**

People were really excited about this one- once again, all of the tickets were booked in a day! The instructor was great and taught introductory techniques that can be used to start pretty pictures. A horticultural extension to this would be welcomed by all (and I may try to make that happen before the year is over!

**Welcome Back BBQ**

**Annual Report 2021**

This was an awesome way to get people together before we went back into lockdown! I am really glad we had the opportunity to show off the student garden display and get everyone together for some yummy sustainable food and drinks. If allowed, it would be great to do more of these next year!

### **Virtual Escape Room**

We were a bit sceptical about how this would run, but it was actually one of the most successful events we put on this year! It was a great socialisation activity and all the students who participated really enjoyed it. This is another great option for an online activity in case there are restrictions again next year!

### **Land Your Career in Forest and Ecosystem Sciences**

This one was also a huge success reaching many students who wouldn't normally know about Burnley! While I was not able to make it and there were a couple of glitches, it was an excellent opportunity to show off Burnley programs and hear from students about their experiences.

### **Evaluation of activities throughout the year**

The beginning of the year was challenging and uncertain, but I'm still proud of all of the events we were able to put on this year. The R workshops and book are my pride and joy because R is one of the fundamental skills needed in the field of ecosystem sciences and it was something I had to figure out on my own without help. Providing students with workshops and resources for how to do learn these skills made me feel like I was paying it forward and helping people avoid the same challenges I faced. It was great to work with the team of instructors and everyone working on the book to learn skills and create something great together.

Once I discovered ClassBento and all of their online classes and workshops everything became easier! They have a number of fantastic Zoom classes complete with supplies mailed directly to students. The painting workshop, cocktail workshop, and terrarium building workshop (coming up!) were all from different providers through this group. I mention this because these types of classes are a great opportunity to increase student engagement if restrictions return!

The career event was another great one- a little more planning would be helpful, but given the circumstances the outcomes were great.

Overall, I think that everything we were able to put on this year was a huge success!

### **Recommendations for future Office Bearers**

I am fortunate enough to be the office bearer for next year and I'm very excited about the opportunity to use what I've learned this year to make next year better.

Burnley students are difficult to engage and so having regular events next year to attract more students will be a necessary component for increasing student activism and participation. Having a mix of online and in person events will be great because there are many Burnley students who live far away or work jobs and do not attend campus.

People are excited about meeting in person again and so I would really like to harness this enthusiasm and put together more social events so that students can meet each other and become more involved in Burnley activities. A mix of social activities, workshops, and academic activities will hopefully reach a wider audience than we have so far.

Our little island campus would benefit from more collaborations. This was a weakness of mine this year- I didn't work to make this happen, but next year I intend to bring some of this to life!

My main recommendations are to start a collective, keep a mix of online and in person events, and start to bring life back to campus with fun activities and workshops to engage a new audience. By beginning with social events we can increase engagement and hopefully use this momentum to increase student participation in activism and activity participation!