



President's February Memo

Welcome back to the new academic year! 2019 is a big year for the USU and I want to thank all the staff who worked incredibly hard over the break to ensure that historical changes coming to the organisation this year could be seamless.

1. Free USU Membership and \$45 Access Rewards in 2019

The USU is very excited to announce that for the first time USU membership is free to all students studying at the University of Sydney. This is a historical change as the USU aims to be accessible for all students and achieve our goal of returning to universal membership. Head online to <https://www.usu.edu.au/Membership/USU-Membership.aspx> if you haven't yet signed up to be a member.

We will be offering annual USU Access Rewards membership for \$45. Students and staff can participate in Access Rewards and receive a 10% discount off at all of our food and retail outlets as well as other freebies and perks. To find out more head to <https://usu.edu.au/access-rewards.aspx>.

2. C&S Funding Changes

Given the USU's historical change to free membership for all University of Sydney students, we have had to make adjustments to the Clubs & Societies Program. In order to prepare our community for the influx of more participants to the Program, various provisions of the C&S Program have been updated. The highlights are as follows:

- The amount budgeted to fund Clubs and Societies has **increased by over \$55,000** in 2019 and the total amount will be dedicated for supporting the activities of the clubs.
- Clubs and Societies have always been required to operate in accordance with democratic principles. This C&S Membership Principle has been extended to note that club executives shall make documents of the club available to their members through their website, social media platforms and/or the USU website.
- The annual registration process now includes the Club & Society Agreement. The Agreement captures the policies and procedures that the Clubs & Societies already operate by and formalises compliance to these policies and procedures as required by the University.
- The total grants available to Clubs and Societies have been increased by over \$55,000 for the year 2019, a 16.7% increase over the previous year.
- Following an extensive study of C&S funding in the past few years and considering free membership to the USU and the projected growth of the C&S Program, C&S Funding provisions were updated as follows:
 - Annual funding caps have been revised to \$3,000, \$5,000 and \$7,000 with provisions for Clubs to increase their funding cap upon meeting certain criteria.

- Event funding caps corresponding to each Annual Funding Cap have been introduced at \$2,000, \$3,500 and \$5,000 respectively.
- Event funding claims process has been updated to reflect FREE membership and removed differential pricing:

2018 event funding claims process	2019 event funding claims process
Event funding was based on club's event entry prices	Funding is not based on entry prices and differential pricing
Clubs could claim the difference between a non-Access member entry price and Access member entry price of up to \$6 per access attendee	Clubs can claim \$1 per USU/Access rewards member
0% of event costs could be claimed	Clubs can claim 30% of total event costs in additional to attendance \$ claim
Funding could not be sought for events where a discounted price for Access holders was not offered, including events where attendance was free for all attendees	Funding is available for all events, including FREE events, it is no longer compulsory to charge an entry fee
Clubs cannot profit from event funding	

- Merchandise and admin funding have been merged into one category and Clubs will still have access to printing credit through the C&S Office.
 - The USU logo has been updated and all Clubs are required to use the 2019 logo for merchandise and marketing activities of the Club.

The updates to the Program have been made by considering its long-term sustainability and to ensure that funding is available all year round to support the growth of the Program.

In addition, the updates to the Program - particularly to the funding provisions - will be re-visited based on the feedback provided by Clubs and Societies and the data related to membership and events. The C&S Office is critically monitoring the impact of these updates and will schedule a **C&S Forum in April** to secure feedback from Club executives. Please note that the funding provisions are dynamic and that your feedback will be valuable in shaping the Program.

3. Welcome Festival

Welcome Festival was a huge success despite the rain trying to dampen our spirits. As one of Australia's largest student orientation events, Welcome Festival gives an opportunity for student clubs and societies to host stalls and recruit new members. We saw over a hundred clubs and societies sign up new members as well as a full three days of clubs showcasing what they do.

Massive thanks to club executives, our USU student volunteers and staff who made the week a massive success. In particular to the Welcome Festival directors Andrew Rickert, Monica Gava and Sarah Cutter-Russell.

If you are interested in volunteering positions with the USU please head to <https://www.usu.edu.au/get-involved/volunteers.aspx>



We saw over 2500 students attend our Welcome to Sydney Party and Welcome Week Party.



4. USU Make A Difference (USU MAD)

MAD will be the new USU charity and fundraising program aimed at developing a culture of social justice and philanthropy through engaging a purpose driven generation. The **MAD** program will be integrated across several existing USU events, spaces, and programs while also culminating in an end of year event. Clubs, students and staff will have the opportunity to vote on their preferred charity focus [here: https://www.usu.edu.au/get-involved/make-a-difference.aspx](https://www.usu.edu.au/get-involved/make-a-difference.aspx). Alternatively students and staff can submit a specific charity to be invited to apply as an official charity partner of the USU, by emailing mad@usu.edu.au.

5. WUDC Debating Championships

The USU World's debating contingent were incredibly successful in Cape Town at the University World Debating Championships. We won the overall tournament (congratulations to Kevin Lee and Bostan Nurlov) and had two teams in the grand finals. We also won overall best speaker (congratulation James Stratton) and had three other speakers in the top ten (Imogen Harper, Theodora Von Armin and Madi Bosler). All five of our teams were ranked in the top 28 out of 267 teams. We managed to beat out some of the best institutions in the world including Harvard, Oxford, Cambridge and a string of other Ivy League institutions.