



President's May Memo

Semester 1 is coming to an end as students get ready for final assessments and classes are starting to wrap up. The USU looks towards Semester 2 as more changes are being made.

1. Board Elections

Congratulations to all the newly elected board directors: Benny, Oscar, Nick, Eve, Irene and Cady! Commiserations and congratulations to the other candidates who nominated: Tom, Ellie and Tina. Nominating and putting yourself out there to try and improve conditions for the wider student community is an achievement in itself. It was great to see so many students being involved in the election, which reinforces student leadership as one of the core foundations of the USU. This year, 6454 votes were cast as compared to 3555 last year, which shows an 82% increase in votership! That is incredible and highlights the strength of universal membership increasing engagement with the USU.



2. Annual General Meeting & Annual Report 2018

This month the USU hosted our 47th AGM where we heard from the President and Treasurer with regards to the USU's performance over the past year as well as the results of the financial report for 2018. Whilst the USU ended the year with a loss of \$495,174, for the first time since VSU the USU made over \$31 million dollars in revenue. This is significant given the organisation has taken many years to adjust to the impacts of voluntary student unionism. We are incredibly proud of the work of past directors, past and current staff members and the staff leadership team for this achievement. To read more about the financial performance of the USU please visit the online copy of our financial report: <https://www.usu.edu.au/about-us/Side-Callouts/USU-Accounts-2018.aspx>

3. SSAF Approval

This month the contestable SSAF was approved for all student organisations. This saw the USU receive \$1 million which contributed to covering the costs of providing free USU membership this year to all students at the University of Sydney. Whilst the contestable SSAF does not cover all the expenses of this historic change to the USU, the support from the University has greatly aided the USU in making this change.

4. Sustainability Week

The inaugural Sustainability Week occurred this month. The USU food truck was out delivering free breakfast as well as \$5 vegan lunches. Courtyard abandoned plastic and had biodegradable edible plates (I'm not convinced they tasted edible though...). We also hosted a How to Life: Think Sustainably workshop to hear from a team of sustainability innovators and experts. The inaugural Twice Loved Markets were also hosted in Manning building where students sold second-hand clothing and items in promotion of sustainable fashion.



5. Board Regulation changes - introduction of disability officer

A series of changes were made to the USU's regulations at the May board meeting. One key change was the introduction of a disability portfolio holder. This position would operate similarly to our current other portfolios for Wom*n's, Queer, Environment Portfolio, Ethnocultural Portfolio and International. The regulations stipulate the Director elected to the Disability Portfolio must identify as having a physical, mental, intellectual or sensory disability. In the event that no one satisfies this regulation a director will be appointed and the holder of the portfolio is expected to have extensively consultation with the community and relevant stakeholders.

6. USU Achievements at Campuslink

A contingent of USU staff attended Campuslink, the biggest event in the Australian non-academic student services calendar, this year at UTS. The USU won a number of awards at the Awards Dinner at Campuslink, winning the following categories:

- Best Commercial Retail Campaign
- 'Jacaranda Snow Globe' Best Food & Beverage Offering
- '6 After 6' Meal Campaign
- Best Newcomer Award: Clint Smith - Facilities Coordinator
- Joe Curtis Travel Scholarship: Tess Bennetts - International Programs Coordinator
- Most Successful Student Outcomes Program: 'Incubate'

It is great to have the hard work of the staff at the USU recognised as we could not operate as successfully as we do without them.

7. C&S Advisory Group

Following the C&S Forum in April, a C&S Advisory Group will be formed with C&S staff, board directors and five student advisors. The call out form to participate in this group was sent out on 16th May and closed at the end of May. We hope to contact the students who will be involved before the first meeting which is scheduled for the last week of June. This Group's input will be crucial in developing various provisions of the USU's C&S program.