

BOARD REPORT

PRESIDENT

USU Board meeting date: 28/8/2025**Agenda item:** 9.4**Report Period:** August 2025**Author:** Phan Vu**Title:** President**Phone/mobile:** +61 493 322 268

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Summary

August has been a month of outpouring, both literally and figuratively. Despite the heavy rain, Semester 2 began with a burst of energy as USU delivered another successful Welcome Fest alongside the soft launch of the pilot \$5 meal offerings.

Over two days, 15-20,000 students came through Welcome Fest, making it our biggest Semester 2 launch since before COVID. Even with torrential rain in the lead-up (and some drizzle on the first day), the atmosphere was buzzing. Our operations team served 1,800 free meals at the festival, while also launching \$5 meal offerings with immediate full service offering 500+ meals per day far exceeding the forecast of 350. Demand has remained steady at that level since.

We also celebrated the launch of PULP Issue 22 – massive congratulations to our editorial team for a strong start.

GOVERNANCE

Committee Meetings

A number of committee meetings were held this month, including Clubs and Societies, Electoral, and Debates. I will defer to the Vice President's report for a full collation of outcomes, but I want to highlight the excellent engagement with our C&S programs with 15 new club applications and a fantastic turnout at Club Conference which attracted over 100 participants, and the first in-person Leadership Academy brought together 80 attendees.

The Electoral Committee discussed establishing a formal due process for complaints to ensure a fair and equitable election process for all candidates.

Incorporation

Positive progress continues to be made on incorporation. Our lawyers are currently reviewing the proposed amendments from the OGC to the draft Constitution presented at the June Special General Meeting of USyd Student Union Ltd. Further meetings with OGC will focus on finalising these amendments and planning for asset transfer. In parallel, we are in the process of registering the new entity with the ACNC. We aim for the University approval of the Constitution to take place at the November Senate meeting.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

University

I had my first meetings with David Thodey AO, FTSE (Chancellor, USyd) and Darren Goodsir (Chief of Staff, USyd) to introduce myself, familiarise myself with the senior University leadership, and share my vision for USU over the next 12 months, with the goal of continuing to strengthen the relationship between the University and USU.

Canteen Working Group

The group reviewed feedback from the soft launch of the \$5 meal offerings at Laneway to identify opportunities to improve service delivery for students. Discussions are ongoing regarding a long-term location and provider for a permanent Canteen in 2026. Following the successful pilot, the USU has positioned itself as a strong partner, demonstrating its capability through the effective delivery of the program.

Student Consultative Committee Meeting

The committee met this month to discuss ongoing concerns from major student organisations, including SUPRA, SUSF, and the SRC. SUPRA presented recommendations for the endorsement of the relaunch of international student transport concessions as part of the broader effort to advocate

for fairer fares for all students across NSW. These recommendations were informed by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). SUPRA also called for a unified effort from all student organisations to promote the campaign for fare equity. USU previously endorsed the 2023 fair fares campaign and will continue to engage with SUPRA to support the new petition through our membership platform.

I also shared the Semester 1 Impact Report to highlight key deliverables and outcomes. In Semester 1 2025, USU provided over 75,000 opportunities for students to access free or reduced-price food, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to enhancing the student experience on campus.

Student Life & USU Monthly

Janina and I met with Ben Wilkes (Chief Student Life Officer, USyd) and Adam Hatch (Student Life, USyd) to review the outcomes of Welcome Fest. Discussions included the operations of the \$5 meal offerings and addressing student feedback, as well as a brief conversation on broader cost-of-living initiatives, such as the free Bonus Breakfast offered on ISL every Monday to Friday.

Student Life & Clubs and Societies

Student representatives met to address key issues raised by Clubs & Societies members. USU will follow up on free period product distribution and broader availability of affordable period products across campus. In response to an incident at a C&S event, questions were raised about managing risk of intoxication in event planning. As this varies with individual tolerance, it is important to understand the University's risk framework for on-campus events. USU will work with the University to develop a clear framework for all C&S events as part of the C&S program.

SSAF Consultation Group

SSAF planning was a major focus this month. A consultation meeting was held on 20 August to discuss the five priorities proposed by each student organisation.

Student Organisation	Priority area
USU	1. Club Administration
	2. Food Security - support for cost-of-living initiatives
	3. Student Health & Wellbeing - support for ongoing training and support services
	4. International Student Services
	5. Building Community - support for orientation and welcome activities
SRC	1. Support for students (Casework & Policy)
	2. Providing Legal services to students
	3. Student leadership and representation (Funding, training, stipends)
	4. Welcome week and Information sessions/workshops
SUPRA	1. Providing legal services to students
	2. Advising on matters arising under the higher education provider's rules
	3. Helping meet the specific needs of overseas students
	4. Student-driven community engagement activities
	5. Providing tenancy advice and information
SUSF	1. Enabling student participation in social and representative sport
	2. Expanded access to free or low-cost fitness, wellbeing, and inclusive sport programs
	3. Support for student employment pathways through sport-related training and leadership.
	4. Welcome and orientation sport activations
	5. Promoting student leadership opportunities through subsidised participation and training.

These priorities align with the top services and amenities students identified in the 2025 SSAF Student Survey (May–June 2025).

Our mission, “Your SSAF At Work,” ensures that funding is allocated responsibly to deliver student-centric initiatives that reflect the needs of our diverse community. While student organisations were asked to nominate two priorities each, I worked with leaders from other groups to collaborate and negotiate, ensuring that USU’s priorities were strategically represented. This approach streamlines the process and maximises benefits for students.

USU Nominated Priorities:

#1 – SRC: Support for students (Casework & Policy)

#2 – SUSF: Enabling student participation in social and representative sport

STUDENT EXPERIENCE & IMPACT

Welcome Fest

Welcome Fest featured 110 club stalls and 50 corporate stalls, with minimal issues or incidents. The food truck and free meal initiatives were an overwhelming success. Despite some unfortunate weather, day trips went ahead with approximately 400 students participating, and ongoing day trips continue to be well-received by students. Some amazing stats for the amount of bonus meals served during Welcome Fest: breakfast, 400 meals per day; lunch, 500 meals per day; total free meals served over two days, 1,800. Food trucks will continue across campus throughout Semester 2.

Student Programs

The next major month for events is Creative Month (2-26 September), celebrating the remarkable creativity of our clubs, societies, artists, and members. I am grateful for the tireless work of USU staff in supporting the Board’s vision and implementing student-centric initiatives. The full events calendar is available on our website.

Revue Season

Revue season is underway, and the Board and I look forward to attending the Law, Science, Med, and Engineering Revues.

PULP

Massive congratulations to Sasha, Portia, Ege, Jayden, Rosy, Jess, and Sophie, our new editorial team, on the impressive debut of PULP Issue 22. The launch party was a huge success, with an enthusiastic crowd enjoying the event and eagerly lining up for tarot readings!

My heartfelt thank you to our devoted staff, members, and the Board for their tireless efforts and continued contributions throughout August. I look forward to an even more vibrant and successful September ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Phan Vu' in a cursive, stylized script.

Phan Vu
PRESIDENT