

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Established in 1874, University of Sydney Union (USU) remains the largest for purpose student led organisation in Australia. Working closely with the University of Sydney, our aim is to be the number one student union in the world, providing quality services, memorable events, inspiring leadership, ongoing opportunities and meaningful support for our members.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

University of Sydney Union acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional owners of the land on which we are located. The USU recognises that the land belonging to these peoples was never ceded, given up, bought, or sold. We pay our respects to the Aboriginal Elders both past and present and extend this acknowledgment to any other Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people reading this publication.

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UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY UNION (USU) ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT

This year has been one of seminal moments, with USU doing the unconventional to take student experience to new heights.

COVID-19 challenged our existential position; amidst online learning and social isolation, we were forced to rethink our operations, revenue streams, governance and fundamentally, what purpose we serve on and off the University of Sydney campus. What does it mean to be the heart of Uni life in a new decade with a new generation of students, many of whom have not experienced pre-COVID campus life? How do we harness this cultural shift to further our accessibility and care for our stakeholders?

In 2021, we finalised our strategic plan to better centre students, prioritise both stakeholder relations and sustainability and develop the right culture and values. In my term as President, I have had the privilege of driving this new direction for USU.

More student-centric

Our semester 2 online Welcome Fest held events with more than 400 students attending – we even created an inter-society Discord and facilitated interfaculty trivia! We held online festivals, including Wellness week and our first global International Fest! We opened a rehearsal space for performing arts clubs in our newly renovated Common Room and provided a gallery space in Wentworth for Sydney College of the Arts students to showcase their creative talents. We developed a close relationship with the Conservatorium Students Association, providing more opportunities to students who wish to perform on campus, and preparing for our first Welcome Day at the Con.

Some of our greatest successes derive from our approved SSAF applications. We received 170% more SSAF funding in 2021 than in the previous year. This has helped fund a reinvented PULP Magazine, where a team of six editors, led by a senior editor, will produce a print magazine available across campus. We began planning our first USU music festival, where professional and student artists can perform, and a 'Battle of the Bands' competition can take place. This will be delivered in collaboration with the Conservatorium of Music students and will offer more opportunities to student performers.

After a near 20-year hiatus, we are bringing USU Manning parties back to campus and we will continue reactivating our bars after dark with live music and comedy. We are further excited by our upcoming projects such as the Distinguished Speaker series, where we invite alumni back to campus, and a Union debate, to celebrate our world-renowned, award-winning USU debating teams. These projects signal a shift in the way USU engages campus life.

Stakeholders & Sustainability

We have worked closely with the University to welcome our international students returning to campus, including expanding our regular international programs. We also worked closely with the SRC and SUPRA to introduce Food Hub and produce Rad Sex & Consent Week and Pride Fest. Importantly, we liaised with disability portfolio holders to encourage our larger clubs

to offer autonomous Disability Officer roles and have worked with SUPRA and SRC to establish a new disability space in our Manning building. We also proudly defeated Honi Soit in our first USU x Honi Basketball match.

For sustainability, we amended our investment policy to prevent direct investments in unethical industries and supported the Uni's implementation of its biodigester. We have also introduced a Green Caffeine reusable cup swap system, moving towards eliminating single use plastics in our outlets and have publicly endorsed and advertised the climate strikes.

Right culture & values

During lockdown, the dedication and skill of our staff kept our organisation afloat. Despite online learning, USU was in a strong financial position. Our Heads of Department sent care packages to staff in lockdown and organised resilience workshops to help with self-care. We developed a COVID Mobilising Committee to monitor the crisis and led ourselves safely out of this difficult time without compromising our core values. USU could not have survived and thrived without the commitment and ingenuity of our incredible staff.

We are also proud to have helped launch the leadership training which equips our club executives with Responding with Compassion training, an RSA, mental wellbeing training and much more. This ensures C&S execs – who are the heart of the C&S program – are prepared to handle any situation that arises at club events and proactively address key safety concerns.

A New USU

In early 2021, my central mission was to develop a "new USU", one with ambition, creativity, and bravery in the face of uncertainty. I am proud to reflect on the incredible position of USU today and am grateful for the opportunity to have contributed to it. Our upcoming projects represent a new generation of values and interests, and I am excited to see them grow. After an historic and tumultuous period, USU emerged stronger and more motivated than I have ever seen. I feel privileged to have witnessed the creativity, enthusiasm and strength of our incredible staff and members, who are the lifeblood of this great organisation. The success of our Union is a result of their work, and this report will forever be dedicated to their contributions.

Thank you.



Prudence Wilkins-Wheat
President



FROM OUR CEO

I am delighted to deliver this report which marks 12 months since I started in the role of CEO at the USU, and which has been an interesting period.

I commend the entire USU team, and especially its senior managers and Directors, for their professionalism, dedication, and ability to navigate the past two years of severe disruption. There is a phrase that describes this period – 'VUCA' which stands for an environment of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. This is directly relevant to the USU where we saw public health order lockdowns wherein the university was effectively closed for all on-campus activities.

Despite these difficulties, Sydney emerged from the lockdown and the USU held Welcome Fest in late February 2021. A full calendar of events and activations was planned for 2021, however, the emergence of the Omicron strain of COVID-19 meant that the USU, and the University, were thrust into a period of further lockdowns. This had an immediate and severe impact on USU's operations and all except two outlets were closed.

As a result of these lockdowns, the USU was unfortunately unable to maintain employment for our normal contingent of casual employees. However, we are very proud that we were able to maintain 100% of permanent staff during this period, and throughout 2021. Despite the difficulties, due to prudent financial management, the Board was able to approve a 2% CPI increase to our employees in order to recognise the efforts of our team.

USU acknowledges the various government support programs such as JobKeeper, JobSaver and COVID-19 Disaster payments which assisted it to carefully control its costs. Above all, we are extremely grateful to our staff for their perseverance during these difficult times, and for their total support and understanding with regards to reducing their hours and applying for the Disaster payments.

The USU was successful in securing a special venue hire for its facilities for a major TV production during October to December 2021. This funding helped secure USU's overall financial result, as well as providing employment opportunities for team members. Additionally, USU secured grant funding from Destinations NSW to underpin our venues' operations and deliver much-needed employment to performing artists.

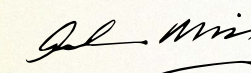
This year we undertook the development of new business systems to improve efficiency, cost control and communications. Employment Hero was implemented in 2021 and has impacted on the whole employee and operational environment from pay to self-service to rostering and management reporting. Also, work on the new USU website commenced.

Over the past 12 months, the USU reinvigorated its relationship with key university stakeholders. 2021 marks a high-water mark for successful SSAF grant outcomes for USU. We hope to continue to build on this success as we develop exceptional events and initiatives that deliver improved student experiences and engagement.

In June we embarked on the development of a new Strategic Plan for 2021-24. This was a successful collaboration between the Board Directors, managers and staff. The three pillars of our Strategy are:

1. Adopting a student-centric mindset
2. Engaged stakeholders and sustainable development, and
3. Right Culture, right values.

The subsequent development of an operational plan underpinning our strategy, is an essential business tool enabling us to plan our key objectives and measure outcomes as well as providing a detailed road map of our key initiatives. The strategic plan was approved by the Board in 2021. A copy of the plan can be found [here](#).



Andrew Mills
Chief Executive Officer



INTRODUCTION

Following the extended lockdowns of 2020, the strong collaboration between USU and the University of Sydney saw USU successfully deliver several large-scale in-person events in Semester 1, 2021.

We were also excited to be delivering graduations once more on campus and able to be a part of this important celebration with our students. Additionally, we were excited to relaunch Manning in May (albeit briefly) via our first student Party at Manning since COVID took hold. During the lockdown that followed, we continued to support our community by providing lockdown lunches for students in residential accommodation and care

packages for USU staff. We also worked closely with our clubs to deliver a virtual Welcome Fest in Semester 2 as well as improved virtual versions of our programs and events, resulting in increased engagement and attendance. Once again, we were grateful for Government support during the 2021 lockdown, which safeguarded our finances and supported our staff.



ACHIEVEMENTS

2,388 people attend Welcome Fest 2021

280+ clubs and societies take part in Welcome Fest 2021, Sem 1 and 2

USU Membership reaches **35,875**

225% increase in attendance at International Fest

NEW equitable funding model introduced for clubs

USU Elections hybrid voting model successfully introduced

3,250 USYD Graduands dressed and catered for

OVER 5,500 free meals, drinks and snacks given to USU Members

MEMBERSHIP

With continued support and funding from the University, 2021 marked USU's third year offering free membership to all students, with 50% of the USYD student population becoming USU members.

Despite the challenges brought on by a second year of COVID, including a mid-year lockdown, campus closure and a lack of international students in Australia, our membership base grew by 7% from 2020, to a total of 35,875 members, 6,389 of which were USU Rewards members. These figures support a YOY growth of over 2,660 members. Total membership was made up of approximately 65% domestic students and 35% international students.

2021 also saw the introduction of initiatives such as the launch and roll out of a new USU Rewards brand identity, increased collection of vital membership data at activations and events, and

the commencement of the digitisation of our Life Member database. The continuing pandemic encouraged the exploration of new ways to engage members with online competitions and digital campaigns, developed to maximise reach both locally and overseas. Throughout 2021, we continued to build online member services and improve customer experience. We learned from 2020 that we were able to provide consistent and effective member care remotely. While, in 2021, we did trial opening the in-person ISL desk, a decision was made to close this service following a lack of student traffic, cementing the move to online service delivery.



USU ELECTIONS

Due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions, USU ran our first hybrid election in 2021. While in-person campaigning returned, online voting was retained to ensure participation remained accessible to those still studying remotely. The traditional Soap Box and Election Night Party also ran in hybrid mode, being streamed simultaneously with the in-person event. Engagement remained high, with 4,820 members voting.



HIGHLIGHTS

USU Membership reaches **35,875**

THE FIRST successfully run hybrid model of USU Elections

4,820 members vote in the USU Elections

CLUBS

At the start of Sem 1 2021, USU's in-person COVID-safe Welcome Fest saw a vibrant return to campus for 180 clubs, providing them with the opportunity to sign up new members, promote their events and host engaging performances over three days of the festival.

However, due to the COVID restrictions at the time, Semester 2 Welcome Fest migrated online. Engagement remained high with many clubs providing promotional videos and interacting with USU's social media channels.

2021 C&S (Clubs & Societies) Awards were also held online. Awards were presented across 11 categories that included a new award introduced by the USU President, Prudence Wilkins-Wheat – Best Community Impact, recognising involvement in the wider community and across the globe. Filipino Student Society won this category with their fundraiser for typhoon affected victims.

New training videos for club executives were rolled out in November 2021. These videos, which were first showcased at the Student Experience Network conference in June, were adapted by the C&S team and integrated into the USU C&S program. The videos are short, informative, clear and concise, providing an alternative approach to in-person training, and gaining positive feedback from club executives.

In response to the changing nature of club operations during COVID, 2021 saw the introduction of a standardised, more equitable club funding model introducing member tiers, which dictate how much clubs are funded for the year. Tiers include new clubs, small (20 – 120), medium (121 – 320) and large clubs (321+).



HIGHLIGHTS

180 clubs and societies take part in Welcome Fest Semester 1

BEST Community Impact Award established

NEW training videos for club executives made available online

NEW equitable funding model introduced



FLAGSHIP EVENTS

Welcome Fest Semester 1

Welcome Fest 2021 Semester 1 saw a return to campus for clubs with a COVID-safe festival extending over three days, hosting 180 club stalls, two outdoor cinema events, free food, lots of giveaways, and a full program of student performers.

PopFest

Hosted at Hermann's Bar, this in-person COVID-safe event featured the USU Eats food truck, arcade games, panel discussions and workshops. Highlights included a movie night and comedy night that each saw capacity crowds. USU Clubs were pleased to be involved, enjoying the opportunity to host events on campus.



Enviro Week

Hosted on campus across three days, Enviro Week showcased the diverse range of sustainable partners and products within the University community and included workshops, activities, and education content inspiring USYD students to adopt more sustainable practices in their day to day lives. Other highlights were the Projector Bike Tour around campus and the Pedal Powered Cinema.

Welcome Fest Semester 2

Due to lockdown, Semester 2 Welcome Fest 2021 was delivered online and was USU's biggest online event to date, featuring more than 100 club events over 2 days, attended by 2,388 people. The event saw a significant increase in engagement with total website views of 107,859 across the period (514% Increase from 2020) as well as 45,691 Club webpage views. The club with the highest page views was the Arts & Crafts Society with 357, and the most viewed category was Faculty & Professional with 9,595 views.



International Fest

International Fest, also conducted online, saw great engagement with 25 club events throughout the festival with a 225% increase in attendance compared to 2020. Highlights included a live walking tour of Asakusa in Japan, a YouTube cooking demo library, a Discord Lounge and the Learn a Language Workshop.

Pride Week

Also conducted online due to lockdown, Pride Week delivered a more streamlined program. As a result of learnings from past online events, event times were strategically selected to maximise engagement. Over 450 people attend across three days with 10 USU clubs participating. Highlights included Drag Bingo, Clubs Performance Night, as well as The First Mardi Gras with the 78'ers panel.

Wellness Week

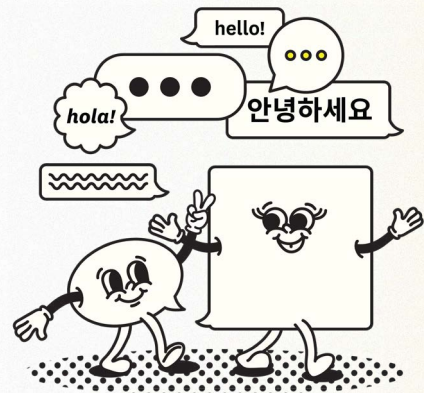
The easing of COVID restrictions saw Wellness Week delivered in hybrid format. Key events included an online Mindful Sketching class and Bullet Journaling workshop, alongside a USU Eats food truck activation on campus. The event was attended by over 230 people with 14 clubs participating.

HIGHLIGHTS

2,388 people attend Welcome Fest 2021 Semester 1 (our biggest online event to date)

225% increase in attendance at International Fest (online) compared to 2020

STUDENT PROGRAMS



Language Exchange

In Semester 1 Language Exchange was delivered in hybrid format, while in Semester 2, due to lockdown, it was delivered entirely online. Successful online delivery resulted in increased accessibility with the program achieving over 1,100 registrations in 2021, as well as the highest engagement recorded to date.



Palladian Cup

In 2021, Semester 1 saw Palladian Cup (the intercollegiate arts competition) delivered in a COVID-safe setting with reduced audiences across a range of venues on campus, including Seymour Centre and the Refectory. There were 1,050 attendees, with each event livestreamed to the colleges for those who were unable to secure tickets. Post lockdown, Palladian Cup returned to live performances with the events streamed to college audiences. In addition to Palladian Cup, USU provided a range of training materials to assist each college with their orientation program.

How to Life

To ensure it remained accessible to all students, How to Life continued as an online program throughout 2021. Monthly sessions included Origami workshops, How to Study with Dr Karl and How to Sketch for R U OK Day.

Day Trips and Campus Tours

Following limited opportunities in 2020, our popular Day Trips and Campus Tours returned to in-person delivery in Semester 1, with many students exploring the campus and surrounding areas as well as visiting Madame Tussauds and Manly Beach. Lockdown saw these programs move online in Semester 2 with 60 people taking part in Campus Race and 80 people attending virtual Day Trips of The Rocks, Wildlife Sydney Zoo and Berowra Valley National Park.

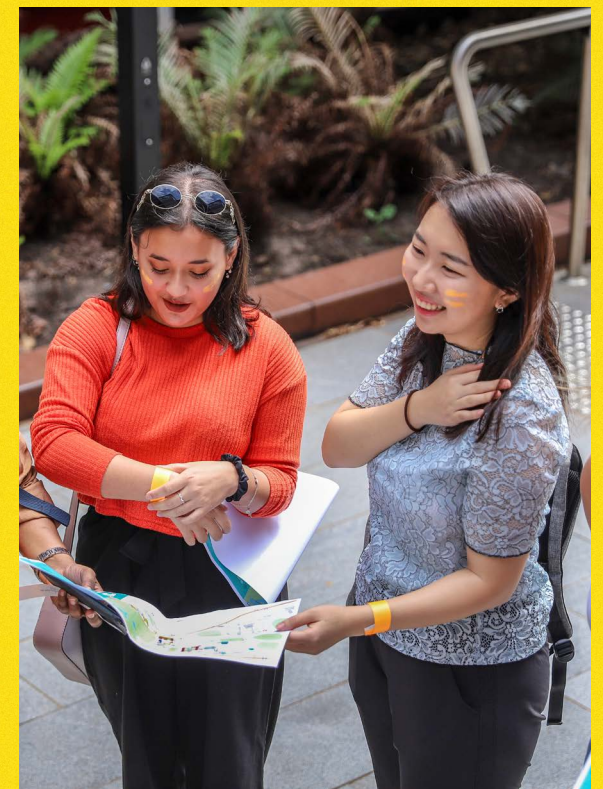


USU Goes

USU Goes was launched in 2021 offering students the chance to participate in weekly online activities including games days, a magic show, and a sign language workshop. Through a partnership with Centre in China, four USU Goes sessions for 100 students were conducted, including Aussie Slang, Sydney Sights and Aussie Food with a special tasting event. Given its success, it was decided to continue the program in 2022.

Debating

Debating remained online in 2021 with consistent attendance at internals, recording all sessions to create a training library on YouTube. Highlights included the launch of a sold-out Online Schools Competition with 120 students attending an online training day. USU also hosted the online Australasian Wom*ns Debating Championships and Nepal's 2021 Australasian Debating Championships with all USU teams making the finals. Oliver Cummins was awarded Best Speaker at the tournament.



HIGHLIGHTS

OVER **1,100** registrations for Language Exchange

USU Debating launches a sold-out Online Schools Competition



V Team

There were 100 USU V-Team volunteers at Welcome Fest 2021 who contributed over 500 hours of support across the festival. Overwhelmingly positive feedback post event resulted in all volunteers being offered complimentary USU Rewards membership. During Semester 1, volunteers also took part in Enviro Week and PopFest with 40 volunteers assisting at Eat Up Australia packing day, preparing lunches for food insecure school students. In Semester 2, further online volunteering opportunities were offered through the USU Goes program as well as a targeted How to Life session 'Build the Skills Employers Want While at Uni' delivered to active V-Team members.

Verge Gallery

In 2021, Verge Gallery presented 19 exhibitions including a first major international exhibition. In collaboration with the University's China Studies Centre, Verge exhibited a solo project from Singaporean artist Wei Leng Tay entitled ABRIDGE, with a work from the show being acquired into the Chau Chak Wing permanent collection. Verge received a positive exhibition write-up in Art Asia Pacific, a critical arts journal that is published in 89 countries across Asia, the Pacific and Middle East. Verge Projects, featuring on campus pop-up spaces, saw the artworks of over 35 students showcased around campus. In addition, in June, Verge hosted the 2021 Australian Fashion Week collection launch from seminal Australian fashion designer Akira Isogowa.

The major challenge for Verge in 2021 was the winter lockdown that saw the gallery close to audiences from mid-June to mid-October. In response, the Verge team transitioned to an online exhibition model that included Verge's first arts and culture

podcast series, Opening Drinks and video tours of exhibitions that did not open to the public. A major achievement in 2021 was the initiation of Verge's new website that is well equipped to host a range of media content such as video and sound works.

Several important initiatives were implemented in 2021. Verge mentored and worked alongside the Sydney College of the Arts Society towards the establishment of Backspace, the society's first exhibition space on campus. In conjunction with USYD's Power Institute, the Verge team initiated a university specific visual arts working group that includes employees from the major visual arts organisations on campus: Chau Chak Wing Museum, SCA Galleries, Tin Sheds gallery, The Power Institute, SCASS and Verge. The working group's aim is to carve an identity for and presence of visual arts on campus.

19 exhibitions including a first major international exhibition



USU Creative Awards

The USU Creative Awards was one of many hybrid exhibitions Verge presented in 2021 with the exhibition and awards night presented online alongside a physical iteration of the show occurring in the gallery. Compared to 2019, the 2021 Creative Awards saw a 48% increase in entries across three categories: word, music, and art. The People's Choice saw 495 votes and the online exhibition opening was viewed by over 600 people. The 2021 Creative Awards was curated by Masters of Curating student, Emily Roebuck, as part of the course's internship program.

HIGHLIGHTS

100 USU V-Team volunteers at Welcome Fest 2021

48% increase in entries for the USU Creative Awards

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

A review and refresh of how USU presents itself across digital channels was undertaken post Welcome Fest 2021. The new direction for content strategy was led by the insight that highlighting photography and videos of people and architecture outperformed graphics. This insight led to our Instagram Strategy, 'Faces and Places', and flowed through to the redesign of our e-newsletter.

Instagram

Due to our demographic's digital behaviours and evolving consumption of content, Instagram became our main social channel to communicate with our audience in 2021. We hit 12,768 followers (+17% YOY), our average engagement rate increased by 16.5% (YOY) and our average likes grew by 52.2% (YOY), confirming Instagram as our most successful and highest growing channel.

Instagram Reels

By mid 2021 we began to diversify our content further with the adoption of Instagram's new feature, Reels. Leveraging off insights on what content works best on Instagram, we explored Reels as a tool to simply entertain and engage with our audience. This approach has been well received with an average of 13,848 plays, 485 likes and 86.7 shares.



YouTube

From our learnings in 2020, our approach to online events in 2021 changed entirely. Live streaming fatigue was evident and as a result, collectively with programs, we decided to shift our approach for online events, empowering Clubs to take the lead and establish connections with their peers. The focus became what we can offer students, through our clubs and how we could continue to promote clubs to gain members and engagement throughout COVID. Part of this strategy was the introduction of club videos hosted on YouTube highlighting their offering in a visually engaging way. Over 128 clubs submitted videos and collectively the channel had 15,102 views (+37.2% YOY).

WeChat

Entering the second year of little to no international students on campus, WeChat was faced with the problem of retaining engagement with an audience who were solely offshore and uncertain about when they could return to campus. While followers grew to 5,864, engagement rates began to degrade incrementally as USYD launched their own WeChat account with Centre in China ramping up their communications on this channel. By end 2021, a strategic decision was made to leverage our relationship with USYD and Centre in China to distribute relevant messaging directly via USYD's WeChat channel.



PULP

USU'S digital student publication, PULP, employed four students over an 11-month period in 2021. In semester 1, the team consisted of three editors: Emily Graetz, Fabian Robertson and Mia Castagnone. In semester 2, Mia departed and Mandarin-speaking editor, Kristin Miao, joined the team for a four-month period. In June, preceding lockdown, PULP introduced a video series, 'PULP Pops'. Ten short video interviews with students captured on campus discussed topics such as, 'what's your first date experience at USYD?'. Collectively, the series has received 15,360 views since being published. Over 2021, traffic to PULP's digital channels continued to grow with Facebook and Instagram increasing by 379.8% (YOY) and website views reaching 226k (+23% YOY).

HIGHLIGHTS

12,768 followers
on
Instagram

INSTAGRAM Reels
records
13,848 plays

PULP Facebook and
Instagram increases
by 379.8%

15,102 club video
views on
YouTube

OPERATIONS

2021 was challenging for Operations with a COVID lockdown in place from July to October.

As a result, the Operations team learnt to be agile, flexible and responsive. While managing the shut down and reopening of our outlets, we continued to support our staff and the community, setting up the USYD Food Hub, supplying international students in need with over 3500 food hampers free

of charge. We also provided Lockdown Lunches, supporting more than 3000 student residents. In addition, during the height of the COVID lockdown in September, emergency food hampers were home delivered to all USU staff, whether full time or casual.

Live Music and Events

2021 started well with a strongly attended in-person Welcome Fest at the beginning of March, the launch of live Parties at Manning mid-April, and a successful Enviro Week in late April, with over 5,500 free meals, drinks and snacks handed out to our Members via the USU Eats Food Truck.



Graduation Experience

Face-to-face Graduation began in April 2021, and we hosted more than 2,500 Graduands prior to lockdown in June. Despite a hiatus until the end of 2021, we managed to successfully cater for and dress a further 750+ Graduands by December. The highlight for 2021 was the Graduation Experience project development, which allowed us to completely revamp the graduation process, reducing the time it takes to enter appointments from 2 hours per ceremony to zero, saving roughly 40 hours per month. It also reduced the dressing time taken for each graduand from 5 minutes to 3 minutes per graduand – saving approximately 86 hours per month.



Sustainability

USU continued to demonstrate ongoing commitment to more sustainable practises, particularly through its operations and partnerships with sustainable suppliers, which were highlighted at Enviro Week. In addition, USU staff regularly volunteered to support social enterprises, including Eat Up Australia and Oz Harvest with 3,582 donated to Oz Harvest, supported by Vittoria Coffee.

COVID Management

With our outlets slowly reopening after an extended lockdown, one of our greatest achievements was the management of COVID operating procedures. Through regular clear communication to staff, we achieved 100% adherence to health restrictions, as well as consistent monitoring of guidelines and COVID plans.

HIGHLIGHTS

A TOTAL OF 3,250 USYD Graduands dressed and catered for

OVER 404,000 customers served in our outlets despite months of extended COVID Lockdown

OVER 5,500 free meals, drinks and snacks given to our Members via the USU Eats Food Truck

\$97k in discounts given to USU Rewards Members

\$3,582 donated to Oz Harvest via Vittoria Coffee

PEOPLE & CULTURE

Following a challenging 2020, P&C had several projects lined up for 2021.

Despite being hit by another lockdown halfway through the year, we still managed to introduce some key tools and initiatives which have had organisation-wide impact. The effects of COVID slowed our progress and plans, however, overall,

Staff Newsletter

In June, P&C launched a bi-monthly online staff newsletter. Features include profiling our various teams and celebrating our achievements. We have worked closely with the Marketing team on the structure and production of the newsletter and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with more than 45% open rate.

Employment Hero

In July, we implemented a fully integrated HR and Payroll system, Employment Hero (EH), allowing the closure of our soon-to-be defunct separate rostering system. Comprehensive training for staff and managers was conducted before going live and we continue to provide training as requested. The benefits to both the organisation and our employees are manifold. With EH, we have one true source of information and significantly reduced the risk of data inaccuracy. Management can now be provided with information and reports allowing for review and planning. Processes have been streamlined, saving time and duplication. Much of our induction is conducted on-line, which is particularly useful when battling with working from home orders. Managers and staff have direct access to update personal details, manage leave requests, and track their objectives as well as the USU strategic plan. There are also a range of staff benefits available from discounts on retail goods to learning and development courses.

P&C achieved many of the things that we set out to do in 2021. We also recognise that we couldn't have achieved some of this without the collaboration of our colleagues in other departments.

Fundraising

As we returned to face-to-face activities, we held a USU Staff Bake-off to fundraise for the Biggest Morning Tea. For those members of the team who could not attend in person, we took plates to our various outlets so that they could sample the entries.

Recruitment

Despite the disruption of a pandemic, we continued to offer development to our teams. A highlight was the internal promotion of 10 members of staff, recognising their growth and abilities. We worked with several departments to re-structure to provide opportunities for promotion. Recruitment was obviously slower than anticipated but built up in the last quarter of the year, particularly with regards to casuals and by Christmas we had had over 300 applications for our operations roles.



COVID-19 and Staff Wellbeing

Our Work, Health and Safety Committee was re-established with representatives from across the business, meeting quarterly giving their time to undertake the role. Workplace walkthrough safety inspections resumed, and the Committee played an active part in the response to COVID-19.

Lockdown and the closure of most of our frontline operations posed a significant challenge to the organisation and our teams were fantastic in their co-operation, understanding and support of the ensuing actions that we took. Staff voluntarily elected to reduce their hours rather than have it imposed and accept everything going back to online. Despite reduced hours, USU ensured that everyone continued to accrue annual and other types of leave based on their normal working hours.

Communications were heightened during the lockdown and P&C kept all staff updated of developments in NSW and locally and with regards to the changing regulations and public health orders, and how they directly affected USU and our individual team members. We also supplied information to help colleagues apply for any related benefit packages that were launched by the NSW Government.

Previous experience as well as the rapid mobilisation of our managers, enabled us to respond swiftly to the changing landscape and we were able to draw on tools that we had put in place in 2020. A key priority was the wellbeing and safety of our staff, and as well as delivering care packages to staff, we undertook a short survey as a health check on how staff were coping during lockdown, and what if anything we could do to help. We also ran online self-care sessions called 'How to stop going COVID crazy'. Support for our staff wellbeing continued with various activities during Mental Health month.

We also began a discussion with the organisation about mandating vaccination for all our staff, permanent, fixed term, and casuals. Consultation and risk analysis was a thorough process, directly with staff through channels such as the Staff Forum, team meetings, one-to-ones and, also with the WHS Committee. USU had overwhelming support from our team to mandate vaccination and the policy was implemented in December.

HIGHLIGHTS

FULLY integrated HR and Payroll system implemented

USU Staff Newsletter launched

INTERNAL promotion of 10 members of staff

36 USYD students employed

WHO'S WHO AT USU



TOP LEFT TO RIGHT

David Zhu Board Director
Cole Scott-Curwood Board Director
Nicholas Comino Board Director
Telita Goile Board Director
Belinda Thomas Honorary Secretary
Benjamin Hines Honorary Treasurer

BOTTOM LEFT TO RIGHT

Isla Mowbray Board Director
Prudence Wilkins-Wheat President
Ruby Lotz Vice President
Du Du Board Director

NOT PRESENT

Kailin (Vikki) Qin Board Director
Irene Ma Immediate Past President
David Wright Senate-Appointed Director
Marie Leech Senate-Appointed Director

2021 Board Directors

Nicholas Comino

1st Year Board Director

Positions held: *Queer Portfolio Holder, Member Electoral Committee, Director of Student Publications.*

Du Du

1st Year Board Director

Positions held: *International Student Portfolio Holder.*

Telita Goile

1st Year Board Director

Positions held: *Member P&C Committee, Wom*ns Portfolio Holder and Disabilities Portfolio Holder.*

Isla Mowbray

1st Year Board Director

Positions held: *Member Awards Committee, Environment Portfolio Holder and Director of Student Publications.*

Cole Scott-Curwood

1st Year Board Director

Positions held: *Member C&S Committee.*

David Zhu

1st Year Board Director

Positions held: *Member Governance Committee, Ethnocultural Portfolio Holder, Deputy Chair Finance Committee.*

Kailin (Vikki) Qin

Honorary Secretary (January-November 2021), Board Director (Appointed November 2021)

David Wright

Senate-Appointed Director

Other Positions: *Member, Remuneration Committee.*

Marie Leech

Senate-Appointed Director

Other Positions: *Member, Remuneration Committee.*

Irene Ma

Immediate Past President

Positions held: *Member Electoral Committee, Member P&C Committee.*

2021 Executive Board Directors



Prudence Wilkins-Wheat

President

Positions held: *Chair Awards Committee, Chair Electoral Committee, Chair Executive Committee, Deputy Chair P&C Committee, Member C&S Committee, Member Debates Committee, Member Finance Committee, Member Governance Committee, Member WHS Committee.*



Ruby Lotz

Vice President

Positions held: *Member Awards Committee, Member C&S Committee, Member C&S Awards Selection Panel, Member Debates Committee, Member Awards Committee, Member Executive Committee, Member P&C Committee.*



Benjamin Hines

Honorary Treasurer

Positions held: *Chair of the Governance Committee, Chair of the Debates Committee, Member Executive Committee, Member Finance Committee, Member P&C Committee.*



Belinda Thomas

Honorary Secretary (Appointed November 2021)

Positions held: *Chair C&S Committee, Deputy Chair Electoral Committee, Member Executive Committee, Director of Student Publications, Member C&S Selection Panel.*

2021 Outgoing Board

Nick Forbutt

Vice President

Caitlin (Cady) Brown

Honorary Treasurer

Benny (Yinfeng) Shen

Honorary Secretary

Benjamin Hines

Board Director

Eve (Di) Wang

Board Director

Nicholas Rigby

Board Director

2021 Executive Staff

Andrew Mills

Chief Executive Officer, Board Secretary and Acting Director of Marketing

Jess Reed

Director of Operations (January-July 2021) / Chief Operating Officer (Appointed August 2021)

Rebecca Sahni

Director of Finance

Ruth Altman

Director of People & Culture

Louise Anthony

Director of Student Programs

PULP Student Editors

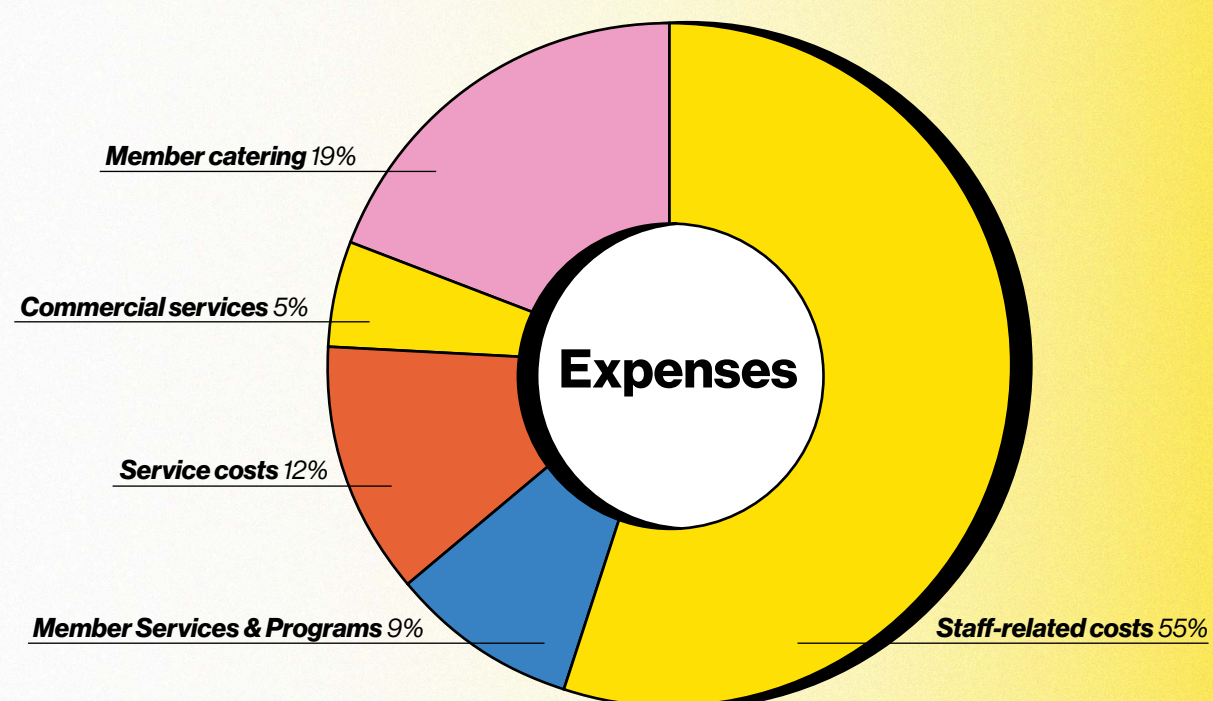
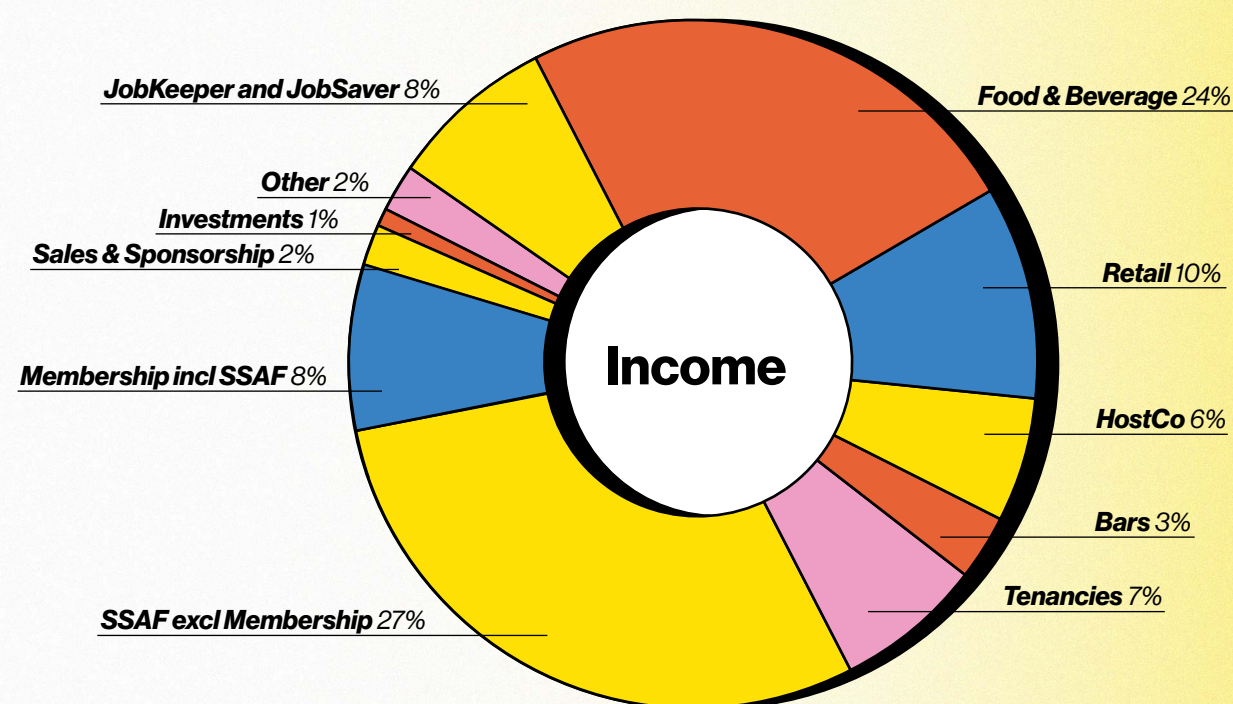
Emily Graetz, Fabian Robertson, and Mia Castagnone

Semester 1

Emily Graetz, Fabian Robertson, and Kristin Miao

Semester 2

2021 FINANCIAL SUMMARY



THANK YOU

Proceeds from 2021 went directly towards providing and improving programs, services and spaces for our Members, USYD students and the wider USYD community.

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