

AGM Minutes – Thursday 7th November 2018

The VUPA Annual General Meeting was officially declared open at 4.48pm by the incoming President, Rachel Brisbane.

All guests were reminded to sign the Registration Form.

The traditional and indigenous peoples were acknowledged as owners of the land.

The President officially welcomed all members to the Annual General Meeting.

The President provided a brief history of VUPA's 17 years and recorded this as the third official AGM in acknowledgement of the huge transformation VUPA has undergone in the past three years including establishing processes and policies. The work of the small team was acknowledged. The President outlined who VUPA represents and the core activities undertaken.

The President tabled the Draft Annual Report members, noting the Final Annual Report would be issued following the AGM including to members on the Registration form by email as well as uploaded to the VUPA website.

The President highlighted the achievements of VUPA for the year including the strategic aspects of a mission statement, beliefs, values, a strategic plan and noted the diversity the board members.

The President outlined the agenda for the AGM including

- reviewing the annual report
- a financial report
- questions from members on the report.

The President presented the annual report highlighting the work in strengthening VUPA towards independence from VUSU; working towards continuing to hold social events with our small reserves whilst funding processes were uncertain; trialling new types of social activities such as laser tag regardless of the small board and multiple resignations experienced on the back of the changes to the sessional teaching availability for postgrads; and increasing the breadth and depth of work done with limited resources through leveraging our relationship with CAPA – with the Fares Fair public transport campaign as an illustration. The President acknowledged the work and contributions of Lavern Nyamutswa in the General Secretary role and wished him well in his future endeavours. The President acknowledged the work of James Sorenson, as the outgoing President and his work in establishing the reputation of VUPA, along with many processes and systems over the past two years and thanked him for his continued support in fulfilling the General Secretary role in the interim.

The President gave a brief overview of the types of things she aspires to complete in 2019 including working through the College Managers to expand the reach of VUPA into all postgraduate courses and gain greater diversity in representation and support for social events in particular; submitting an increased budget to VUSU President to more fully support the work of VUPA and gaining a greater understanding of how postgraduate SSAF funds are allocated.

The President then concluded the annual report presentation and asked for questions from the postgraduate cohort. The questions and responses were recorded as

- What was the likelihood of getting increased funding from SSAF/VUSU?
 - The President replied that although it was unlikely given many student organisations are operating in a context of reduced funding (either overall reduced or per capita

reductions), she still believed it was important to present a budget for expanding services, advocacy and representation to meet needs and to offer a small acknowledgement in the way of honorariums to board members for their work and contributions. We are also looking at a survey to seek feedback from postgraduates as to what their priorities are for SSAF.

- What is the level of transparency on SSAF at the moment.
 - The President replied that she had sought clarification from VUSU on this matter in the past week. Using 2016 as an example, she illustrated using CAPA data from 2016 the university collected approx. \$825K in SSAF from postgraduates that year, and that VUPA would like to understand how the \$810K is allocated leaving the \$15K budget for VUPA, so that it can explain to postgraduates how their SSAF fees are utilised and the benefits to them
- Do we have sponsors?
 - The President replied that in the past few years, VUPA has not had any external sponsors. Previously, there were some small grants (eg \$500) available via the banks for 'community grants' that were used to do things like buy 3MT prizes, however, many of these now have more stringent criteria such as youth or sustainability in the eligibility criteria.
- Can we work towards external funding and sponsorship to improve our funding?
 - The President replied that VUPA can certainly do that and had considered door knocking local businesses for things such as raffle or door prizes. Some of the considerations for other sponsorship relies on being able to bring significant numbers (eg 70+) of postgraduates together to make it attractive for sponsors.
- Is VUPA sustainable with a small board?
 - The President replied that the most important thing was the commitment of the members and the quality of their work, rather than the quantity of members, illustrating that a larger board with members that do not attend meetings or commit to completing tasks achieves less than a small board with dedicated members.

No questions on the Annual Report presentation were recorded and the report was accepted.

The President noted that the formalities for the constitution for the Annual Report were now completed and close the AGM 5.24pm.

The President noted that the next Annual General Meeting would be in October 2019.