

I can honestly say that serving as President of AUScA has been the privilege of a lifetime. I have learnt far more from this experience than I ever did in the lecture theatre. Whilst my time wasn't without difficulties, I am incredibly proud of what the Association has achieved over the past 12 months, and by any reasonable measure the Club is in a far stronger position than it has been this millennium. We had an increased number of members last year, at a grand total of 458 paying members, making us one of the largest clubs on campus. Our committee's O'Week was even more successful than the previous ones, handing out effectively all of our magazines and putting us on track to have an even better year for memberships in 2018. Our finances are in the best position they have been in for years, and our number of events grew. It even reached the point where we had to cap semester 2 pub-crawl shirt sales.

It is important, however, that we do not let these achievements blind us to the struggles we faced. A core disagreement within the committee around the purpose of the club made consensus building in many areas, such as faculty relations, difficult. It is time for the general membership to offer the incoming committee guidance on what AUScA is for: are we purely a social club or do we have a role in advocating for our members? Or, phrased another way, are we to follow the Engineering Society model, or the Medical Students Society model? Whilst it is clear to me that we ought to do all we can to support our members, including standing up for them to the university administration, it is not my decision to make. I call on you to not let the various candidates sit down until they have stated their views on this critical question. In doing so I hope that the next committee can work more effectively in fulfilling your instructions

Last year AUScA took a leading role in working to change the way clubs prevent, deal with, and respond to sexual assault and harassment. The committee published an open letter to our members in response to the Australian Human Rights Commission report into sexual assault and harassment on campus, which not only apologised to our membership for our failings but also laid out a series of policy changes to make our events safer and more welcoming. A number of other clubs adopted our policies or worked with me to develop their own. This also led to me being asked to represent AUScA, and indeed all clubs, on the Respect. Now. Always. Taskforce. This Taskforce ultimately handed down 63 recommendations, including a great many that will directly protect our members as they go through their University lives.

This term also saw a number of organisational changes to how AUScA is governed, being the first full term under our new constitution, and the first year where we have communicated as a committee via Slack. Both of these changes have led to increases in communication, faster and more effective decision making, and better event management. I would strongly recommend that the incoming committee also use Slack for their communications. Our committee has also recommended some tweaks to our constitution to further improve the functioning of the committee.

Committee burnout towards the end of the year remained a problem, especially as older committee members moved onto to research-based education. As of yet we have not found an effective solution by which to mitigate this. It is my personal view that by removing committee members who simply stop communicating with the committee and cease attending meetings/events, and replacing them with new and eager members, as well as electing members earlier in their degree in the first place, we may be able to increase the number of committee members still engaged by the AGM. I would also recommended that the incoming committee revisit the timing of our AGM, whether it should be moved from the beginning of the year to the end. There are genuine merits to both times and as such the topic is worthy of further discussion.

It is also important that the incoming committee quickly settle a day time and location for committee meetings and then stick to it. Once you starting moving meetings around, it becomes increasingly difficult to meet quorum.

Once again the First Year magazine was published, this year edited by Kelly MacDonald, and was an outstanding success. It is clearly an endeavour we should undertake annually. A special thanks to Jill from the Faculty for securing us the \$3000 grant to fund the production.

AUScA's events for this year can be broadly divided into two categories, repeats and new. Beginning with repeat events.

- Our BBQs continue to be a key driver for membership. The offer of free food is perfectly calibrated to attract uni students, and this event remained largely unchanged compared to previous years.
- Pub-crawls also remain a mainstay of the club, both from a fundraising perspective and a social one. Our first pub-crawl suffered from a difficult handover and lack of advertisement leading to the sales period depressed sales number. However, our second pub-crawl was a rip-roaring success, with sufficiently high sales numbers that venue capacity required us to cap sales. This illustrates the importance of a long advertising and sales period. We also decided to base our semester 2 pub-crawl on Hindley Street. We recommend to the next committee that they continue this formula of semester 1 pub-crawls being Rundle Street-based and semester 2 being Hindley Street-based.
- SciBall this year was another record-breaking event, being the largest AUScA gala this millennium. SciBall also broke even financially this year.
- Quiz night was again used as our major semester 2 event and saw similar numbers to previous years.
- Our O'Week events and meet and greet, having three days at O'Week, and the success of the magazine led to high membership signups at the stall, putting us on track to exceed last year's membership. At the time of writing the meet and greet is yet to take place, but based on social media is on track to exceed last year's attendance.

Our three new events:

- Networking evenings were an innovation by the former Vice President Khalia Primer. They were run by inviting 3 speakers from a given career area to speak to students interested in pursuing that field. The focus was primarily on careers outside of academia. These events are deceptively difficult to organize, and as such were shelved upon Khalia's resignation. For this reason the committee has recommended the creating of a dedicated Networking Officer on the committee as this goes to a core function of AUScA.
- This year's National Science Week event was an ambitious plan to hold a public debate between 3 leading scientists, funded by a National Science Week grant. This event did not see the attendance that the committee had hoped for, and whilst the fundamentals of the event were fine, AUScA lacked experience in advertising to schools and the general public. Whilst this event did not reach our goals we did learn a great deal from it. It is worth giving another shot this year, but only if the committee is willing to put in the time early enough to directly engage with schools to arrange for them to attend. Shrinking the venue of the event to a more achievable goal is also recommended.
- A soup kitchen during SwotVac for studying students. This was run in collaboration with the Rotaract club - it was very popular and soup is fun. The new committee should reach out to Rotaract about repeating the event.

The outgoing committee has also made a number of recommendations to the incoming committee:

- That a greater emphasis be placed on organizing cheap food for during pub-crawls, and that more of an emphasis be placed on ensuring that food outlets honour their agreements.
- To cease having UniBar on our pub-crawls because nobody goes.
- To cease movie nights. The licencing problems are nigh insurmountable and make the event unprofitable and unappealing.
- That we maintain a good relationship with Johnny's Popcorn in order to keep getting more free popcorn.
- That we work more with the Union to advertise our events and to prevent unnecessary competition (e.g. multiple clubs holding similar events on the same night).
- That inquiries be made as to procure more secure storage space.
- That, where practical, public feedback forms be released following each major event in order to aid the committee in improving events.
- That we hold more sherry nights for the committee, and that they be planned via Facebook rather than Slack (sherry nights are what we call it when the committee goes drinking together).
- That the committee attend international O'Week to increase our membership among international students.
- That we once again decline to purchase pens.

I wish to conclude this report by thanking those that served on the committee, especially those that have, on numerous occasions gone above and beyond the call of duty, those who have run events, and those who taken time out of the busy schedules to give something back to the club. AUScA is and always will be a team effort. No one person can hold the club aloft on their own. It has only been by relying on others that my presidency has been a success. I would also like to single out my partner, Patrick Stewart who, while not serving on the committee has been invaluable in supporting me and the committee at large. But above all else, I want to thank the general membership. This club belongs to you, and I hope that you remember me as diligent custodian of this astounding institution.

Sincerely,

Declan Price-Brooks

President of the Adelaide University Sciences Association.

