

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Strategic plan 2019-2024

Our vision:

Inclusive, empowered graduate student communities that achieve meaningful and holistic university experiences.

Our values:

- Empowerment
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Community
- Respect

Our objectives:

Representation

To harness graduate student representation and advocacy to influence policy change.

Academic Support

To provide activities that support gradate students to achieve their desired academic outcomes.

Transition to Work

To develop skills, opportunities and activities to assist graduate students to transition to work.

Engaged and Healthy Communities

To engage with graduate students to improve emotional health and well-being.

Sustainability

To ensure organisational excellence, stability and improvement.

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Meet our graduate leaders

01



Emily Roberts
President

Emily Roberts is a student in the Melbourne Business School, completing a Master of Management. As GSA President Emily has presented at the Academic Freedom roundtable with over thirteen different Vice-Chancellors from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. She's presented on issues of academic free speech, dealing with crises and supporting student mental health, along with many other issues that will have long term impacts for students for many years to come.

Apart from providing governance support and attending numerous meetings, Emily enjoyed The Annual Graduate Ball. The event was a highlight of the year where graduate students got to have fun and celebrate with friends.



Madeleine Johnson
General Secretary

Madeleine is completing a Master of Pure Mathematics in the Faculty of Science.

As General Secretary, Madeleine excelled in keeping everyone at GSA fully informed and accountable to up-to-date policies and procedures with her regular communication and reporting.

Some of her highlights of 2019 have included: being able to work with fifteen passionate and dedicated councillors, whose consistent commitment to serving graduate students with integrity has been a constant source of inspiration; the opportunity to work with an experienced CEO, Rachna Muddagouni; and finally, the opportunity to gain national perspectives on key issues by attending forums as a representative of GSA.

Message from the President and General Secretary

In 2019, GSA achievements were strategic, significant and progressive. GSA has grown, adapted and learned during this significant year of change. GSA has had moments of real success, coupled with enormous challenges, and the GSA council members have grown to be aspiring leaders, and represented the University of Melbourne graduate student community successfully.

GSA council members began the term by celebrating GSA's 25th birthday, honouring a quarter of a century of graduate students standing up and demanding an independent graduate student voice in their University community. We were awed to meet generations of former GSA student leaders and friends of GSA at our celebratory lunch in June and have made it our goal to do their legacy justice. Coupled with this commemoration of GSA's past was an intent to build an even stronger future, and, two months in to 2019, we were able to pass GSA's first ever strategic plan. This five-year plan, based on extensive consultation and research with graduate students, the University, and those within GSA, consists of five guiding principles that have been the cornerstone of all we have strived for this year. We are pleased to say – the strategic plan is now fully operational.

It's been a year of many exciting changes. We have welcomed our new CEO Rachna Muddagouni on board, who has brought with her decades of experience as a not-for-profit CEO to GSA. We have seen a temporary move out of the 1888 Building and into the Doug McDonell Building after the University's investment of over \$6 million in upgrading the 1888 Building as part of the New Student Precinct project.

To strengthen our organisational sustainability, GSA conducted an internal audit, reviewed our financial policies and procedures to ensure improved transparency and accountability. We continued to champion our campaigns and protests, valuing the wonderful diversity within our graduate student community. Excitingly, GSA started a process of constitutional reform to secure a sustainable future for GSA, with strong student governance and representation and more opportunities for graduates to take on leadership roles.

Our involvement in all of this has been both incredibly rewarding and challenging – we have been pushed to learn and grow at each step of the year, as we have balanced our (almost) full-time studies with the requirements of our roles. For our Council members, our involvement has been enriching and incredibly rewarding.

We are very proud to have left GSA with a vision of five years and beyond. To our successors – we wish you all the luck in the world. To our councillors – thank you for your passion and dedication. To GSA staff and especially Rachna – thank you for your hard work, your patience, and your commitment to supporting graduates. To our friends and families – thank you for putting up with us this last year. And finally, to our graduate student community: you are the reason we are here and continue to exist. We can't thank you enough for your continued support.

GSA Council

May 2019 to December 2019



Emily Roberts
President



Sachetha Bamunusinghe
Vice President



Madeleine Johnson
General Secretary



Lauren Taylor
LGBTIQ Officer



Tessa Gould
Council member



Vinu Geesara Gunetilleke
Council member



Jeremy Waite
Activities Officer



Eliza Colgrave
Women's Officer



Ying Hu
International Officer



Katherine Wang
Council member



Angela (Chengzhe) Han
Council member



Theodora Wong
Council member



Hiruni Walimunige
Health & Welfare Officer



Lubna Meempatta
Families Officer



Fia Hamid-Walker
Education & Research Officer

Further thanks to these previously serving 2019 Council members



Cindy Han Yuejiao



Ida Tangshuang Qin



**Mitchell
Vanderwerdt-Holman**



Yali Zhao

Perspectives of graduate student leadership



Lauren Taylor

LGBTIQ Officer

Doctor of Medicine (MD) Year 3.

I first became involved with GSA in my first year of my MD, during the marriage equality postal survey.

GSA took a leading role with the University community on campaigning for marriage equality in collaboration with UMSU: mobilising students to enrol to vote, update their details, and call others to encourage them to do the same. This progressive leadership on LGBTIQ+ issues inspired me to become more involved in GSA, and I was elected to GSA Council in September 2018.

In 2019, some of the highlights of my work included the launch of the Pride in Action Network at the Midsumma Pride March and our stall for Wear It Purple Day.



Tessa Gould

Council member

I was newly elected to GSA Council in May 2019. In this time, it has been an absolute honour to be a representative for grad students. One of my biggest achievements has been advocating for better placement experience in the Master of Teaching (Secondary). The Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) has implemented important reforms in response to our advocacy and as a result of this, not a single student was placed late in the first round of placements for 2020.

I was also the GSA Women's Officer in 2019, and celebrated women in higher education for Bluestocking Week with a barbecue and other activities, and I represented graduate students on the Respect Taskforce, which aims to eliminate sexual harassment and assault at the University of Melbourne.

It was a year of reform for GSA Council, and I am so proud to be part of a group that has worked really hard to improve our governance capacity and accountability to students.



Vinu Geesara Gunetilleke

Council member

Master of Engineering (Civil with Business)

I am a 2nd year masters student majoring in Civil Engineering with Business. I was fortunate to be elected in 2019 as the Activities Officer and a member of the executive council. It was my absolute pleasure to work with our amazing staff to deliver two graduate orientations, the "Fire and Ice" Annual Graduate Ball as well as pilot events such as the International Student Wellbeing Project. I got the opportunity to represent GSA with national peak bodies such as the Council of International Students Australia (CISA) and to forge relationships with student leaders and various stakeholders from across Australia.

My time at GSA has been a truly rewarding journey to me as an individual, being able to learn and endeavour with my duties and responsibilities in both governance and representation as a councillor.



Theodora Wong

Council member

Master of Music Therapy, Class of 2020

I have been on the GSA Council since the end of January 2020. My areas of interest are wellbeing for international students and advocacy and wellbeing for the LGBTIQ+ community.

I have been working on the International Student Wellbeing Initiative with GSA's International Officer, Ying, and

I have enjoyed advocating on behalf of graduate students as a council member at GSA.



Sachetha Bamunusinghe

Vice President

Master of Public Policy and Management

I have been on the GSA Council since February 2019. Some highlights of my work include meeting Grad Group committees at their events, advocating graduate student issues at University meetings and developing the Council's Policy Platform. I have enjoyed contributing to student union representation and understanding issues in the higher education sector.



Jeremy Waite

Activities Officer

I joined GSA Council in November 2019, and started in my role as Activities Officer in early 2020. My experience at GSA has been incredibly rewarding and varied; aiming to better represent and further the interests of grad students has remained at the core of the work I have undertaken.

As a second-year Juris Doctor student, I have taken a strong interest in reforms to the GSA Constitution to strengthen the organisation's governance and representation, and to ensure the voices across faculties and constituent groups are heard at the table.

In my role as Activities Officer I worked with staff and council to plan and run events such as our Semester 1 Orientation Day, a Food for Thought BBQ as well as a range of online events and activities to engage grad students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working alongside a very talented, passionate group of councillors this year, and am excited for what's to come at GSA.



Hiruni Walimunige

Health & Welfare Officer

Master of Public Policy and Management, 2nd year

During my time on the GSA Council, I have enjoyed connecting with graduate students and working to make GSA an organisation that truly represents their needs.

From hosting autonomous afternoon teas, to supporting new Grad Groups at their first events, I have been able to engage with the diverse graduate student cohort and contribute to building a sense of community. I have also seen firsthand the work that dedicated and passionate graduate students do to support and represent their peers.

In addition to this, I worked alongside fellow Councillors to improve GSA's internal mechanisms through reviewing our internal policies and providing input regarding student health & wellbeing in the creation of our strategic plan. From representational to governance duties, being on the GSA Council this past year has given me the unique opportunity to engage in student life and build GSA's organisational capacity.



Eliza Colgrave

Women's Officer

I'm a final year PhD student from the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, researching a disease called endometriosis. I was elected to a casual position on council in December 2019 and took over as Women's Officer in January 2020. In my time as a councillor I have enjoyed applying my experience in women's health and advocacy. I played a key role in the planning of our International Women's Day event and gave the keynote speech on the day, sparking a lot of great conversations with female-identifying students and allies. The event re-affirmed the need to speak to and work with a diverse group of women, especially marginalised groups, in order to eliminate gender equality. I took up a position on the University's Respect Taskforce, which was established to address issues around sexual assault and harassment involving students.

I look forward to seeing the actions the university and organisations like GSA take in the coming months to improve how we support students on these issues. I have learnt a lot while assisting in the governance and operations of GSA and look forward to assisting the next Women's Officer to step into the role.

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

It has been a great privilege to lead GSA as the CEO from September 2019. It is indeed very rewarding working with energetic and aspiring Council members, who have had a challenging year, planned new services and changed existing programs to meet the needs of the graduates as identified in the new strategic plan. Indeed, a pleasure to work with an enthusiastic GSA Council who put in a lot of hard work, continuously grow and offer the GSA countless hours of support and effort. I am deeply indebted to their work.

The Representation Team have adopted a nimble, determined approach to pursuing new campaigns, policy changes and advocacy work. They have experienced great success and some ongoing challenges to bringing about policy change. GSA has consulted, listened to and acted upon feedback from graduate students, and are

determined to continue doing so.

The Student Engagement Team have excelled and delivered many successful activities, events and academic support workshops. Student participation and satisfaction in our events have increased significantly, supported by proper planning, marketing and evaluation. GSA has further extended our reach beyond Parkville and Southbank to Burnley and Werribee campuses, and we've launched some inspired new social events and programs while refining our previous offerings.

Our many affiliated Grad Groups have grown in number and activity, inspiring increased participation in the University of Melbourne student community. Their work has supported GSA to ensure various engagement platforms, groups and innovative ideas have developed to improve social connection, engagement and cohesion. GSA staff have developed great policies and procedures to improve all the Grad Group systems and support

Our President, Emily Roberts, and our General Secretary, Madeleine Johnson, have shown extraordinary leadership and courage in leading a complex journey of organisational change at GSA. We are building the foundations for an even stronger and more effective GSA in the years ahead. A big thank you to all the staff who have strived hard to deliver many interesting and innovative programs. GSA strives to be 'the heart of graduate student life' at the University of Melbourne, and in 2020 will continue to make every effort to increase the value it creates for all graduate students.



Rachna Muddagouni



Rachna Muddagouni, LEAD conference

Meet the Grad Group community

02

Grad Groups

Grad Groups are GSA-affiliated student societies that support, and are led by, graduate students.

By hosting activities and engagement across all different faculties, demographics, campuses and interest areas, they promote interaction, welfare and cohesion within the diverse graduate student population,

With over 120 groups undertaking activity for over 20,000 members, Grad Groups are at the heart of the graduate student community experience.

Grad Groups focus on a vast number of topics, such as:

- Academic
 - Business & enterprise
 - Creative, media & performance
 - Faith & spirituality
 - International & cultural
 - Physical activity, sports & games
- Political, campaigning & social justice
 - Professional development
 - Representation & inclusion
 - Special interest
 - Sustainability & the environment
 - Welfare & wellbeing



180 Degrees Consulting
African Studies Group (ASG)
Agrifoodies
Amphora Issue Collective (AIC)
Animal Welfare Science Students of the UoM (AWSSUM)
AntITHESIS
Asia Institute Postgraduate Group (AIPG)
Australia Awards Scholars Club (AASC)
Australian Students' Society of Haematology (ASSH)
Bengali Cultural Club (BCC)
Bioinformatics Graduate Student Association (BGSa)
Biosciences Postgraduate Society (BioPS)
Built Industry Group (BIG)
Burnley Campus Postgraduate Group (BCPG)
BusinessOne Consulting
Cancer Society of Melbourne University (CSM)
Chemistry Postgraduate Society (CPS)
Chilean Research Group of Australia (CREGA)

Chinese Data Science Society (CDSS)
Chinese Students and Scholars Association Graduate (CSSA Grad)
Chinese Studies Research Group (CSRG)
Classics & Archaeology Postgraduate Group (CAPG)
Climate College Graduate Student Group (CCGSG)
Computational Biology Postgraduate Sports Group (CBPSG)
Computing and Information Systems Graduate Research Student Group (CIS GRs)
Crossing Borders Melbourne (CBM)
Culture and Communication Graduate Committee (CCGC)
Data Science Postgraduate Society
De Minimis
Dermatology Interest Society (DermIS)
Earth Science Postgraduate Group (ESPG)
Ecuadorian Research and Entrepreneurship Network (EREN)

Enactus
Ethnoforum
FBE PhD Student Society (FBEPSS)
Forest Ecosystem Student Society (FESS)
Geography Postgraduate Society (GPS)
Global Consulting Group (GCC)
Global Law Students Association (GLSA)
Global Origins Magazine
Graduate Agriculture and Food Society (GAFS)
Graduate Backyard Cricket Club (GBCC)
Graduate Education Society (GES)
Graduate Group of Student Parents (GGSP)
Graduate House Student Group (GHSG)
Graduate Infrastructure Engineering Society (GIES)
Graduate Organisation of Development Students (GOODS)
Graduate Power Shuttlers (GradPS)
Graduate Researchers in Psychological Sciences (GRIPS)
Graduate Yoga Society (CYS)
History Postgraduates Association (HPA)
IIT IISc Graduates (I2G)
Indigenous Graduate Student Association

(IGSA)
International Graduate Student Wellbeing Group (IGSWG)
International Melbourne Uni Graduate Volleyball Group (IMUGVG)
Interprofessional Education and Practice Health Students Network (IPEP-HSN)
Later Law Students' Network (LLSN)
Law Students for Refugees (LS4R)
MD Acapella Society
MD Queer (MDQ)
MEDitate
Mechanical Engineering Research Student Association (MERSA)
Med Moves (MM)
Medical Creatives Collective (MCC)
Melbourne Business School Student Association (MBSSA)
"Melbourne Children's Campus Research Students Association (MCCRSA) (previously known as Murdoch Children's Research Students Association)"
Melbourne Dental Post-Graduate Group (MDPGG)
Melbourne Dental Students Society (MDSS)
Melbourne Emergency Student's Society



(MESS)
 Melbourne Energy Students Association (MESA)
 Melbourne Graduate Music Society (MGMS)
 Melbourne Information Systems Graduate Association (MISGA)
 Melbourne International Property Students (MIPS)
 Melbourne Latin Community Association (MLCA)
 Melbourne Neuroscience PhD Program Student Association (MISSioN)
 Melbourne Population Health Students Association (MPHSA)
 Melbourne Postgraduate International Relations Organisation (MPIRO)
 Melbourne South Asian Law Society (MSALS)
 Melbourne University at Mercy Students (MUMs)
 Melbourne University Chinese Debating Group (MUCDG)
 Melbourne University Civil and Structural Society (MUCSS)
 Melbourne University Genetics Postgraduate Society (MUGPS)
 Melbourne University Geomatics Society (MUGS)
 Melbourne University Graduate Christian Union (MUGCU)
 Melbourne University Law Students' Society (MULSS)
 Melbourne University Nepalese Students' Society (MUNSS)
 Melbourne University Nursing Students' Society (MUNSS)
 Melbourne University Physiotherapy Students Society (MUPSS)
 Melbourne University Planning Student Society (MUPSS)
 Melbourne University Taiwanese Postgraduates Association (MUTPA)
 MSD Research Students Association (MSDRSA)
 Music Therapy Graduate Student Group (MTGSG)
 Navigators (The)
 Neuropsychology Students Society (NSS)
 OCULUS
 One Health Research Society (OHRS)
 Outlook Rural Health Club (Moovin Health)
 OVS Research Crew
 Paraguayan Student Association (PSA)
 Persian Art and Culture (PAC)
 Philosophy Postgraduate Group (PPG)
 Physiology Student Society (PSS)
 Postgraduate Association of Chemical and Biomedical Engineering Researchers (PACBER)
 Postgraduate Environment Network (PEN)
 Postgraduate Physics Students' Society (PPSS)
 Postgraduates at Werribee (PAWS)
 Postgraduates of Veterinary Science (POVS)

Public Interest Law Network (PILN)
 Public Policy Grad Group (PPGG)
 School of Health Sciences Graduate Group (SHSGG)
 Sri Lankan Graduates' Society (SLGS)
 School of Languages and Linguistics (SOLL)
 Postgrad Group - formally Languages Linguistic (LAL) Postgrad Group
 Social Work Association of Graduate Students (SWAGS)
 Society of Marketing and Communications (SMAC)
 Special Postgraduate Association for Students of Immunology and Microbiology (SPASIM)
 Speech Pathology Students' Society (SPSS)
 St Vincent's Student Society (SVSS)
 Statistics and Mathematics Postgraduate Society (STAMPS)
 Student Conservators @ Melbourne (SC@M)
 Student Conservators for Timor Leste (SCTL)
 Students in Primary Care Research (SPCR)
 Students of Landscape Architecture (SOLA)
 Students in Orthopaedic and Musculoskeletal Academia (SOMA)

Students of Neuropsychiatry Research (SONR)
 Students of Neuroscience and Anatomy (SONA)
 Students of Pharmacology (StOP)
 Students of Royal Melbourne (STORM)
 Students of the Florey Institute (SOFI)
 Surgical Students' Society of Melbourne (SSSM)
 SYNAPSE
 Unimelb Journalism Society (MJS)
 Unimelb Pride Community (UPCC)
 University of Melbourne Medical Students' Society (UMMSS)
 University of Melbourne Optometry Students' Society (UMOSS)
 University of Melbourne Space Program (UMSP)
 Victorian Environmental Law Student Network (VELSN)
 Wellbeing Arts Graduate Student Group (WAGSG)
 Wilderness Medicine Student's Society (WMSS)
 Womendeavour



Any University of Melbourne graduate student can set up a Grad Group!

You just need six members, a common interest and some documentation that we can help you with! To talk through the benefits of affiliating, find out what funding opportunities there are and discuss the affiliation process, feel free to book in with the Grad Groups team here. You can also email us at gradgroups@gsa.unimelb.edu.au to get started.

**We
represent
you**

03

Representation

GSA's Representation Team focus on achieving positive change, both at university and in society as a whole, through the work of advocacy, campaigning and trained committee representatives.

In 2019, the Representation Team advocated for both research and coursework students on campus on complex and simple issues. These concerns remain varied: the ongoing problem of a lack of adequate study spaces, liaising with faculty on any policy changes, resourcing graduate representatives and supporting Grad Groups.

The team has continued an event series called the Graduate Leaders' Forum. Since February 2017, this series has brought together graduate student leaders, including Grad Group presidents, members of GSA Council and GSA-nominated committee representatives, empowering student leaders to address the issues that matter most to them. The series has focused on developing leadership capacity and cross-faculty collaboration, featuring keynote speakers from government and the University, and has encouraged students to think creatively about solutions to the problems that matter to them and their peers.

The Representation Team also worked with Council members to develop a policy platform for GSA, and associated strategies to pursue advocacy and lobbying. The policy paper has been established and supports the advocacy and campaign work. The team have continued significant campaign work such as the Fares Fair PTV, Climate Chair and NTEU Wage Theft campaigns, and a range of other state and commonwealth related issues.

The team have also developed significant policy submissions to government, in partnership with key stakeholders like UMSU and NTEU, to highlight the impact of policy issues for the graduate student community at the University of Melbourne.

In order to achieve the most collaborative possible outcomes, the Representation Team liaises with peak community organisations such as the Council of Postgraduate Associations (CAPA), Council of International Students Australia (CISA) and others, to advocate on social and emotional health issues that adversely impact graduate students. One example of such collaboration was GSA's response to the University's proposed changes to special consideration provisions in September 2019. GSA's submission was developed in partnership with UMSU, and centres the voices of graduate students with lived experience of chronic illness and disability.

GSA worked closely with UMSU in developing our submission, and I'm really proud of our collaboration.

– Fia Hamid-Walker, GSA Education & Research Officer, October 2019

The Representation Team also supported the CEO and Council to develop GSA's response to the University's Strategy 2030 discussion paper. The response will primarily focus on the themes of students and education; place; and people, diversity and inclusion.

Overall, the team continues to develop systems and support for Grad Groups, strengthens the policy work of Council and committee representatives, and forges strong stakeholder relationships across the University community.



What our representatives do

A vital part of GSA's representation work is to ensure that graduate students have a direct say in how the University develops and behaves, by nominating graduate students to sit on University committees. Every major decision made at the University will be discussed on a committee at some point, which is why student representation is so important.

GSA relies on our nominated committee members to keep us informed about discussions and decisions made by the University, so that we can continue to support and represent the interests of all graduate students.

GSA committee representatives

Sina Khatami
Divyangana Rakesh
Jewel Boniface Dcruz
Ivy Ziqian Wang
Nigel Huckle
Corey Cribb
Sakshi Agrawal
Emily Crisafulli
Michelle Todorov
Nina Zapedowski
Alex Hedt
Abbie Trott
Ai Tam Le

Ioannis Sidiropoulos
Christian Ainsworth
Laura Ruaux
Jessie Downey
Djamila Eliby
Kritika Shankar Gehani
Alex Guerin
Maita Subba
Jay Ryder
Deniz Tuncer
Saeid Charani Shandiz
Natasha Ballis
Penny Vervoos

Councillors with committee roles

Sachetha Bamunusinghe
Emily Roberts
Hiruni Walimunige
Lubna Meempatta
Lauren Taylor
Ying Hu
Tessa Gould
Fia Hamid-Walker
Madeleine Johnson



How
we
engage

04

Engagement

GSA strongly believes that life at university is not only about education, but also about gaining valuable social experiences to support emotional and physical wellbeing.



We endeavour to provide graduates several meaningful opportunities to build a sense of connection, belonging and identity. Providing different avenues of engagement is one of GSA's greatest strengths, and we see it as one of our greatest duties.

Over the 24 semester teaching weeks of 2019, GSA ran a social barbecue lunch every Wednesday, nicknamed the Hump Day BBQ for its timing in the middle of every week. These lunches were extremely popular with the students, and had over 3400 graduate students dropping in for heavily discounted social lunch and a chance to chat with the GSA team and Council.

The ever-popular Grad Orientation Day attracted 4011 attendees in Semester One, who enjoyed the 'Back to School' theme. The day was fun-filled with valuable information provided on how to socially connect at the University, promoted all the activities of GSA and serviced a range of yummy food to entertain our graduates. Orientation in Semester 2 had over 2700 attendees who had similar experience of fun, information and entertainment. GSA Council and Staff also attended many faculty orientation sessions and provided information to the new graduates.

The Garden Party in Semester 1 provided an excellent platform for 600 graduates to network, socialise and

engage with range of activities that were promoted on that day. GSA's Septemberfest in Semester 2 gained similar popularity and over 600 students who enjoyed the festive day with dance, music, food and lots of entertainment.

To support academic excellence, we had a range of activities that were offered to graduates at different campuses. Over 150 graduates attended the 'Shut Up and Write' workshops that were conducted 9 times over the year. The 'Start Your Week Write' social writing workshops also got a lot of interest from graduates, and over 158 students attended 28 sessions, which were held every Monday morning. For both these programs, GSA received a lot of positive feedback from the participants. In addition to this, GSA's Thesis Bootcamps drew lots of student attention and we're pleased to report that 137 students were supported over 5 separate bootcamp events, with an additional 106 graduates attending five corresponding thesis editing workshops.

The GSA ART Prize in October provided an amazing opportunity for 39 grad students to showcase their creative talent, and the exhibition evening was filled with guests who attended the celebration to encourage the talented artists and their work.

Social networking and making friends are top priority engagement events for GSA and two Speed





Friending sessions attracted 80 participants each – who all found new friends and connections.

Parents and children all eagerly look forward to the Family Fun days each year. The fun filled face painting, the jumping castle, the art and craft, and a magic show attracted 200 people in semester 1 and 115 people in semester 2. Lovely to see the bright smiles on our little people's faces after a wonderful day of fun and frolic.

The legendary Annual Ball 'Fire and Ice' was a grand success. Held at a prestigious venue with over 400 graduate students dressed up for the occasion, the night involved awards, music, great food and drinks, and set some high expectations for the future balls to come.

SWOTVAC and Exam Support attracts many graduates to GSA activities and events. We supported 1113 students in Semester 1 over 12 sessions and 1135 students in Semester 2 over 18 sessions. The graduates provided the staff great feedback and thanked them for the care and support provided.

A strong part of GSA's engagement with students is to ensure that we run events and activities in collaboration with the University of Melbourne. 2019 was no different, in that we helped support the university with their campaigns like RUOK Day, Uni Mental Health Day, and Respect Week. These collaborative events attracted and supported over 750 graduate students over the course of the year.

On top of working with the university on engaging students, the Student Engagement Team provided support and opportunity to our GSA Council Members to design and deliver events that targeted specific student groups with the graduate cohort. Over the space of 10 months, GSA's council led 16 campaigns to provide greater support for almost 600 graduate students. These events included 'Wear it Purple Day', International Women's Day, a series of Workshops/Seminars on knowing your rights, promoting a healthy lifestyle, and dedicated activities for students with disabilities, students of colour and students in the LGBTIQ+ community.

Non-Parkville Campus activities

GSA hosted the VCA Wine and Pizza Night at Southbank that attracted 41 participants, the Southbank Lunch for Graduates in March hosted 55 people and following that another Southbank Lunch in April for 32 people. Southbank was delighted to see GSA hosting more events in their campus.

Similarly, at Burnley the Mental Health Day attracted 50 participants and 40 attended the Respect Week activity. At Werribee over 151 students enjoyed the \$5 Voucher lunch and 35 students attended the Respect Week activity.

The excellent collaborative work undertaken by Council and Staff, sponsorship from UniBank and the SSAF funding from University of Melbourne supports this important work at GSA.





150
participated in
**Wear It
Purple**



150 people celebrated
International Women's Day
with us at our IWD Morning Tea

186

attended our
**Healthy
Habits**
workshops

learning about topics
like nutrition, sleep,
exercise and finances



47 attended our
Afternoon Teas

18

attended
**Know Your
Rights**

workshops
to learn about issues like
tenancy, casualisation,
workers' rights and more



LEAD

Leadership Exploration and Development

LEAD is GSA's flagship leadership development program. It's a challenging and high-impact program that will take you beyond your studies and rapidly develop your leadership skills.

LEAD has a selective and competitive application process. Applying for LEAD means committing not only time, but also energy and willpower. It is not for people who are undecided about their goals – it's for people who are dedicated and ready to stretch their horizons. It does not take passengers.

Overview

At GSA, we believe that leadership takes many forms and that everyone has leadership potential. LEAD challenges participants to rethink their perceptions of leadership.

Applying the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM), which is widely used on university campuses across the world, and principles of the Rotary Young Leaders Award, which has been training young Australians in leadership and self-efficacy since 1961, LEAD aims to enable graduate students to take on leadership positions and drive positive change in their communities.

Participants are supported by a team of leaders and become members of a supportive, values-driven community. Be inspired by your facilitators and mentors as part of this first-of-its-kind program at the University of Melbourne.

The LEAD program is about finishing university as a leader.



What skills and experience does LEAD build?

Over the course of the program, LEAD attendees will:

- Develop effective professional and interpersonal communication skills.
- Understand the value of a growth mindset, and how you can use your growth mindset to achieve your personal and professional goals.
- Gain clarity around the values that drive you and master how to be authentically 'you' in a professional setting.
- Develop coaching skills to help get the best out of teams you lead.
- Learn how to handle negotiations professionally, and how to deal with difficult conversations both in the workplace and beyond.
- Understand how to develop a vision and strategy to successfully see a project through to completion.
- Learn how to manage change effectively.

What can attendees expect?

The program aims to help attendees to:

- Hone your confidence in your own unique leadership style.
- Understand your strengths and weaknesses, and learn how to articulate your value professionally and interpersonally.
- Channel your existing passion and purpose and commit to the next steps toward your goals.
- Develop your leadership and management skills, understanding how to apply them at university, in your career, and for the benefit of your community.
- Understand how to use all of these skills in a socially responsible manner.



**How
we
communicate**

05

Communications

In 2019, the University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association (GSA) celebrated 25 years as a supportive hub for students to build their skills, connect with peers, fight for change, and prepare for life after study.

Over the organisation's existence, GSA has adapted to whatever communication channels and styles were best suited for students. From the 1990s all the way up until 2014, this included printed magazines mailed to every enrolled student every semester. But, like everyone else, GSA has had an active social media presence for many years as well, with more emphasis on digital communication with each passing year.

We even undertook the challenge of branching out into the Chinese social media platforms of WeChat and Weibo. Unfortunately, these overseas platforms are extremely difficult to run as a non-profit organisation in Australia, and the level of funding and support required to maintain them would have had a negative impact on our efforts elsewhere. Achieving the best support for graduate students at the University of Melbourne meant focusing on where we can achieve the most.

Our 25-year celebration was an enormous undertaking for GSA's communications. It needed to cover every base: a social media campaign, printed pamphlets and postcards, merchandise such as

highlighters and yo-yos, and even giant 'GSA' letters on the lawn.

But the centrepiece of the campaign was a short film. The Heart of Graduate Student Life: 25 years runs for just one minute and thirty-six seconds, but it represents an incredible collaborative effort of several months and the contribution of nearly every staff member, along with dozens of graduate student supporters and external help. You can see the result on our YouTube channel.

Throughout the whole year, GSA's small communication team strives to make students aware of our crucial role. GSA is the peak representative body for over 36,000 graduate students; we are an independent association providing representation, events, training and support.

We've spread the message of our work far and wide: Orientation days; Family Fun Days; two climate marches; the prestigious Ball and the Art Prize; the LEAD program; countless social events such as barbecues, the Garden Party and Septemberfest; our hard-working committee representatives, and of course, our Grad Groups.

Since 1994, across different names and locations, our mission has remained the same: to be the heart of graduate student life.



info@gsa.unimelb.edu.au



19 email campaigns to
over 12,000
students in 2019

@graduate student association



2,000+
views

@GraduateStudentAssociation



Over 12,000
page followers
with 940+ gained in 2019

@GSA_UniMelb



365.2k
tweet
impressions

@gsa_unimelb



2,000+
followers

@墨尔本大学研究生会



140+
articles and
links posted

@gsaunimelb



2,000+
reactions

gsa.unimelb.edu.au



Average 5,000
unique user visits
per month

Thank you to all the staff of 2019

Andrew Cameron
Carly Mattson
Christine Rathjens
Emily De Rango
Felicity Ford
Freyja Gillard
Jacci Jones
Jingxian You
Lori Vullings
Louise Ryan
Nisha Choudhary
Oscar Thomas
Rachna Muddagouni
Stuart Ellis
Subah Kamal
Suzanne Griffin
Tevita Lesuma



Highlights through the year



01 January
Working hard



02 February
Midsumma

07 July
Preparing for Orientation



08 August
Lead Retreat



03 March
Orientation



04 April
Garden Party



September
Climate Change Strike



10 October
Art Prize



05 May
Thesis Bootcamp



June
25th Anniversary

06



November
SWOTVAC

11



December
Preparing for 2020

12

Time for numbers

06

Financial report

Statement of profit or loss

For the year ended 31 December 2019

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Income		
Student services and amenities fee (SSAF) funding - core	2,856,947	2,560,707
SSAF - other	296,342	223,913
Other grants/contributions	60,000	205,000
Event income	50,083	59,094
Rental income	-	35,328
Interest income	27,033	32,279
Training and workshops	5,267	21,192
Venue hire income	26,156	33,520
Other income	48,379	61,725
	3,370,207	3,232,758
Expenditure		
Depreciation expense	96,071	93,927
Employee benefits expense	1,875,329	1,831,115
Other operating expenses	85,623	59,687
Honoraria	147,310	138,945
Program / project activity costs	415,074	454,485
Administration expenses	298,350	259,598
Audit fees	15,200	11,000
Computer / ICT expenses	17,524	29,454
Graduate groups support	212,221	192,239
Marketing and communications	151,680	132,074
Occupancy expenses	210	6,399
	3,314,592	3,208,923
Profit/(loss) for the year	55,615	23,835
Retained profits at the beginning of the financial year	1,587,097	1,563,262
Retained profits at the end of the financial year	1,642,712	1,587,097

Statement of financial position

As at 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	1,858,753	1,956,443
Trade and other receivables	3	5,826	11,624
Prepayments		6,506	7,900
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,871,085	1,975,967
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Plant and equipment	4	126,289	193,899
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		126,289	193,899
TOTAL ASSETS		1,997,374	2,169,866
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	5	139,124	160,655
Employee benefits	6	82,797	178,025
Income in advance		63,333	123,334
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		285,254	462,014
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	6	69,408	57,422
Income in advance		-	63,333
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		69,408	120,755
TOTAL LIABILITIES		354,662	582,769
NET ASSETS		1,642,712	1,587,097
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Retained profits		1,642,712	1,587,097
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		1,642,712	1,587,097

Statement of changes in equity

For the year ended 31 December 2019

2019

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 January 2019	1,587,097	1,587,097
Profit for the year	55,615	55,615
Balance at 31 December 2019	1,642,712	1,642,712

2018

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 January 2018	1,563,262	1,563,262
Profit for the year	23,835	23,835
Balance at 31 December 2018	1,587,097	1,587,097

Statement of cash flows

As at 31 December 2017

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:			
Other receipts		135,683	184,129
Proceeds from student services and amenities fee funding		3,411,566	2,882,449
Rent received		-	35,328
Receipts from other grants/contributions		-	291,500
Interest received		27,033	32,279
Payments to suppliers and employees		(3,643,511)	(3,368,670)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	7	(69,229)	57,015
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Purchase of plant and equipment		(28,461)	(45,149)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(28,461)	(45,149)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held		(97,690)	11,866
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		1,956,443	1,944,577
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	2	1,858,753	1,956,443

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2019

The financial statements cover University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association Inc as an individual entity. University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association Inc is a not-for-profit Association incorporated in Victoria under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

Basis of Preparation

In the opinion of the Executive Committee, the Association is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial statements who are not able to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs. These special purpose financial statements have been prepared to meet the reporting requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (the Act)* and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 *Presentation of Financial Statements*, AASB 107 *Statement of Cash Flows*, AASB 108 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors* and AASB 1054 *Australian Additional Disclosures*.

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Income Tax

The Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(b) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Items of property, plant and equipment acquired for nil or nominal consideration have been recorded at the acquisition date fair value.

Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the assets useful life to the Association, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

(c) Employee benefits

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Cashflows are discounted using market yields on high quality corporate bond rates incorporating bonds with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cashflows. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

Employee benefits are presented as current liabilities in the statement of financial position if the Association does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting date regardless of the classification of the liability for measurement purposed under AASB 119.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2019

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(d) Revenue and other income

Revenue is recognised when the amount of the revenue can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Association and where performance obligations exist, those performance obligations have been satisfied.

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

(e) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

(f) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

(g) Comparative amounts

When necessary, comparative information has been reclassified to enhance comparability in respect of changes in presentation adopted in the current year.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2019

2 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and in hand	383,246	529,280
Short-term deposits	1,475,507	1,427,163
	<u>1,858,753</u>	<u>1,956,443</u>

3 Trade and Other Receivables

CURRENT		
Trade receivables	3,000	3,920
Other receivables	2,826	7,704
Total current trade and other receivables	<u>5,826</u>	<u>11,624</u>

4 Property, plant and equipment

PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Student furniture & fittings		
At cost	24,318	24,318
Accumulated depreciation	(15,991)	(12,561)
Total plant and equipment	<u>8,327</u>	<u>11,757</u>
Office fixtures & fittings		
At cost	43,731	43,731
Accumulated depreciation	(23,054)	(15,910)
Total furniture, fixtures and fittings	<u>20,677</u>	<u>27,821</u>
Service improvements		
At cost	23,836	23,836
Accumulated depreciation	(22,401)	(17,823)
Total service improvements	<u>1,435</u>	<u>6,013</u>
Office equipment & computer hardware		
At cost	563,721	535,260
Accumulated depreciation	(467,871)	(386,952)
Total computer equipment	<u>95,850</u>	<u>148,308</u>
Total plant and equipment	<u>126,289</u>	<u>193,899</u>
Total property, plant and equipment	<u>126,289</u>	<u>193,899</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2019

5 Trade and Other Payables

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Current		
Trade payables	7,397	-
Sundry payables and accrued expenses	131,727	160,655
	<u>139,124</u>	<u>160,655</u>

6 Employee Benefits

Current liabilities		
Long service leave	-	60,285
Annual leave	82,797	117,740
	<u>82,797</u>	<u>178,025</u>
Non-current liabilities		
Long service leave	69,408	57,422

7 Cash Flow Information

Reconciliation of result for the year to cashflows from operating activities

Profit/(loss) for the year	55,615	23,835
Non-cash flows in profit/(loss):		
- depreciation	96,071	93,927
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
- (increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	5,798	(7,935)
- (increase)/decrease in other assets	1,394	27,806
- increase/(decrease) in income in advance	(123,334)	(104,212)
- increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	(21,531)	(45,613)
- increase/(decrease) in employee benefits	(83,242)	69,207
Cashflows from operations	<u>(69,229)</u>	<u>57,015</u>

The Association has no significant stand-by or financing facilities in place. There were no non-cash financing or investing activities during the period.

8 Contingencies

In the opinion of the Executive Committee, the Association did not have any contingencies at 31 December 2019.

9 Economic Dependence

The Association is economically dependent on continued funding from The University of Melbourne. In 2019 Student Services and Amenities funding received from The University of Melbourne was 95.34% (2018: 92.48%) of its income.

Statement by the executive committee

The Executive Committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The Executive Committee of the Association declares that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 1 to 8: are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013* and:
 - (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards as stated in Note 1; and
 - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 31 December 2019 and of the performance for the year ended on that date of is in accordance with the accounting policy described in Note 1 of the financial statements.
2. In the Executive Committee's opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Executive Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Executive Committee by:

President 
Emily Roberts

General Secretary 
Madeleine Johnson

Dated 28 February 2020

Independent audit report

to the members of University Graduate Student Association inc

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association Inc (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2019, the statement of profit or loss, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the statement by the executive committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Association is in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 31 December 2019 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report is prepared to assist the Association to fulfill the financial reporting responsibilities under *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for the Association and should not be distributed to or used by parties other than the Association. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Executive Committee is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Executive Committee is responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Independent audit report

to the members of University Graduate Student Association inc

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

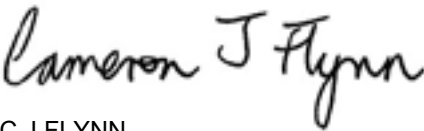
As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgemental and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association’s internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Executive Committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association’s ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial reporter, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Executive Committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



ACCRU MELBOURNE (AUDIT) PTY LTD



C J FLYNN
Director

Dated 28th February 2020

Contact us

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