

THE ANU OBSERVER

Student Services and Amenities Fee 2018 Bid

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NEWS | ANALYSIS | VIDEO | LIVESTREAMS

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I | INTRODUCTION

A | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ON OBSERVER

The ANU Observer is a student organisation dedicated to providing timely, accurate coverage of news relevant to ANU students. It was started in March 2017 by Michael Turvey and Eliza Croft, and has experienced rapid growth and uptake from the student body. To ensure the sustainability of the organisation, Observer requires funding. SSAF is the most appropriate avenue for this, as student media is explicitly a SSAF category. Furthermore, it ensures the lowest amount of conflicts with our reporting – affiliating as an ANUSA club, for instance, would impede our ability to report frankly on ANUSA issues.

OUR BID

Observer is bidding for \$ 600 in total. This includes \$33 000 for stipends for Editors, the Treasurer, and the Secretary. It also includes \$9000 for vital audio-visual and other equipment, mostly relating to our livestreaming service and explainer videos. \$8000 is needed to bring back Observer's print edition – this will help to create an informed student body and improve campus culture. We are also requesting \$3000 to send two reporters to the National Union of Students (NUS) National Conference, and \$1000 for Freedom of Information requests, to ensure students get quality, in-depth coverage of campus-related news.



B | OBSERVER'S VALUE

ANU'S TRUSTED NEWS SOURCE

The ANU Observer is the leading news publication for ANU students and staff. Our coverage of on-campus events is fast, reliable, well-written, thorough, and extremely widely read. The Observer has become a necessary aspect of campus life for a huge number of ANU students and deserves to continue its growth and sustain its functions with SSAF.

THE NUMBERS

Observer has published over 100 news and analysis articles since our launch in February, at a rate of more than one per academic day. Our news has been very widely read - the average news article is read over 1000 times, and our most-read story has over 8000 reads. Over this year, students, staff and alumni have read Observer stories over 115,000 times. We've also seen excellent thorough engagement - average read-time on long explanatory pieces is regularly over five minutes.

Our video and livestreaming has also been extremely successful - while Facebook inflates numbers somewhat, our video explaining the ANU Council structure was accessed by at least 1000 people, and since the beginning of the year we've livestreamed over 50 on-campus events; more than one per week.



II | NATURE OF THE ASSOCIATION

A | GOVERNANCE

LEGAL STATUS

The ANU Observer is an incorporated Association under the ACT Associations Incorporation Regulation Act (1991) and has been since May of 2017. This affords Observer with limited liability. Observer also holds an Australian Business Number and bank account. As an incorporated Association, Observer maintains a constitution and policies governing its operations.

DOCUMENTS

Observer is governed by its Constitution, which includes provisions for the appointment, election and removal of officers, the disciplining of members, the management of finances and provisions for accountability to members. This Constitution also establishes various policies, which govern payment to officers, election of Executives, rules and guidelines for journalistic ethics and conflicts of interest, and mandatory duties for officers.

STRUCTURE

Observer is governed by The ANU Observer Council, which is the Committee under the Act. This Committee consists of two News Editors, a Digital Editor, the Treasurer and Secretary. One member of this Council is chosen as Chair, and is the public officer and formal representative of Observer. In total there are five News Editors, two Digital Editors, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. Each of these Executives will be elected by the Members at a General Meeting according to the Electoral Regulations.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in Observer is granted to students who take part in the Association in some way, i.e. have any formal position. This is to ensure decisions and elections are made by an informed constituency motivated by the completion of Observer's defined goals.



B | ACCOUNTABILITY

TO MEMBERSHIP

All Executives are accountable to the membership. Members are empowered to remove Executives, compel the association, alter the Constitution or in any other way direct Observer, through motions at General Meetings.

TO THE ARBITRATION PANEL

We have established a panel to hear disputes and conflicts over conduct, published reporting, and payment to Officers. This panel is comprised of independent students who are not members of Observer. The Panel can receive applications from any individual and may if it chooses order articles be removed or altered, corrections published, Officers be removed from office, or Executive stipends be modified.

TO STUDENTS

Students may hold Observer accountable through formal petition, censure, or motion to remove. A petition signed by over 50 students may petition Observer to take any given action, and a petition of over 100 may censure Observer's behaviour. These petitions are not binding, but must be published by Observer, establishing an incentive for Observer to comply or risk damaging credibility and readership. Finally, students may by way of petition demand a motion be considered at a General Meeting to receive any or all Executives.



III | CONSULTATION

Observer's SSAF Consultation began with a survey during the Semester 2 mid-semester break, which had approximately 150 responses. In it, we asked some questions relating to our governance and finances.

In response to the question,

How democratic should Observer be?

only about 15% of respondents thought students should elect Editors. A further 25% thought students should be able to vote at General Meetings, and 47% thought students outside of Observer should have no say. In light of this, we structured our governance as explained above.

In response to,

Roughly how much do you think Editors should be paid per year?

65% of respondents chose numbers between \$1500 and \$7000. Some commented on the survey that we should get better livestreaming equipment, and others requested more investigative pieces. All of this has informed our bid.

Observer then ran student consultation sessions and opened an online form. About five students attended the sessions over two days. Some of these students expressed scepticism about printing, but once we explained our reasoning, said they were open to it. Here, again, students requested better equipment, particularly for livestreaming. The form received eight responses. Seven of these thought Observer should receive SSAF money. The average amount the respondents thought we should receive was approximately \$108 000. Respondents particularly wanted to see funding for Editor stipends, having articles translated, equipment, Freedom of Information requests, and sending reporters to the NUS National Conference.



B | SUMMARY OF BID

Section	Line Item	Amount	Applicable SSAF Categories
A	Executive Stipend	\$33 000	c, m, n, o, r
B	Honoraria Pool	\$6000	c, m, n, o, r
C	Equipment	\$9000	m, n, o, r
D	News Subscriptions	\$550	n
E	Software Subscriptions	\$750	c, n, o
F	Printing	\$8000	n, r
G	Advertising and Merchandise	\$2000	m, n, r
H	Events	\$1000	a, n, r
I	Meetings	\$800	c, a, n
J	NUS National Conference	\$3000	n, o
K	Office Set-Up	\$500	c, n
L	Administration	\$1000	c, n
M	Legal	\$2000	c, n
N	Freedom of Information	\$1000	n
	Total	\$68 600	



A | EXECUTIVE STIPENDS

SSAF CATEGORIES

C) supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students;

M) supporting an artistic activity by students;

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students;

O) helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled; and

R) giving students information to help them in their orientation.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

Currently, our Editors put in 30 to 40 hours of work per week. This is the necessary amount of time for the job – News Editors currently supervise two to three reporters, having to direct them as well as write their own stories. Additionally, the majority of articles are edited at least twice, and Editors are generally responsible for creating article images and publishing articles on our website and Facebook page. In order to sustainably fill these positions, this work must be incentivised. It is also important that the role be as accessible as possible – it is not feasible for students to do a significant amount of paid work while also having this role, making it difficult to attract self-supporting students currently.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item (\$)	Per Position (\$)	Number	Total (\$)
News Editors	4000	5	20,000
Digital Editors	4000	2	8000
Secretary	3000	1	3000
Treasurer	2000	1	2000
		Total	33,000

Pursuant to our Payment Regulations, stipend will be paid in five instalments across the year, including summer break. This is to ensure maximum accessibility. The Arbitration Panel will be able to suspend or reduce stipends for a variety of reasons.



B | HONORARIA

SSAF CATEGORIES

- C) supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students;
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- N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students;
- O) helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled; and
- R) giving students information to help them in their orientation.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

Our reporters work in a purely volunteer capacity, with an expectation of about 10 hours of work per week. This will continue into next year, but it would be beneficial to reward those reporters who go above and beyond this expectation. This would incentivise reporters to pursue investigative pieces on their own initiative, be willing to drop everything for breaking stories, and write on topics that may be personally draining but are important for student knowledge. We will also be able to give honoraria to those (reporters, digital team, and others) who help with the printing and distribution process.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Honoraria Pool	6000
Total	6000

Honoraria will be granted at the discretion of the Arbitration Panel each semester. Members may nominate themselves or others to receive honoraria. We anticipate that the amount of each instance of honoraria would be between \$100 and \$500.



C | DIGITAL EQUIPMENT

SSAF CATEGORIES

M) supporting an artistic activity by students;

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students;

O) helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled; and

R) giving students information to help them in their orientation.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

Observer currently livestreams at least one event per week – generally more. Our Digital team is present at ANUSA SRCs, ANUSA and PARSA OGMs, important press conferences, public lectures, and more. However, we currently rely on phones, which are quite low quality. Higher quality livestreaming will improve this service to students, and particularly make the recordings more accessible – it is often very difficult to hear what people are saying on our livestreams.

We are also currently using tripods and microphones that belong to our volunteers. This is obviously problematic as they will not always be at ANU or on Observer, and also are risking having their property damaged. Finally, Observer has begun making explainer videos. These have proven very popular with the student body. In order to make these in a reasonable time-frame, we need computers that can process graphics software well. We also need at least one of these to have the Adobe Suite, as this is the best programme for the work

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Video Camera (Canon EOS 760D + 18-55mm STM)	1100
Tripods (2 x Manfrotto MKCOMPACTLT-BK Compact Light Tripod)	220
Livestreaming Microphone (Rode Shotgun Mic)	175
Mobile Steadicam (DJI Osmo Mobile)	400
Mobile Microphone Attachment (Rode VideoMic)	80
USB Microphone (Blue Yeti USB)	200
Audio Recorders (Olympus VN-541PC x5)	350
Camera Drone - (Zero-X Titan Aerial Drone)	300
Lapel Microphones (to be shared with Woroni)	300
Computers and monitors (exact specifications to be determined at time of purchase to ensure most current)	4500
Peripherals (Keyboards mice and mouse pads, etc)	500
Adobe Suite	360
Battery packs (Samsung Fast Charge 25W Battery Pack)	120
Postage	395
Total	9000



D | NEWS SUBSCRIPTIONS

SSAF CATEGORIES

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

We check other news outlets daily for news which may affect ANU students. We also use old stories for background research for news and explainers. We have previously run into paywalls, and having to constantly find someone who has not exceeded their monthly/yearly article allowance is not practical.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
The Australian	410
The Age	140
Total	550

We intend to purchase an Observer digital subscription to The Australian and The Age, costing \$410 and \$140 respectively. These were chosen as they are the only media outlets we frequently use that have paywalls.



E | SOFTWARE SUBSCRIPTIONS

SSAF CATEGORIES

C) supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students;

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O) helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

We have moved to Slack for our messaging, and use Trello to keep track of articles. This has made the job of the Editors easier, as we can easily see where an article is in the writing process (re-searching, writing, awaiting comment, ready to edit, etc), and keep track of all the different groups of volunteers (those who work on ANUSA news, residential news, the livestreaming team, etc). Trello's professional version is very expensive, and superfluous to our needs currently, so we will continue to use the base. However, a Slack subscription is very important, as it will increase security, allow us to do group video calls (important when people can't make meetings), and increase our file storage.

We also make extensive use of Canva – it's used for all our graphics and article images. The paid version of this will give us more storage, custom fonts, and allow us to create templates.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Slack (Education discount)	450
Canva	160
Stock photos	90
Stock music	50
Total	750



F | PRINTING

SSAF CATEGORIES

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students;

R) giving students information to help them in their orientation.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

Observer began as a weekly A4 news sheet. While online has been very successful, there are definite limits. The main one is that many students don't use Facebook, and we currently don't really have a way of reaching them. This is particularly the case with international students, who use Facebook proportionally less than domestic students. There is also the issue of those who have Facebook, but do not like our page. Printing will allow us to reach these audiences, creating an informed campus that students feel they are a part of.

As we just want to print a double-sided A3 page, we can stick copies up all around campus. This will improve the campus atmosphere, encouraging students to learn about their campus. It is important to note that this will be treated as a trial. We will monitor uptake rates and gauge student opinion, and if it proves unpopular, we will discontinue printing. However, the only way to gauge interest in a print edition is by printing and measuring uptake.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Newssheet Printing	7800
Tape	200
Total	8000

700-800 A3 double-sided B&W pages per week, 25 weeks
(Quotes from Officeworks and Kwik Kopy are similar; decision will depend on quality).



G | ADVERTISING AND MERCHANDISE

SSAF CATEGORIES

M) supporting an artistic activity by students;

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students; and

R) giving students information to help them in their orientation.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

Starting as just two people, it was easy for everyone to identify Observer. However, as we grow, not all of our team members are widely known. We've had people express discomfort at finding out a reporter was present at an event – although our reporters try to identify themselves, people sometimes miss this. Getting t-shirts would help prevent this, as Observer team members would be immediately visible. It would also mean students can see who to talk to if they have something they think should be reported. Branding would also help Observer volunteers feel like a more cohesive team – this is especially important as the team size grows.

Other merchandise is important for providing Observer advertisement, and creating a campus community. Standing banners will allow us to advertise better at Market Days, and have pop-up stalls around campus to talk to students. Distributing stickers increases awareness of Observer, and gives students a way to indicate that they care about an informed campus. Business cards allow us to give our information to students and others should they wish to talk to Observer or join the team.

Sponsoring Facebook posts will increase our reach. It would be particularly valuable for expanding our readership beyond typically involved circles.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
T-Shirts	800
Branded Notebooks	200
Banners	170
Stickers	150
Business Cards	60
Facebook Sponsorship	500
Total	650



H | EVENTS

SSAF CATEGORIES

- A) providing food or drink to students on a campus of the higher education provider;
- N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students; and
- R) giving students information to help them in their orientation.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

In Bush Week 2017, Observer has a strong Market Day presence. We ran a stall with "choc chip for a tip", which made students feel like they could be part of the news, and received a lot of interest from students wanting to join the team. We would like to continue running this in future.

Observer also collaborated with Woroni to run the ANUSA Executive Roundtables and Presidential Debate, and ran the NUS Debate independently. Having a budget for these events would boost their quality and attendance – students will always attend events for free food. This is important for ensuring voters are informed.

Finally, we would like to run a few BBQs or other food events during the year, to foster the sense that Observer is part of the community.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Market Day	400
Debates	300
BBQs	300
Total	1000



I | MEETINGS

SSAF CATEGORIES

- A) providing food or drink to students on a campus of the higher education provider;
- C) supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students;
- N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students; and

EXPLANATION OF NEED

We have weekly news meetings on a Monday evening that generally run for about two hours. Food is provided as it is at meal-time for some of our reporters who live on campus. Currently, Editors pay for this, but this is not a sustainable expense – particularly as the team expands. We also intend to provide food for General Meetings in order to encourage attendance and engagement.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Catering	800
Total	800



J | NUS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

SSAF CATEGORIES

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students; and

O) helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

ANU has not had a media presence at NUS National Conference in recent memory. This means we have had to rely on other universities' coverage – mostly Honi Soit's. However, ANU is uniquely placed, as it is never certain whether we will accredit. This means ANU students require specialised information, to ensure they can determine how they would like their representatives to vote. Furthermore, ANU students deserve to be able to know how their delegates are voting and whether they are carrying through with their promises.

Observer is well placed to provide this coverage. We have covered the NUS extensively and in-depth, including an article on the accreditation decision published the night the decision was made. We also ran an NUS Debate independently, and have a reporter dedicated to NUS coverage.

Sending two reporters is important due to the demanding nature of the Conference; this decision was made after talking to students who have attended. It is necessary to ensure full and accurate coverage, and also for the wellbeing of our reporters.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Conference Registration	2000
Transport	850
Food/sundry	150
Total	3000



SSAF CATEGORIES

- C) supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students; and
- N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

Observer has recently acquired an office, as one of the organisations involved in the S29 Co-working Space. This is a very useful place for us to work, but lacks some key things that we cannot expect S29 to provide as we are the only organisation who would benefit. Our reporters often work late into the night, so coffee and catering are necessities. We also need a desk for our computers, and decent office chairs for these.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Coffee Machine	80
Coffee Pods	80
Catering	80
Desks	140
Chairs	120
Total	500



L | ADMINISTRATION

SSAF CATEGORIES

C) supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students; and

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

We bank with Credit Union Australia, an ethical and convenient option. They charge some small fees for certain transactions, which we must allow for. We will also likely need assorted stationery and printing throughout the year.

We also require administrative funds to pay for any required applications to Access Canberra with regards to our incorporated status.

Web hosting requires the payment of server fees, Wordpress charges for elements and themes, domain registration, and various other costs.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Website	500
Sundry administration	500
Total	1000



SSAF CATEGORIES

C) supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students; and

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

This is a precautionary measure, which hopefully we will not need. Generally we utilise the ANUSA legal service for any questions, and will continue to do so. However, they owe fiduciary duties to ANUSA, and so in the event of an issue relating to the Association, could not provide advice. Additionally, it is possible (thought highly unlikely) that we could need to pay court fees etc. This money would cover such an instance.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
Legal reserve	2000
Total	2000



N | FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

SSAF CATEGORIES

N) supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

Freedom of Information requests are a must for investigative journalism, which students say they want to see more of. The costs of these can vary wildly, depending on the organisation and the time it takes to gather the information, so it is important that we have a pool from which we can draw.

PLANNED EXPENDITURE

Item	Cost (\$)
FOI Request Pool	1000
Total	1000



VI | PLANNED COLLABORATION

A | ANUSA

Livestreaming of SRCs, OGMs, and other events increase engagement and participation for ANUSA.

Publication of information about **campaigns and elections** increase engagement, awareness and accountability.

ANUSA has agreed to work with Observer in developing a new set of **media policies** to govern the interaction between our organisations.

B | PARSA

PARSA has agreed to allow Observer to utilise the time of their **financial controller** to assist with accounting and financial management

Livestreaming of SRCs, OGMs, and other events increase engagement and participation for PARSA.

Publication of information about **campaigns and elections** increase engagement, awareness and accountability.

ANUSA has agreed to work with Observer in developing a new set of **media policies** to govern the interaction between our organisations.

C | ANU SPORT

Livestreaming of sporting matches will increase student engagement.

Publication of information on sporting results, ANU Sport plans, and Australian university sports governance increases engagement, awareness and accountability.

D | ANU STUDENT MEDIA (WORONI)

We are **jointly bidding** for lapel microphones, to be shared.

Woroni and Observer have agreed to **share equipment** as appropriate.

Woroni and Observer have agreed to share and participate in one another's **professional development opportunities**.