



THE ANU OBSERVER

Meeting of The ANU Observer Board

Date: 26/06/21

Opening of Meeting: 9:23

Item 1 - Attendance and Apologies

Present: Konstantinos Katsanis (Chair)

Angus Brooks (director)

Sung-Jae Lee (director)

Helena Burke (director)

Brandon How (director)

Keeley Dickinson (director)

Declan Milton (director)

Absent: Joseph Oh (director)

Item 2 - Acknowledgement of Country

Delivered by Konstantine.

Item 3 - Previous Action Items

Angus to meet with Konstantine at the end of next week to organise OGM hybrid format.

All executives to provide their reports by Wednesday 19 May COB.

Item 4 - Reports

Chair Report: Konstantinos Katsanis

Not much to report on. For the past month I've been pretty pre-occupied with uni work, so I have not done much on the public affair side of things.

We had our OGM, and it went more smoothly than expected. I appreciate everyone's help in setting it up.

Our financial audit has been finalised. Me and Sung-Jae have been working together in putting the final touches, as there were couple of errors in the documents. Hopefully we will be quoted soon and have all the documents up on our website. Not discrepancies, which is always good. Regarding finances, I will need to set up a meeting with Sung-Jae

in the coming days to sort out our mess. We will also need to start spending and thinking about how much we would like to bid for.

Unfortunately, two of our editors are departing, so we will need to fill those vacancies. Best of luck in all of their future endeavors, they will be missed.

I am planning to come in touch with the DVCSUE's office to see what the SSAF process will look like and I will try to provide our input in the SSAF process.

Passed Chair to Brandon

Report moved by Angus

Procedural motion to move all reports en masse

Moved by Keeley

Seconded by Angus

Secretary Report: Konstantinos Katsanis

Our OGM was a success. We managed to pass our constitutional amendments. What's left is for those to be approved by the ANU Council in their July meeting on 30 July.

Other than that, nothing much to report. I will be working on policies over the break and on the policies related directly to the new amendments after approval.

Editor in Chief Report: Helena Burke

This will be my final report as Editor-in-Chief. I leave Observer feeling immensely proud of what the news team has achieved over the last six months.

May saw our best month of performance yet with an output of 14 articles and 35,849 total website page views. June has been predictably quieter due to the exam season.

News output highlights of the past two months include:

- The exclusive breaking story on the return of CRS/CRN
- A well-researched and well-received explainer on ANUSA's past presidents
- A long form feature story on the struggles of ANU's financially independent students, which received widespread praise from the student community
- A strong return of the fortnightly five in a new and exciting entertainment style

Attendance and engagement from Reporters at news meetings could use some improvement. Moving forward, I think it is important for the successive Editorial Board to continue to keep Reporters engaged over

the mid-year break.

Brandon and I will both be departing Observer at the end of this month. Brandon has been an invaluable member of the Editorial Board whose work ethic and dedication to the organisation has been unparalleled. I look forward to seeing the new Editorial Board flourish with the addition of two new editors selected from within the organisation.

Brandon: Thank you Helena for being EiC.

Helena: Thank you for being such a good editor and the party react.

Finance Executive Report: Sung Jae Lee (not received)

Sung-Jae: Since the last board meeting, I have paid the allowances and honoraria. As Kon mentioned, our audit has been finalised and there were some minor changes to be done in the financials. These included signatories and definitions. I have emailed PKF already on the 21 June. I also went through our bank account and we spent about \$20,000. Since this is resolved, we can now work on getting merchandise, but we will need to have a budget meeting.

Community Executive Report: Angus Brooks (received late)

Signage update:

I am currently experiencing difficulties with contractors. Standard procedure is to have three businesses provide quotes, however this has proven difficult, as only one has gotten back to me. I hope to have this resolved within the next week.

Office rent payments

I am currently working with UniLodge to work out how much we need to back pay UniLodge for rental of our office space. The exact amount is yet to be finalised, but I am confident it will be substantially less than what we have budgeted for/allocated. This will free up more money to spend on improving the office, and could even possibly be reallocated depending on the needs of the organisation, and the approval of the University.

Purchasing

I am currently holding back on making purchases of consumables and other items for the office until we have had a budget meeting.

Web Executive Report: Angus Brooks

Very little to report. Substantial decrease in logged IT issues recently - please ensure any problems are raised through the Web Support Slack channel

Konstantine: Have you spent the money on the upgrade yet?

Angus: No yet, but will do soon.

Visual Content Executive Report: Joseph Oh

Nothing much has changed from last report

- Looking to hire more people for next sem
- Will start preparing for election season
- Fortnightly five going strong!

Moved by Angus

Seconded by Declan

All reports pass unanimously

Item 5 - Items for Decision

5.1 - Filling two vacancies for the role of Editor.

The following candidates have expressed their interest in becoming an Editor:

Nathan Bow - Statement and COIs under Appendix A

Ali El-Zein - Statement and COIs under Appendix B

Alex Ellwood - Statement and COIs under Appendix C

James Day - Statement and COIs under Appendix D

India Kazakoff - Statement and COIs under Appendix E

Appointment of the following officers as Editors of the ANU Observer:

Helena: My pick is Alex and Ali.

Declan: I think they are all great candidates. But yes, I tend to agree. If between three, I would say Ali and Alex.

Keeley: I agree, due to their commitments and skills.

Angus: I am happy to support the editor's decisions regarding this.

Brandon: Yes, I agree with the other editors, they seem well connected to the community as well.

Declan: I am speaking myself here, but Ali is really passionate about Observer stuff and this has shown through his attendance, proofing articles and being on top of stuff. If anyone wants to speak more about Alex.

Helena: Alex has previous experience editing, and is very responsive. They also think creatively and are very organised.

Sung-Jae: Happy to refer to the editors. Not sure if valid point for concern, but I was wondering whether there is a concern in choosing a reporting becoming an editor who produces a huge output.

Helena: Yeah there could be, but I've also heard some more people are keen, so hopefully this will fill the void.

Declan: We talked about this in the previous meeting, but I don't think the person for producing the highest output should be punished. It is important to get the people who are really committed to the organisation. I think we discussed last meeting that James has more of a visual direction rather than news. India is great, but might need more experience before becoming an editor.

Motion to consider Ali and Alex in the position of editor:

Moved by Helena

Seconded by Keeley

Passes unanimously

Motion to appoint Ali El-Zein as Editor of the ANU Observer Inc.

Moved by Keeley

Seconded by Sung-Jae

Passes unanimously

Motion to appoint Alex Ellwood as Editor of the ANU Observer Inc.

Moved by Konstantine

Seconded by Brandon

Passes unanimously

Brandon and Helena to have a handover ready by 30 June.

5.2 - Set Strategic Meeting date

Konstantine: Week before week.

Keeley: Sounds good, will let you know of specific dates and times in the next two weeks.

Date set for Tuesday 13 July

5.3 - Set Budget Meeting date

Tuesday 6 July 5:30pm

Item 6 - Items for Discussion

6.1 - Internal survey and feedback from members

Helena: Use a mailing list? Or get ANUSA to forward our surveys?

Konstantine: Is there a way to get on the mailing list?

Angus: Not for a survey but for OGMs ye. Will need to contact the university.

Item 7 - Other Business

Item 8 - Recall Actionables

Brandon and Helena to have a handover ready by 30 June.

Angus to look into internal and external surveys. To have the internal survey before the beginning of the semester.

Angus to look into how to gain access to the student list coordinator email to give notices for our OGMs.

Closing of Meeting: 10:10

Appendix A

I am interested in becoming Editor to take on more of a managerial role in Observer, as opposed to directly writing articles. As Konstantine knows, I am looking to potentially fulfill his role as secretary once he leaves and I think having some experience in the role of Editor will adequately prepare me for understanding the behind-the-scenes functioning and managerial aspects of Observer - especially in regards to holding a position on the Board.

Beyond this, I have really enjoyed my time as a reporter but I think there are some things that could be done to make Observer a bit more efficient and I am interested in being a part of implementing changes to achieve this.

Further, I am very responsive to messages on Slack and, thus, will be reliable when it comes to the editing process which I hope to be both thorough and swift at carrying out. I also have very few commitments outside my uni workload so I will be able to dedicate ample time to the role.

Conflicts of interest:

- Member of the following societies:
- IR Society
- MESA
- PPE Society
- UN Society

Thanks,

Nathan

Appendix B

I've greatly enjoyed my time as a reporter at Observer and I'd like to be considered for the Editor position. I want to be an editor because I hope to be able to take part in the decision-making processes which influence the direction of Observer. The leads that are pursued and which articles are published are some of, if not the most important factors in shaping Observer, and I would love to play a part in Observer's evolution. I am organised, reliable and my good relationships with the other members at Observer will help in the communication related aspects of the Editor position. I have consistently attended events as a reporter and I think this has taught me how to gauge the viability and direction which articles can go. It has also given me a firm understanding of the editorial process, from lead to publishing. Through my experience as a reporter, I've also found that doing proofs has made me want to be an editor. I have always enjoyed writing and the chance to edit articles beyond checking for spelling or grammatical errors is very exciting. I appreciate the opportunity to apply and hope you consider my application.

COIs

Wamburun hall resident for two years (2019-2021)

Appendix C

Editor Application Statement

In my admittedly short time working for Observer as a reporter, I feel I have greatly improved as a writer, and have developed a strong skillset in communication and collaboration. Writing for Observer has been one of the highlights of my time at university thus far, and I would love the opportunity to not only be more involved with Observer but also to support and work with new and upcoming reporters, the same way the current editors did with me. I think I would be a good editor as I am organised and work well under extreme time pressure. I am also flexible and often able to pick up tasks with a short turn around, such as the Life Choice not becoming affiliated article, or the CRN/CRS discontinued article. Furthermore, I am innovative, creative and analytical, and would love to come up with and implement new ideas to improve reach and audience engagement. Overall, I would make a good editor as I am organised, time efficient, work well under pressure, and am innovative and always looking for ways to improve both myself and the system I am working within.

List of conflicts of interest

- Resident of Fenner Hall
- Member of NUTS

Appendix D

Dear Editorial Board,

My interest in becoming an Editor with Observer is two-fold, for experience and a belief that I can contribute to the improvement of the organisation. The role has been of interest to me for some time now. From seeing and talking to the current editors, I've gained a new appreciation for the huge amount of work it takes, and how much of an impact the Observer has on the ANU community. The variety of work it demands is where I thrive, and its experience will be invaluable for me, as I wish to continue working in journalism after university.

In this role I wish to contribute by continuing the high standard of investigative reporting; working with reporters in a collaborative environment that will deliver quality stories, as efficiently as possible; and creating more opportunities for cooperation between the visual and news team. I believe there needs to be more work done towards broadening Observer's online and social presence on campus. I believe I can facilitate this as editor, in getting reporters to work more with our visual team. Creating tasteful but interesting content, that retains our standards of publishing and reputation as a respected student news organisation.

I really enjoy working at Observer, and to become one of its editors would be a fantastic opportunity, which I believe I can improve the organisation through. Whether I get the position or not, thank you for considering me.

Currently my conflicts of interest include directing a live improv show that will take place in week 6 of semester 2, casual work on the weekends, and university (currently 3 courses a semester). This sounds like a lot with being a director, but there are two others in that role and we are completing most of the work during these holidays. During the semester, my commitment to the improv society will only be 4 hours a week, but I will give plenty of notice if something comes up and I have to address it. If you find me suitable for the role, I will make sure that my schedule prioritises being an editor over all other commitments, except for university.

Kind regards,

James Day

Reporter

The ANU Observer

Appendix E

I would love to put my name forward to be considered as one of the editors for *Observer*. I recognize that I have not been one of the members of *Observer* with the highest volume of output in terms of articles, and that is due to a mixture of factors – most notably the fact that I was trying to figure out how to budget my time in my first semester of university. I am committed to rectifying this!! Nonetheless, I love working for *Observer* and have enjoyed making friends, learning about the news cycle, and attending events in an official capacity.

I believe that I could bring fresh eyes to the role of editor and, whilst it would take some getting used to, I think I would function well in the role. I enjoy working as part of a team and am an effective editor of

written pieces, whether those be my own or others'. I have effective public speaking and leadership skills which I think would help me run news meetings. Most importantly, I love showing up to *Observer* events and will continue to grow in my role as reporter, regardless of the outcome of this selection. Thank you very much for considering my application!