



THE ANU OBSERVER

General Meeting 2024-05-06

Agenda

Location: ANU Observer Office and Zoom Hybrid

1/25 Childers Street

Time: 1830

Item 1: Meeting Opens and Apologies

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

Item 2: Minutes from the Previous Meeting including Matters Arising

2.1 Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Passed by: James Weatherman

Seconded: Ryan Bourke

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zcbYo5ZBm6xwgTLW_ytuWIRU81duAORljbIAhbX4sQc/e/dit?usp=sharing

Item 3: Reports and Matters Arising

3.1 Report of the Chair of the Board (Appendix A)

3.2 Report of the Chair of the Editorial Committee (Appendix B)

3.3 Report of the Visual Team (Appendix C)

3.4 Report of the Web Executive (Appendix D)

3.5 Report of the Community Executive (Appendix E)

3.6 Secretary's Report (Appendix F)

3.7 Finance Executive's Report (Appendix G)

Item 4: Items for Decision

No Items for Decision

Moved: James Weatherman

Seconded: Ryan Bourke

Item 5: Elections

Returning Officer: Thomas Foley

Candidate statements will be read out.

Voting polls close at 7pm.

Editor x 2:

Brianna Elliott

Amy Briggs

Outcome of election: Amy Briggs elected as editor to the ANU Observer.

Returning officer's decision as legitimate:

Moved: James Weatherman

Seconded: Hannah Farrow.

Item 6: Items for Discussion

No items for discussion.

Moved: James Weatherman

Seconded: Maddy Burns

Item 7: Other Business

No other items for business.

Moved: James Weatherman

Seconded: Darcy Davitt

Item 8: Date of next meeting and Close of Meeting

Next meeting sometime in October, date to be confirmed closer to date.

Appendix A: Report of the Chair of the Board and Appendix B: Report of the Executive Editor combined

Prepared by Ryan Bourke, Editor-in-Chief and Chair of the Board of ANU Observer

Hello everyone,

I hope you're all doing well today. As we gather for our OGM, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we've been on together over the past six months. Since stepping into the role of Editor in Chief and Chair, it's been a whirlwind of excitement, challenges, and growth, and I couldn't be prouder of what we've accomplished as a team.

First and foremost, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to each and every one of the members of the observer board for your hard work and dedication in overcoming the financial hurdles we faced at the start of 2024. It wasn't an easy journey, but thanks to your resilience and commitment, we've managed to navigate through those tough times and come out stronger on the other side. A special shoutout goes to Maddy, our Finance Executive, for her invaluable

expertise and tireless efforts in helping us steer through those choppy waters. Maddy, your dedication is truly inspiring, and we owe you a debt of gratitude for all that you do.

One of the highlights of our journey so far has been the expansion of our team through a comprehensive hiring process. I'm thrilled to say that the Observer is now bigger and more diverse than ever before, thanks to the hard work and dedication of myself, the other editors, and all those involved in the hiring process. It's truly incredible to see how far we've come, and I'm excited to see the impact our expanded team will have on our future endeavours.

Our board can also be proud of the work we did this year with the successful application and granting of funding from the SSAF council to improve our live streaming capabilities. This has allowed us to enhance our coverage of events like BNO and provide our audience with an even better viewing experience.

Of course, none of what Observer does would be possible without the incredible work of our reporters. Your dedication to excellence and commitment to telling important stories have been the driving force behind our success. I want to thank each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication—it doesn't go unnoticed, and we are immensely grateful for all that you do.

I also want to give a huge shoutout to Shé and his visual team for their incredible work in making the Observer look better than ever before. Your creativity and attention to detail have truly taken our publication to new heights, and I couldn't be more proud of the stunning visuals you've created.

In addition to our internal achievements, I'm thrilled to report that our partnership with IAC has extended and expanded into 2024. After numerous consultations between their team and our content executives, we've managed to strengthen our collaboration and pave the way for even greater success in the future.

Last but certainly not least, I want to thank Anneysha, our Web Executive, for her invaluable contributions to our team. Your hard work and dedication to keeping our online presence strong have not gone unnoticed, and we are immensely grateful for all that you do.

In conclusion, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your hard work, dedication, and unwavering commitment to excellence. It's been an incredible journey so far, and I can't wait to see where we go next.

Thank you all!

Appendix B: Editor – Sophie Felice, Rowey Worner Bucher

Sophie:

The last 6 months as Observer have been really successful. While the start of the year came with its financial stress, the board worked so well as a team to ensure that we were able to remain in a financially secure position. As an editorial team, I feel the three of us have worked so well together this semester and I am deeply saddened to be leaving the organisation for now. Ryan has been an incredible leader for both the board and the editorial team, and Rowey is such a strong editor and leader within the organisation. I'm really proud of the content we have produced this year in terms of the speed and accuracy of our coverage. We have also made really positive hiring decisions and have a strong news team. Additionally the collaboration that has taken place between the news and visual team has been amazing to see; Shé is a fantastic leader of the visual team and working alongside him has been so rewarding. I am so grateful for my time as editor and I really appreciate everyone in the Observer team; Monday nights are the highlight of my week and I will miss it greatly over the next six months.

Rowey:

I was appointed as an editor at Observer at the end of 2023, and I'm incredibly proud of the work I have achieved since then, both individually and as part of the greater Observer team. In my time at the role so far, it has been a priority of the editorial team to expand the reporting capacity of the organisation, while also strengthening it to further legitimise Observer as a respected news outlet. I have been involved in the hiring process which has added multiple new members to the news team, while also working collaboratively with Shé, our visual content executive to enhance inter-department communication between the news and visual teams by organising Observer's first joint team meetings.

I am proud of my efforts in streamlining the process of onboarding new reporters, by creating documents which outline what is needed to be done by new reporters when they join the organisation, as well as providing resources to further their skill development as reporters, such as source-finding, and contact creation.

As part of my responsibilities as a member of the board, I have helped negotiate with our Finance Executive Maddy the allocation and acquisition of funding to further the organisation, which has involved liaising with university staff and external parties.

As my time as Observer continues, I am looking forward to continuing to establish the organisation as a legitimate and essential part of the ANU, of which one ambition is to establish better relations with ANUSA, including organising monthly meetings with the President of ANUSA. I would further like to streamline some of the internal processes at Observer, by compiling annual processes and procedures in a handover document to ensure the smooth running of the organisation, considering the nature of the Observer as a student organisation with a high turnover rate of members and board members.

It's been a pleasure and a privilege to work at Observer for the last semester, and I'm enthusiastic to further my time and experience within the organisation.

Appendix C: Visual Content Executive Report – Shé Chani

During my time as Visual Content Executive, my team has commenced a long-term documentary project with ANU Rocketry, established a year-long partnership with the Interhall Arts Committee (IAC), received extra funding for our visual team ventures and re-established our social media structure. The documentary has expanded the team's skills around visual journalism as the production process has required a consistent understanding of important documentation areas, an awareness of interview opportunities and a foundational understanding of storytelling principles.

During the partnership with IAC, we've delivered a full livestream, social media coverage, and photographic coverage of their annual theatre sports event. We are also in the post-production process of a full recording of IAC's Big Night Out. This project required communication between the external production company, IAC, and ANU Observer. Balancing the coordination of these different stakeholders and the execution of the filming process expanded my abilities in time and project management. Applying for extra reserve funding helped sharpen my skills in pitching and budgeting. Receiving this funding will streamline our production process and familiarise our team with industry standard practice.

Finally, working closely with our social media manager to re-establish our social media structure has strengthened the visual brand of ANU Observer, and has seen positive engagement from the community. While improvements in the administrative side of the visual team (ie introducing a stronger weekly review process), and further improvements in production processes (ie the delivery of article graphics) could be established, the visual team has worked effectively up to this point with the resources they have.

Appendix D: Web Executive Report - Anneysha Sarkar

Appendix E: Community Executive Report - Mackenzie Watkins

As the Community Executive within The ANU Observer, my primary responsibility revolves around fostering constructive and harmonious relationships within the Observer team, overseeing office management tasks such as cleanliness and supplies, coordinating provisions for our weekly news meetings, and organising Observer social gatherings.

A pivotal aspect of my role this semester entailed orchestrating the ANUSA O-Week Market Day Stall. Countless hours of meticulous planning preceded the event, involving tasks such as assembling over 200 lolly bags, crafting signage, and designing newspapers and brochures. On the day itself, the concerted efforts of the executive team members and reporters were indispensable, commencing preparations as early as 7 am and concluding with the stall's closure at 4 pm. The outcome was remarkable, with more than 200 students expressing interest in joining the Observer team and a footfall exceeding 300 students engaging with our branded materials.

While not explicitly within my purview, I spearheaded a team effort to conduct a thorough deep cleaning of our office earlier this semester. Collaborating closely with our Editor-in-Chief, Ryan Bourke, and Editor, Rowey Worner-Butcher, we dedicated our weekend to ensuring the office space met the stipulations outlined in our tenancy agreement, particularly in anticipation of the landlord inspection conducted two months ago.

Looking ahead, I am committed to fostering greater cohesion among our news, podcast, and visual teams through enhanced social initiatives. Recognizing the limited interaction among these distinct teams, I aim to facilitate more inclusive social gatherings to nurture a sense of camaraderie and collaboration. A notable achievement this semester has been the establishment of monthly cross-team meetings, fostering deeper connections and a more cohesive organisational culture.

Thank you.

Appendix F: Secretary's Report - James Weatherman

This semester has been marked by a series of challenges for the Board of ANU Observer, as Secretary this has been with regards, specifically, to navigating new administrative hurdles and fortifying our ties with ANU governance. Yet, amidst all of this, it has also been a period of immense growth and accomplishment.

One of the primary objectives I set out to achieve this semester was to draft a comprehensive finance exec policy, delineating clearly the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the exec., building on lessons learnt from last year. This goal is in light of some issues we had early on in the semester. Maddy and I are hoping to refine finance processes to ensure greater transparency and efficiency by the end of the semester.

In my capacity as secretary, I additionally feel as though I have honed my record keeping and scheduling abilities from last year. Also, it has been refreshing also to see the sub-teams function, with regards to the podcast team, being exercised to its fullest as the Board navigates into expanding its operations.

I wish to express my gratitude to my fellow board members, whose commitment to this organisation has been instrumental to its success. Everyone of these associates are still learning yet repeatedly illustrates their competence in the face of every challenge that they come across. I look forward to where ANU Observer goes next.

Appendix G: Report of the Finance Executive

In the role of Finance Executive, I have managed and established the 2024 budget. I complete all of the invoicing and payment of all expenses including rent, allowance, honoraria and more. I track all spending and help prepare the audit with an external firm. In this period I worked with the board and the university to receive our SSAF funding for the year. I also am a member of the Student Service Council and I attend their meetings to discuss the allocation of SSAF excess SSAF funding, I also prepare quarterly reports to present at these meetings to ensure transparency, and that the university has an understanding of what we are spending our money

on and how we are spending our money and why it is important. I also sit on the board and attend all board meetings and contribute to general board discussions. I have undergone governance training with the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and I strive to ensure that all of ANU Observer's financial practices are ethical and are being held to the highest governance standards. Going forward I am looking forward to creating a policy for the obligations of the Finance Executive, to ensure the future financial security of ANU Observer. To further ensure this I will also be working on a handover document to make sure that future position holders have a comprehensive understanding of their role in order to have a running start.