

Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF)

Allocation Report 2025



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF)

2025 Allocation Report



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Introduction

The *Higher Education Support (Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy) Guidelines 2022* (SSARA Guidelines) require higher education providers to provide a publicly available report on student services and amenities fee (SSAF) allocations and actual expenditure for the year as part of their annual reporting and in the form approved by the Minister. This *SSAF Allocation Report* is the form approved by the Minister.

The information provided in this *SSAF Allocation Report* does not require auditing by a financial accountant. The SSAF expenditure reporting is a separate process and remains unchanged, more information can be found in the [Financial Statements Guidelines](#) for Table A and B providers, and in the [Financial Viability Instructions: Applicants and Providers of FEE-HELP \(FVI\)](#) for all other approved providers.

SSAF Consultation and Achievements

Consultation

Since the introduction of the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) in 2012, the University has regularly sought student feedback on how to best dedicate this funding towards the improvement of student wellbeing, connection and support for activities that benefit students across all of its campuses. Funding allocations for 2023-2025 were based on the 2025 SSAF Student Survey (1,814 completed the survey), where students ranked activities and services that were of most importance to them. The activities and services in the survey were based on the Government specified criteria in the Higher Education Support Act (2003, Subsection 19-38) which outlines higher education provider parameters for SSAF expenditure. A 5-point scale was used to assess activities and services from 'not' important to 'very' important.

The top five activities (i.e. considered of highest importance) were:

1. Support for health and/or welfare
2. Support to obtain employment or career advice
3. Helping international students with specific support relating to their welfare, accommodation and employment
4. Access to libraries and reading rooms, other than those provided for academic purposes.

Throughout 2025 The Office of the Provost worked in partnership with the University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU), University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association (GSA) and Melbourne University Sports (MUS) and Students and Scholarly Services (SASS) to identify where collaboration across services and activities could lead to areas identified by students as being most important to them. The student unions and MUS also run annual satisfaction surveys to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of their current offerings and adjust offerings based on this feedback.

SSAF funded activities across 2025

The activities listed below are highlights of the services and activities funded from SSAF and provided by SASS, MUS, UMSU and GSA. Not everything funded from SSAF is included here. All activities funded from SSAF meet the Government's allowable expenditure category.

Academic Skills Support

Exam Support Program: Between Semester 1 and 2 exams in 2025, UMSU provided almost 300 hours of student support by hardworking volunteers, keeping the stalls stocked and covered at key pre-exam times across 120+ different exam slots at the Royal Exhibition Building, Wilson Hall and Southbank campus, and a self-service stall at Kwong Lee Dow. The volunteers began as early as 7am on most days during the exam period, answering questions, promoting support services and handing out thousands of study supplies and snacks – including pieces of fruit thanks to the University's Health Promotion Program.

Thesis Bootcamp. GSA continued to support graduate researchers through an intensive writing retreat designed to help participants make significant progress on their theses. Registrations for the program increased by approximately 11%, highlighting sustained demand for structured research support.

'Shut Up & Write'. Introduced in 2016 by GSA, the Shut-Up & Write program provided regular structured writing sessions where graduate students could work alongside peers in a focused and supportive environment. Delivered in a hybrid format, 25 sessions were held in 2025, welcoming over 200 attendees across online and in-person participation.

LEAD Program. GSA continued to attract strong interest from graduate students seeking to build leadership and professional skills. While participant capacity remained consistent, registrations increased by approximately 36% compared to 2024, demonstrating growing demand for the program.



Barista Course. GSA delivered subsidised barista training in partnership with CBD College to support postgraduate students seeking part-time or casual employment with 70 students completing the course in 2025. The program was highly popular, with places filling quickly and strong demand, and provided participants with nationally recognised, job-ready skills for the hospitality sector at a significantly reduced cost.

Support for Food and Cost of Living Pressures

Frozen Meals Program. Facilitated by UMSU, *FareShare*, a local not-for-profit organisation, provided free healthy frozen meals, including vegan and gluten-free options to 4,540 students across three campuses.



UMSU Volunteers serving free food. Photo courtesy UMSU

Student Aid. In 2025, GSA continued to provide targeted financial support initiatives to help graduate students navigate ongoing cost-of-living pressures, particularly during high-stress academic periods.

Digital Coffee Voucher Program. GSA supported students during SWOTVAC and exam periods, providing vouchers redeemable at participating on-campus cafes. Delivered across two rounds, the initiative reached 1,473 students, offering small but meaningful support to help students stay nourished and focused during peak study times.

Direct Financial Assistance. GSA also provided direct financial assistance through grocery vouchers, with 300 vouchers distributed to graduate students experiencing financial hardship.

Recreational opportunities. To further support student parents and caregivers, GSA delivered 100 Zoo vouchers, providing accessible recreational opportunities for families. A limited number of School Holiday Program vouchers were also offered to support student parents during peak caregiving periods.



GSA O-Week. Photo courtesy GSA



GSA Open Day. Photo courtesy GSA

Student Parent and Caregiver Support. In 2025, GSA strengthened its support for student parents through a range of initiatives designed to ease financial pressure, foster community, and support the balance between study and caregiving.

Family Day. GSA expanded to two events, up from one in 2024, with total attendance increasing from 127 to 262, despite challenges such as inclement weather. The program provided a welcoming space for student parents and their children to connect and engage in family friendly activities.

Melbourne University Sport's School Holiday Program. As part of GSA's commitment to addressing cost-of-living pressures, a limited number of fully funded places were offered in Melbourne University Sport's School Holiday Program for graduate students with children aged 5-12 years. In total, 30 student parents received a fully funded day for their child to participate, supporting families to balance academic commitments with caregiving responsibilities.

Dedicated Family Rooms. GSA also continued to provide access to dedicated Family rooms within the 1888 Building, offering student parents a safe and supportive space to study while caring for their children.

Parenting and Studying workshops. To further support student parents, GSA delivered two parenting and studying workshops, providing practical guidance, shared experiences, and strategies to help students navigate the challenges of balancing study and family life.

Union Mart. A team of over 650 volunteers organised by the UMSU Welfare Department were able to work with Foodbank Victoria and a range of other providers to support 1000+ students a week with free groceries. Due to cost-of-living pressures, the number of students accessing Union Mart was up considerably in 2025, leading to a doubling of the opening times each week, which increased the capacity for students serviced by more than 25%.

Union Mart activities also included:

- **Pop-Up.** An additional 'pop up' run by UMSU Welfare to hand out excess and fresh produce to around 125 students a week.
- **Reserve Fund.** Additional support budget for around 50-80 extra students who were facing more significant financial difficulties, including those with families, on scholarship or living on the PhD stipend.
- **Other Campuses.** In 2025 Union Mart expanded to Burnley, and continued operating at Southbank, with volunteers and UMSU campus representatives working together to provide groceries for around 50 students per week.

UMSU Welfare Brunch. Each Thursday, UMSU Welfare provided a free brunch for 300-500 students, providing not just a free meal, but a social occasion for students, with abundant servings of plant-based curries staving off both hunger and loneliness, in what was a heavily attended event each week.

Health and Wellbeing

Breakfast and Lunch Programs. In 2025, GSA continued to deliver its popular Breakfast Club and Lunch Socials, providing graduate students with regular opportunities to access free meals, connect with peers, and build community.

Breakfast sessions were held fortnightly by GSA on Tuesdays and Thursdays, alongside fortnightly Wednesday Lunch Socials, creating consistent touchpoints for students throughout the semester. Across the year, over 4,000 meals were shared through these programs, supporting students amid ongoing cost-of-living pressures while fostering a relaxed and welcoming environment on campus.

Monthly Market Days. GSA further expanded the food offerings, transforming lunchtime into a vibrant hub of activity. These events featured themed celebrations, including cultural festivals such as Tamil New Year and Qixi Festival, alongside initiatives focused on mental health, women's health, and sustainability. In 2025, Market Days engaged over 1,300 students, bringing together Grad Groups, student communities, and campus partners through stalls, activities, and performances.

Wellbeing and Creative Programs. In 2025, GSA delivered a diverse range of wellbeing and creative programs designed to support graduate students' physical health, mental wellbeing, and social connection.

The free online Yoga and Pilates program, first introduced by GSA in 2020, continued to provide flexible weekly classes for students studying both remotely and on campus, including those with disabilities. The program reached students across Burnley, Southbank, Werribee, Creswick, and Parkville, with more than 480 attendances recorded across 60 online sessions throughout the year.

GSA's in-person Yoga program, launched in 2024, continued to grow in 2025. Delivered weekly, the program created a welcoming space for students to unwind, move, and connect with others. Across 25 sessions, more than 400 attendances were recorded.

The Dance Exploration series offered by GSA saw students provided with an energising outlet to relieve stress while celebrating diverse dance styles from around the world. Open to all experience levels, the program featured styles such as Bachata, Hip Hop, K-Pop, and Bollywood. Thirteen classes were delivered in 2025, attracting over 190 attendees. Creative wellbeing programs also continued through Music Expression sessions, which provided a relaxed space for students to connect through informal music-making, with 12 sessions delivered in 2025.

At Southbank, The GSA Expression Space program supported students through creative exploration using dance, drama, and expressive arts, delivering 25 facilitated sessions across the year and creating a welcoming environment for reflection, connection, and wellbeing.

Sports and Outdoor Activities. In 2025, GSA expanded its recreation portfolio through a range of sports and outdoor initiatives designed to promote wellbeing, social connection, and active engagement among graduate students.

GSA delivered its inaugural Sports Day, bringing together more than 70 graduate students to participate in 6-a-side soccer, dodgeball, and badminton. The event catered to both beginners and experienced players, encouraging teamwork and friendly competition in an inclusive environment. The day concluded with a BBQ and prize presentation, strengthening community spirit and establishing a strong foundation for a future annual event.

Full day outdoor adventure trips. During the Easter break, GSA also delivered a full day outdoor adventure trip to Werribee Gorge State Park, offering graduate students the opportunity to participate in guided rock climbing, abseiling, and bushwalking. The new initiative generated significant interest, with students joining the waitlist, demonstrating strong demand for outdoor recreation opportunities.

GSA also delivered a subsidised Ski Trip in partnership with the Melbourne University Ski Club (MUSKI), providing graduate students with the opportunity to visit Mount Buller and experience skiing in a supportive environment. The program enabled students to learn new skills while connecting socially with peers from across the University.

Collectively, these initiatives highlight GSA’s commitment to delivering accessible, high impact recreation opportunities that support student wellbeing, foster community, and encourage active engagement beyond the classroom.

Cultural Events. In 2025, GSA delivered a diverse program of cultural celebrations that fostered belonging, connection, and inclusion across the graduate student community.

New and continuing celebrations included Nowruz, Ramadan Iftar, and Easter, creating welcoming spaces for students to celebrate cultural traditions and connect with others while away from home.

The Moon Festival remained a key GSA cultural event, attracting over 400 attendees. Delivered in partnership with student groups, the event featured performances, interactive stalls, and shared food experiences, creating a vibrant and engaging atmosphere. Strong student involvement and a dynamic program contributed to high levels of participation and sustained engagement throughout the event.

The International Fiesta had over 500 attendees and 21 Grad Groups, showcasing cultural performances, traditional food, and student-led stalls. The event provided a platform for students to share their cultures while strengthening cross-cultural understanding and community connection.



International Fiesta. Photo courtesy GSA

Speaker Series. The GSA Speaker Series, delivered across three sessions in 2025, featured four speakers per event, offering graduate students’ insights into professional journeys, leadership, and industry experiences.

The Women in Leadership and Women in Health & Tech sessions attracted strong engagement, with a combined attendance of over 100 students, while the Men’s Mental Health session provided a more focused and intimate setting for discussion.

Across the series, students had the opportunity to connect directly with senior professionals and industry leaders, creating meaningful networking and learning experiences.

UMSU Sexual Harm Response Coordinator Team. The Umsu team provides independent support and advice to students affected by Gender Based Violence (GBV); plans and implements primary prevention initiatives within the broader University community, and performs an internal advisory role within Umsu, assisting the organisation to develop and implement best practice approaches to responding to and preventing GBV.

Work included:

- Assisting 38 individual students with advice and support regarding alleged sexual misconduct.
- The team also delivers programs aimed at preventing gender-based violence on campus.
- These workshops empower students to be active bystanders and respond to disclosures. In 2025, we delivered workshops to 741 students across 67 workshops, predominantly to Clubs and Society student leaders. An additional program was delivered to 30 students which focused on the role that men can play in GBV prevention.

UMSU People of Colour's Racism at the University of Melbourne Survey + Report. Based on a student survey with 353 responses, Umsu People of Colour published the fourth edition of the Racism at the University of Melbourne Report, which included five recommendations to the University for consideration and implementation under the Anti-Racism Action Plan.

UMSU Welfare's A Campus in Distress Survey + Report: Based on a 2025 student survey with 775 responses, Umsu Welfare developed A Campus in Distress, a 50+ page report detailing how students at the University are struggling with a widespread mental health and wellbeing crisis. The report, which was launched in full in 2026, contains 10 recommendations for academic reforms and six recommendations for reforms to University support services to better support students' mental health and wellbeing.

UMSU Period Products. Umsu Women's Department delivered a report on the need for free period products on campus following a survey of 703 students. With 85% reporting difficulty accessing period products on campus, Umsu Women's piloted free period product dispensers across Levels G-3 in Building 168 and advocated for action by the University.

UMSU Peer Safety Crew. In Semester 2, Umsu piloted a new harm reduction program aiming to arm students with the training and knowledge to keep an eye out for their fellow students at events where alcohol is being served. Their keen eye, patient demeanour and enthusiastic attitude allowed them to watch over more than 1000 students across a range of different parties and events throughout Semester 2.

Connection

Rural Healthcare Student Health and Wellbeing Project. A SSAF grant funded series of virtual cooking classes/wellbeing check-ins and meal plan, including ingredient delivery, for medical and allied health students placed in rural Victoria.

Student Mentoring Programs. Funded by a SSAF grant Walter and Eliza Hall Institute (WEHI) connected PhD students, Postdocs, and honours students in WEHI across divisions to share experiences, advice, and support throughout the year.

African Community Initiative. The African Community Initiative is a SSAF grant program aimed at bringing together African students at the University of Melbourne to build a sense of community, celebrate African cultural diversity, and foster connections with the wider African Australian community in Victoria.

GSA Annual Ball – Night of the Zodiac. The 2025 GSA Annual Ball, Night of the Zodiac, brought graduate students together for a night inspired by astrology, star signs, and all things celestial. All available tickets were placed in carts within seconds of release, with the event welcoming 500 attendees on the night.



GSA Annual Ball – Night of the Zodiac. Photo courtesy of GSA

The theme came through across the space with zodiac-inspired styling and interactive elements, including roving palm readers, which were a big hit. The night had a fun, energetic atmosphere, giving students a chance to dress up, celebrate, and connect with others.

As part of the evening, we also presented the Grad Group Awards, recognising the incredible work of student groups throughout the year:

- Graduate Group of the Year: World of Mahjong
- Excellence in Academic & Career Advancement Award: Public Interest Law Network
- Community Builders Award: African Studies Group

Overall, it was a great way to bring the community together and close out the year.

GSA Orientation. Orientation remained a key opportunity for GSA to welcome new and returning graduate students and help them connect with the graduate community.



GSA Orientation. Photo courtesy of GSA

Recurring programs included the Parkville Welcome Lunches, held at the start of each semester and providing students with a relaxed opportunity to meet peers and learn more about GSA services. In 2025, orientation activities at Burnley expanded to include welcome lunches in both semesters, extending GSA’s reach beyond Parkville, while engagement at Werribee increased by 52%, reflecting GSA’s commitment to supporting students across all campuses.

GSA’s flagship orientation events continued to grow in popularity. The Summer Soirée, hosted for the first time at Queen’s College, recorded a 9% increase in attendance, bringing graduate students together for an evening of connection and celebration.

In Semester 2, the President’s Warm Welcome featured the Musical Plants installation for the first time on campus, offering students an interactive experience that blended nature, technology, and creativity.

For the first time, Orientation also included the Vision Board & Goal Setting Workshop, giving students a reflective space to set personal, academic, and professional goals at the start of the semester.

UMSU Student Media

Farrago. 2025 marked the centenary of *Farrago*, Australia's oldest student publication and a pillar of the University of Melbourne's creative and political life since 1925. A series of events celebrated the milestone, with students, staff and alumni coming together to commemorate a century of strong independent student journalism at a time when courageous and unfettered journalism is more important than ever. The 2025 editors Sophie He, Mathilda Stewart, Ibrahim Muan Abdulla and Marcie Di Bartolomeo hosted the *Farrago* Centenary Gala with more than 220+ guests. George Paton Gallery presented *Farrago* 100, an exhibition of previous editions showcasing a century of student media. Finally, at a special edition of Dinner Club, Christos Tsiolkas and Ben Eltham reflected on how student media and the press have challenged ideas of what's considered "rational" in politics, culture, and public debate.

Radio Fodder. UMSU Media's student radio station provides a creative platform for student contributors and producers, and entertainment for the rest of the student community – broadcasting student shows and collaborating to DJ a range of events. Airing 24/7, this is the home of 32 different radio shows that run from 10am to 9pm during the week.

Above Water. UMSU Media and Creative Arts Department collaborated with volunteers and students to publish the 20th edition of *Above Water*, a creative writing anthology featuring 16 student works.

UMSU Clubs & Societies. UMSU-affiliated clubs and societies attracted over 50,000 memberships and hosted over 1,000 events for students. UMSU affiliated 34 new clubs and supported all 230+ with critical governance and administrative support and over \$277k across 1,678 grants.

UMSU Clubs & Societies Expos. UMSU C&S facilitated two recruitment expos for 193 clubs in Semester 1 and 160 clubs in Semester 2. The expos provide an opportunity for new students to meet the club committees and find out what is on offer. They are the days that attract the highest membership sign-ups for our clubs.

UMSU Website - Clubs & Events Portal. UMSU provides and maintains an immense digital platform for student life at the University. In 2025, the UMSU website hosted 2,449 events, including 237 events run by UMSU's student-led departments and 1,943 events run by over 230 UMSU-affiliated clubs and societies.

UMSU Website - Messaging Service. The UMSU website is also the primary communication channel for student clubs and societies at the University, with UMSU-affiliated clubs and societies sending 2,761 emails to their members through the inbuilt messaging service provided by UMSU.

Events and Creative Activities

Diversity and Inclusion Week. Architecture, Business and Planning students were given small grants to fund events, activations, exhibitions, panel discussions or other activities which promote and support diversity and inclusion and community building.

Below Earth. Below Earth is an emerging writing competition funded by a SSAF grant and run in collaboration with UMSU Clubs and Societies' Creative Literature and Writing Society (CLAWS), with an emphasis on uplifting new voices and unearthing new talent within the student community.

Diwali. A joint event between the University and UMSU Welfare, this highly successful festival included a henna stall, Rangoli making (using coloured rice), diya painting and a photo booth, while the event was brought to life by live dance and music performances by the Bollywood Club, student groups and external dance groups.



Diwali. Photo courtesy SASS



Diwali. Photo courtesy SASS

Tempo Doeloe (Indonesian Day Market). Tempo Doeloe is an Indonesian Day Market event, supported by a SSAF grant, which brings an eventful Indonesian cultural experience to the heart of the University of Melbourne, both gathering the large Indonesian community and those who are fascinated by the culture of Indonesia, featuring diverse performances, traditional games, Indonesian delicacies, workshops, and much more.

3-Shot Film Festival. Supported by an SSAS SSAF grant the three-day '3-shot' student short film festival celebrated storytelling and artistic expression, welcoming all students regardless of faculty, skill, or background, and providing a platform for sharing their stories and cultures.

A Symphonic Spectacular. Supported by the SASS SSAF Grants program, this large-scale public performance of a symphonic concert in St Paul’s Cathedral, showcased the combined talents of the University of Melbourne’s two biggest and most active student musical organisations (MUCS and MUBSO). The event brought together almost 200 student performers from across the University of Melbourne, as well as approximately 100 community choristers, a number of alumni and staff, as well as members of Melbourne’s wider musical community, in a spectacular collaboration.

Art Class with Nila. Art Class with Nila funded from a SASS SSAF Grants program offered graduate students a creative and supportive space to develop artistic skills and explore a range of techniques. Delivered weekly at Parkville, the program maintained strong attendance across 22 sessions, with over 250 participants, supported by small class sizes and all materials provided.



Art Class with Nila. Photo courtesy SASS

The program was also extended to Werribee Campus, delivering a tailored series of sessions that provided students with a creative outlet to support wellbeing, skill development, and connection.

Graduate Art Prize. The GSA Art Prize, an annual event aligned with the Engaged and Healthy Communities mandate, celebrates the diverse creativity of graduate students, offering an outlet for expression beyond academic endeavours. In 2025, submissions encompassed a range of media, including photographs, digital artwork, paintings, and drawings.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Art Prize was held in person at Arts Centre Melbourne. This year’s theme, *Seen and Unseen*, inspired over 140 entries from students.

Now in its 10th year, the GSA Art Prize continues to highlight the wide-ranging talents and interests of the graduate community. Each submission reflects the personal connections students have with their environments, showcasing their creativity and the values they hold dear.

2025 Art Prize Winner – 'Confirmation Of Aboriginality' by Georgia Boseley

- **2nd Place:** Robb Eastman-Densem – 'Doily With Illusion Knitting Gay Slur'
- **3rd Place:** Matilde Oviedo Querejazu – 'At Peace'
- **Personal Experience Award:** Michele Owen – 'The First Page'
- **Global Awareness Award:** Zoe Fehlberg – 'Flicker 01'
- **Innovation Award:** Yandell Walton – 'Becoming With'
- **Australian Indigenous Award:** Ian Alcantara – 'Not Just Yours'

We also thank our esteemed judges and preliminary judges:

Edwin Jurriens
Nila Sheharvand
Alissar El-Murr
Isabella Hone-Saunders

Sam Van Ingen
Shanysa Mcconville
Nusra Latif Qureshi



2025 Graduate Art Prize Winners. Photo courtesy GSA

Why 'Seen and Unseen'?

The theme Seen and Unseen invited artists to explore the visible and invisible forces that shape our world, identities, and experiences. From overlooked moments and hidden emotions to the contrast between public and private selves, this theme encouraged reflection on what is revealed, what remains concealed, and the stories that lie in between. This theme was chosen to spark conversation around visibility, recognition, and the complex, often layered realities of graduate life.



Seen & Unseen Artists. Photo courtesy GSA

Short Film Prize. The GSA Short Film Prize was introduced in 2025, expanding opportunities for creative expression beyond traditional visual arts. Centred around the theme ‘Unfold’, the initiative attracted strong interest, with 11 finalists showcasing original work. Finalist films were featured at the Art Prize ceremony, where winners were announced, creating a shared platform that celebrated student creativity across multiple mediums.

- Best Documentary Award: Yufan Yuan – Temple of Life
- Best Fiction Award: Jinzi Bai – Dualagon
- Mindspace Award: Vishahan Tamilselvan – I Am Here for You



Short Film Prize Awards. Photo courtesy GSA

End of Semester Party. The GSA End of Semester Party, held at Ballers Clubhouse, brought together 200 graduate students for a relaxed and social celebration to mark the close of the academic period. The event was well received, with students highlighting the fun, casual atmosphere, opportunity to meet new people, and the variety of games available, including the popular ball pit. Feedback reflected strong overall satisfaction, with many attendees expressing interest in returning to similar GSA events in the future.



End of Semester party. Photo courtesy GSA

UMSU Events. In 2025, UMSU Events department supported over 464 events and delivered 15 major cultural events on campus. UMSU events play a key role in building a strong campus culture and delivering a diverse range of events that bring students together, foster connections, and enhance university life. Working closely with student departments, the Events team create inclusive and engaging experiences that reflect the needs and interests of the student community. Throughout the year, Events supported a growing number of bigger and more complex student-led events. This included major cultural celebrations — Holi, Eid, the Grand Iftar, the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival and Diwali — as well as flagship student events including the Farrago Centenary Gala, Welcome Blak, and the UMSU Ball.

UMSU OWeek Festivals (SummerFest & WinterFest): UMSU’s Sem 1 and Sem 2 orientation festivals are designed to welcome and engage incoming and returning students. These festival programs, held across three campuses, featured over 70 events and welcomed approximately 13,000 students to campus in 2025.

UMSU's Bites & Bustles. Hosted by Umsu Activities, Bites & Bustles events entertained, connected and fed well over 600-800 students each week. Live bands, DJs, clubs & societies, bungee jumping, markets, info stalls: you name it, Bites & Bustles had it.

UMSU's Blak Ball. Hosted by Umsu's Indigenous Department, Blak Ball brought community together once again for a night dedicated to celebrating First Nations students at Uni - a great night of connection, good vibes, and a whole lot of dancing.

UMSU Graduate Dinner Club. 2025 marked the launch of Dinner Club, a new graduate program bringing students together with external speakers and industry guests over a shared meal. Across seven sessions, Dinner Club partnered with nine organisations including Museums Victoria, Zoos Victoria, the National Gallery of Victoria, Creative Victoria, Melbourne Design Week, The Guardian, Science Gallery Melbourne, Farrago Magazine, and the Bob Brown Foundation. Attendees rated the experience 8.1 out of 10 and 86% said they would recommend it to another student.

Ida Unplugged. Umsu launched Ida Unplugged, a live music series at Ida Bar showcasing student and emerging artists throughout the semester.

Ida Bar. Ida Bar's first year of trading in 2025 marked a genuine milestone for the Student Precinct. The \$1.5 million investment, designed with student input and built by Sibling Architecture, delivered a professionally run bar and kitchen and relied on hard-working student casuals to keep it running smoothly. The Ida Bar demonstrated its value as both a social hub and a platform for student-led programming. Across the year, Ida hosted a diverse calendar of events designed to foster community, support networking, and showcase student talent. These included the Graduate Dinner Club series, Paint & Sips, Open Mics, live musical performances, and comedy nights, each contributing to a vibrant and inclusive campus culture. Attendance remained strong throughout, reflecting sustained demand for accessible, low-cost, student-led social experiences at the University of Melbourne.

Speed Friending: 400+ students engaged in one-hour, relaxed, friendly Umsu-led sessions to meet new people, chat about their lives and swap socials – and maybe meet their best friend.

UMSU Women's Employability Week. Umsu Women's ran free and discounted employability workshops, including accredited Responsible Service of Alcohol, First Aid and Barista training.

Union House Theatre (UHT). Umsu supported theatre productions, creative and technical workshops, industry pathways, mentorships, residencies, performances and more. Supporting over 23 autonomous Student Theatre Groups as they create their own productions, as well curating a dynamic program of events and workshops, UHT delivered over 82 events and workshops in 2025, with 13,812 patrons engaging with performing arts on campus.

2025 Theatre Volunteer Program. 65 Umsu student volunteers gained new skills and friendships assisting with front of house set design and props building, marketing activities and activations, and arts administration tasks.

UMSU Student Theatre Groups. There were 28 Umsu theatre productions and 36 dance workshops and events, presented by 1,292 cast, crew and creatives. In addition, administration and over 2000 hours of production support was provided for over 23 affiliated Student Theatre Groups including governance, facility-access, public liability insurance, induction and training.

UMSU Dance Battle in Collaboration with Cypher Culture. More than 1,000 student onlookers gathered to watch 50 student street dancers show off their moves and battle it out in the amphitheatre for International Dance Day.

Stress Less Sanctuary. Guild Theatre became an interactive installation space, designed by a team of students from varying disciplines from psychology to architecture. With more than 300 attendees, the space provided welcome respite from busy exam prep.

Theatre Takeover. Alongside PO PO MO CO, students performed in the Union Theatre in daring and inventive ways. Over 15 students worked with a professional theatre company over 2 weeks, to devise and perform a totally new work.

Dance Democracy. A two-week program of short works with over 200 participants from emerging choreographers, workshop participants, and students sharing works in the Guild Theatre during scratch nights for new performances.

Writing Programs. Championing theatre and performance writing at UHT, supporting emerging playwrights, poets, critics, storytellers and those who've never written before. Through year-long program of workshops and residencies, students developed their craft in supportive environments that encouraged experimentation and collaboration.

Over seven weeks, playwright and performer Jorja Bentley led 10 students to develop new writing. Artists Ian Williams, Emilie Collyer and Kim Ho hosted generative writing workshops for students across campus spanning playwriting, poetry and playwriting.

Student Review publication: Dialog. The Dialog, a student-led online publication chronicling live performance, publishing 77 student reviews in 2025. Reviewing workshops for student reviewers were held with industry experts to upskill writers.

Student Development Residencies. UHT provides space, mentorship and connection enabling student experimentation and the presentation of works in progress to a supportive audience. Five groups of students used the Guild Theatre to develop their creative practice.

EveryBODY Dance Performance. Under the guiding principle that everyone has movement within them, dance artist Janette Hoe brought together a group of students, some experienced dancers, others first timers, to dance and connect over Saturday workshops. The final workshop saw students perform outdoors, activating the landscape and architecture of the Parkville campus.

UMSU Theatre Awards. At Market Hall, over 230 students celebrated a year in student theatre and win coveted Umsu Theatre Awards.

'Outstanding Category' awards include acknowledgement for direction, writing, performance, design and more. Partner awards with Melbourne Theatre Company, MPavilion, La Mama Theatre, Dance House and UMAC support new groups and the development of artists.

Trust Awards from the University of Melbourne bestow honours on students.

UMSU Arts Programs. Umsu Arts Programs supports student creativity, cultural participation and connection through the George Paton Gallery, the Arts Lab, and a year-round program of workshops, public programs and events.

In 2025, Arts Programs delivered 16 exhibitions, 52 workshops, three special projects, three printed publications, one artist residency and one Alumni Awards program, engaging 9,860 gallery visitors and more than 1,300 workshop participants.

Across the year, the program supported 135 participating artists and curators, paid 49 artist fees, and developed partnerships across UMSU, the University of Melbourne and the broader arts sector.

George Paton Gallery. The George Paton Gallery continued to provide a vital platform for student artists, writers and curators, building on its 50-year legacy as a site for experimentation, critical dialogue and student-led cultural practice.

In 2025, the Gallery presented a diverse exhibition program reflecting the breadth of contemporary student practice across media, disciplines and perspectives. Highlights included *Farrago 100*, a centenary exhibition combining archival material with contemporary responses; *Spectrum*, presented as part of MUDfest; and *Bells and Whistles*, a major exhibition of postgraduate student artwork foregrounding research, experimentation and professional practice.

Special Exhibition Projects

- **Spectrum:** Presented as part of MUDfest 2025, *Spectrum* showcased the work of sixteen University of Melbourne student artists working across painting, sculpture, video and installation. Coordinated by Gunjan Ahluwalia, the exhibition formed part of a broader celebration of student creativity, with MUDfest transforming campus spaces into platforms for experimentation, expression and collaboration.

Responding loosely to the festival theme, “Refraction”, *Spectrum* embraced a multiplicity of forms, processes and points of view, highlighting the diversity of student practice across the visual arts.

- **Farrago 100:** *Farrago 100* marked the centenary of *Farrago*, Australia’s oldest student publication and a central part of the University of Melbourne’s creative and political life since 1925.

The exhibition foregrounded *Farrago*’s legacy as an incubator for critical thinking, creative experimentation and student voice, while reflecting on its ongoing role within UMSU in supporting student authorship, representation and dissent.

Through archival material, ephemera and contemporary artistic responses, *Farrago 100* combined historical reflection with contemporary practice, demonstrating the enduring importance of student-led publishing within changing institutional and cultural contexts.



The Arts Lab. The Arts Lab remained a busy and welcoming open-access creative space, supporting more than 128 student bookings across craft, textiles, ceramics, merchandise production and collaborative making. The Lab also supported the inaugural Winter Artist in Residence Program, through which Fine Arts students Fiona Shewan and Elliot Wallace Brown established Constellate Press.

The month-long residency culminated in the presentation of new book works at the George Paton Gallery and demonstrated the value of providing students with time, space and support to experiment, collaborate and extend their practice beyond the classroom.

Workshops and Public Programs. Arts Programs delivered a vibrant program of workshops, talks and events across art making, writing, professional development, experimental practice and social connection.

In 2025, Arts Programs worked with 39 practitioners, speakers and facilitators to deliver 52 workshops and programs in the Arts Lab and beyond, engaging more than 1,300 students. These activities supported students to build skills, confidence and creative networks, while contributing to a strong sense of belonging and participation on campus.

A Climate for Art Symposium. A Climate For Art Symposium brought together artists, arts workers, academics and activists to examine the cultural dimensions of the climate crisis and the role of the arts in responding to environmental imbalance.

Emerging from A Climate for Art's formation in 2023, when a network of 23 arts organisations collectively divested from fossil fuel investments, the symposium reflected on the relationship between climate-focused artistic programming and the structural practices of arts organisations. Across two days, speakers and discussions explored how cultural work can move beyond extractive models and contribute to shared values, everyday practices and meaningful climate action.

Sēmeiōsis. Presented through Practice Lab, George Paton Gallery and MPavilion Parkville, *Sēmeiōsis* supported the development and presentation of new student work throughout Semester 1. The three-day installation invited students to engage with infrastructure, signage, wayfinding and power through cross-media investigations, extending student practice into a public-facing context.

Reading Matter. The 2025 iteration of the annual experimental curatorial intensive, BLOP BLOP, was led by Adam Cruickshank of True Belief and engaged ten students. Titled *Reading Matter*, the practice-led project investigated publishing as a critical and site-responsive practice.

Across three workshops in the George Paton Gallery and Arts Lab, students examined the Gallery's paratextual conditions, including signage, labels, schedules and other institutional texts, as material for making. The project culminated in a group-authored publication launched at the Same Page Art Book Fair.

UMSU Art Collection. The UMSU Art Collection is a growing collection of student artwork funded by UMSU and displayed throughout the Student Precinct at the University of Melbourne, Parkville.

The collection has its origins in a small group of works on paper inherited by the Student Union in 1994, originally acquired by the former MCAE Student Association from the mid-1970s. Since 2004, UMSU has supported the annual acquisition of student artwork, with the collection now comprising close to 200 works.

Each year, Arts Programs acquires works from the VCA Grad Show, supporting emerging artists while preserving a record of student creative practice. In 2025, UMSU proudly acquired painting, video, monotype and screen print works by Kate Murrell, Jya-Ruby Nation, Freja Innes-Ker, Perin and Moira Burke.

MUDfest

MUDfest is a biennial student led arts festival that has established itself as a cultural icon on the emerging art scene in Melbourne and is presented by UMSU's Creative Arts department supported by and in collaboration with UMSU Arts & Culture.

The festival is a unique opportunity for students to gain real-world experience on and off the stage. The festival model is designed as an opportunity for students to build confidence, bring new artworks to life, develop networks, experience professional mentorship, and build lasting friendships.

MUDfest 2025 Refractions: One Self, Many Reflections ran as a five-day multidisciplinary arts festival from 19–23 August. The festival activated more than 10 campus locations with visual art, film, theatre, dance, music, workshops and live performance.

Across the week in August, the festival drew an estimated 2,500 attendees, with a strong turnout at the major social and performance events, especially free and drop-in sessions. 250 student artists and performers took part across more than 20 events and activations, supported by continuous exhibitions and daytime participatory spaces. The festival was delivered by the support of a large volunteer team of more than 150 students, alongside the Creative Arts Office Bearers, Festival production and technical staff and artist liaisons.

Underpinned by a curatorial vision, MUDfest positioned itself not just as an arts showcase but as a space for reflection, experimentation and connection. The festival program encouraged students to explore identity, multiplicity and lived experience through diverse creative forms and interdisciplinary collaboration. Six audience voted awards recognised the excellence across all participating artforms.

UMSU Creative Arts Workshops. Students participated in a series of creative arts workshops where they connected with other students and artists while honing or developing new skills. Workshops included ceramics, acapella, mural painting and dance therapy.

Sport and Recreation



Tennis Courts, Parkville Campus



Sporting Clubs Day, Semester 1 2025.

Sport Fitness Program. In a commitment to keeping costs as low as possible, Melbourne University Sport (MU Sport) provided tailored, affordable fitness service options to students which included:

- Regular free group fitness classes
- Free pool access at regular times during the week
- Support for Regional fitness facilities
- Free Water Safety Program run twice annually
- Access for high performance student-athletes

Subsidised Casual Access. A range of MU Sport program initiatives continued to provide students with increased access to casual and one-off sporting and fitness opportunities at low or no cost. These programs include the 'Quick Hits' initiative, which allowed students to access venue hire facilities such as tennis, squash, and badminton courts free of charge.

Student Life Active Pass. MU Sport continued to provide this pass to introduce new students to the full range of recreation, fitness, and sport offerings at the University. This includes 'come and try' sessions for sporting clubs and programs, weekly events and activities, giveaways, trips and tours, social sporting competitions, and pop-up games and activities held across campus.

Sport Access Bursary. Supports equitable participation by reducing financial barriers that may prevent students from engaging in sport and recreation. The program offers free gym memberships, as well as subsidised programs and services. This aligns with the University's commitment to wellbeing, inclusion, belonging, and student success by ensuring all students can participate in the campus community regardless of financial circumstance.

Sport and Club Support. In 2025, MU Sport had 49 affiliated clubs with a combined membership of 7,530 members comprising 4,507 students. Clubs were provided with a range of support services to help ensure adequate governance and success.

Informal Physical Activities in New Recreation Spaces. MU Sport provided free pop-up ‘casual’ activities such as pickleball, badminton, spikeball, and table tennis in campus areas with regular student traffic, increasing opportunities for the University’s community to engage in spontaneous physical activities and helping to create a vibrant campus experience. Students also have free access to the Sports Precinct Recreation Room, featuring billiards, table tennis, air hockey, Apple TV, and KAYO displayed on a large projector screen.



Mini carnival. Photo courtesy UMSU Int

Water Safety Program. A free aquatics education initiative from MU Sport for students who have not previously had the opportunity to learn to swim, lack water confidence or would like to develop survival and basic formal swimming stroke knowledge and technique. 2025 continued to see strong enrolment numbers, with 821 students participating in Semester 1 (83% female, 93% international), 813 in Semester 2 (78% female, 91% international), and 189 in the October intensive program (80% female, 90% international). An additional pool safety session, hosted by Life Saving Victoria at the Beaurepaire Centre pool, was introduced in Semester 2 in preparation for the Beach Visit and, due to its success, would be incorporated into the program ongoing from 2026.

International Student Bike Awareness/Care sessions. Provided by MU Sport, these sessions provide essential maintenance tips for beginners and enthusiasts alike to keep their bikes in top shape and ready for the road. Ideal for students new to Melbourne, cycling or both.

Legal Support, Advocacy and Representation

UMSU Assemblies. UMSU Education hosted a series of panel discussions and collectives about issues that matter to students. The first assembly covered work rights, placement poverty and employability with speakers from Youth Workers Centre, Migrant Workers Centre, Study Melbourne and Australian Medical Student Association.

Student Engagement Survey. Each year UMSU surveys its student body which helps provide an up-to-date picture of which services and support the student body need and value from UMSU as an organisation. This helps us allocate SSAF to the right resources and understand how the student body changes from year to year.

UMSU Public Advocacy Submissions and Reports. These included: a brief discussing current issues that victim-survivors were encountering at the University, including concerns about fee remission, which was presented to the Respect Reference Group and a collaboration with Youth Law to present to the Student Experience Network Conference on the importance of specialised supports for victim-survivors of sexual assault in community legal sectors with the introduction of the National Student Ombudsman.

GSA Submissions and Reports

Response to the Advancing Research 2030 draft strategy. GSA provided feedback on the University's draft five-year strategy, Advancing Research 2030: Excellence for Impact, based on input from, and the work with, graduate researchers. GSA called on the University to improve processes related to GR supervision, retention, accessibility/workspace needs, and career pathways. Several recommendations were reflected in the final strategy.

The University of Melbourne Protest Rule Changes Report. GSA conducted a survey and in-person consultation to gather graduate student feedback on the introduction of new University rules relating to protests on University premises. GSA also used this opportunity to gather graduate student feedback about the University's updated wireless terms of use. GSA developed a report based on this feedback and called on the University to better protect students' freedom of speech, right to protest, and privacy.

Graduate Researcher Workspaces Report 2025. GSA developed a report exploring graduate researchers' workspace needs. The report was based on findings from a survey (with over 400 GR participants), a town hall, and extensive consultation with graduate researchers. The report showed that, according to graduate researchers, the replacement of sole-use desks with hot desks, hotelling, or bookable desks does not meet their basic requirements. A suspension and review of existing hotdesking plans at the University was called for, and a moratorium on proposed hot-desking plans.

Submission to the University of Melbourne student accommodation review. GSA provided feedback to the University's review into student accommodation and the development of a Student Accommodation Strategic Plan. In the submission, GSA called on the University to better support students to find housing, provide accommodation scholarships, and offer support for students facing severe financial hardship and potential homelessness. The importance of ensuring University student accommodation provides genuine value for money, options for student parents, and adequate cooking facilities was highlighted.

Joint submission to the consultation on modernising and strengthening the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency's powers (TEQSA). GSA partnered with the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) to develop a submission to the Department of Education's consultation on modernising and strengthening TEQSA's powers. GSA called on the Department to amend the TEQSA Act to better support meaningful student participation in University governance processes. The amendments to the TEQSA Higher Education Standards to strengthen TEQSA's powers was supported.

Response to the University of Melbourne's Draft Sexual Misconduct and Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Policy (MPF1359). GSA provided input on the University's draft Sexual Misconduct and Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Policy (MPF1359). GSA called on the University to amend several definitions, explicitly refer to GSA when referring to student organisations, and better outline processes when students are also staff members.

UMSU Elections. 6,867 students voted in UMSU’s annual election, and 1,629 students voted in UMSU International’s election.

UMSU Student Departments. UMSU’s 14 Student Departments each have their own purposes and objectives, representing and serving students across a breadth of cohorts and interests. They include Activities, Burnley, Clubs & Societies, Creative Arts, Disabilities, Education (Academic and Public), Environment, Indigenous, Media, People of Colour, Queer, Southbank, Welfare and Women’s. The Departments are led by student Office Bearers and Committees democratically elected by their peers, and engage with their student constituents throughout the year, including via collectives and surveys, providing all students with a chance to have their say in the direction and activities of the student union.

UMSU Student Representation Induction. The induction period took place from 24–27 November and supported the onboarding of a broad cohort of student representatives and leaders. This included 34 Office Bearers, 22 Councillors, 83 Committee Members, and 4 UMSUi Co-Opt representatives, ensuring incoming members were prepared to commence their roles and support students.

UMSU representation in UoM governance forums. UMSU was active in University of Melbourne governance forums, including the Academic Board, Higher Degrees by Research Committee and the University Executive, to ensure that the student voice is central in decision-making.

UMSU’s Annual General Meeting. Over 1000 students attended UMSU’s Annual General Meeting, celebrating the previous year’s achievements with the launch of our 2024 Annual Report. Students got involved in crafting, karaoke, crowd choreo led by beloved ABBA tribute band BABBA and, of course, democracy.

UMSU Collectives. UMSU’s collectives are run by and for students with shared identities or shared political and advocacy aims. They foster community and solidarity, giving students a place to be themselves, connect with their peers and drive their Union’s advocacy. Our 2025 Collectives included:

- People of Colour Collective
- Bla(c)k Collective
- Queer People of Colour Collective
- Women and Enbies Collective
- Women’s x Enbies of Colour Collective
- Aro/Ace Collective
- Trans Collective
- Queer Lunch
- Enviro Collective
- Education Action Collective
- UMSU in 5 Years Collective
- AI Collective
- Special Considerations Collective
- Mental Health Collective
- Above Water Collective
- Coffee Collective
- Mental Health Coffee Collective
- Sustainability Coffee Collective
- Dance Therapy Collective
- Southbank Collective

UMSU Assemblies. UMSU Education hosted a series of panel discussions and collectives about issues that matter to students. The first assembly covered work rights, placement poverty and employability with speakers from Youth Workers Centre, Migrant Workers Centre, Study Melbourne and Australian Medical Student Association.

UMSU International student needs

UMSU International. Led by 30+ elected students, UMSU International is the official representative body for all international students at the University of Melbourne. In 2025, UMSU International celebrated and supported our vibrant community of international students through advocacy, community-building, cultural events, welfare initiatives and flagship events like Night Market.

UMSU International Breakfasts. In 2025, UMSU's International Breakfasts remained a key touchpoint for the University's 23,000+ international students, offering a free meal and a friendly space to settle into campus life. Over the course of the year, the UMSU International Breakfasts served over 10,000 meals, operating three days a week.

UMSU's International Student Ambassador Program. The International Student Ambassador program continued to grow, with 60 ambassadors helping run events and support their peers.

UMSU International Student Survey. The International Student Survey.

UMSU International Night Market. The Night Market is UMSU International's flagship event and has brought over 6000 students together to celebrate the diverse cultures that make up the University of Melbourne student community. Attendees shared cultural foods prepared by student clubs and were treated to live music and dance performances.

UMSU International's Beyond Borders. This engaging orientation event eased international students' transition into university life providing an opportunity to connect and covering essential topics like rental law, campus life, social opportunities and study tips.

UMSU International's PR/Visa Workshop. This popular workshop provided expert guidance to students planning their next steps for an Australian visa or Permanent Residency.

UMSU Advocacy Service. UMSU provided expert, independent advice to students on their rights and obligations on a range of academic and administrative issues. This casework is used to inform and support the work of elected student representatives in identifying and addressing systemic problems to manifest meaningful change. 2025 highlights included:

Student Demand

- Assisted 1,471 students across 2025.
- Demand increased dramatically, with the service handling almost as many cases in July and August alone (491) as in the first six months of the year (514).
- The September to December period represented a 54% increase compared with the same period in 2024.

Student Satisfaction

- Almost 100% student satisfaction throughout the year (100% in both May to August and September to December, 98% in January to April), with students reporting that they were satisfied with our knowledge and expertise, would use our service again and would recommend us to a friend.

Extensive Advocacy Service expertise, support and advice to Office Bearers on:

- Office Bearer representational work on university committees such as Academic Board Meetings, SPC, APC and TALQAC.
- Support for the expansion of graduate researcher and postgraduate student representational work through HDRC and CGRAD.
- Advice and support for Office Bearer campaign work.

Training

- Provision of training for new discipline committee student panel members.
- Office Bearer governance training.

Recommendations to the University

- Challenging restrictive interpretations of further special consideration (“special on special”).
- Highlighting serious concerns about appeal delays and procedural fairness.
- Exposing inconsistencies in the academic misconduct process, with negative impacts for international students and the combining of multiple academic misconduct allegations and the use of unauthorized penalties.
- Raising concerns about new Vice-Chancellor protest regulations and their implications for student rights.

Policy Consultation and Feedback on:

- Sexual Misconduct and Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Policy.
- Proposed Changes to the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy.
- Provision and Acceptable Use of IT Policy.
- Proposed Changes to the Privacy Management Policy.
- Feedback on Enrolment and Timetabling Policy.
- Enrolment & Timetabling Policy Reforms Proposal.
- New Vice-Chancellor Rules.

Submissions

- Senate Inquiry into the Quality of Governance at Australian Higher Education Providers.
- TEQSA consultations on student grievances and external actors.
- Review of the Disability Standards for Education.
- Review of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
- TEQSA consultation on modernising and strengthening regulatory powers.

Advocacy Web Refresh

- Expanded and redeveloped the online self-help resources which receive over 13,000 active users each year.
- Added new information, checklists and toolkits.
- Enhanced the accessibility of the resources for our student audience.

UMSU Legal Service. An accredited community legal centre providing free and confidential legal and financial counselling help to current University of Melbourne students. Its activities include direct advice and casework, law reform and advocacy work, community legal education, and collaboration with the broader legal sector in relation to student legal issues.

In 2025, the Umsu Legal Service engaged in a wide range of advocacy and collaborative activities which continued to raise the profile of the service; reviewed our practice management compliance and policy systems to ensure alignment with the new sector Risk Management Guide; and built further professional connections to expand capacity and promote students' legal rights.

Key highlights include:

Financial Counselling

The Legal Service team continued to help students in difficult financial circumstances by providing supermarket vouchers and PTV travel passes, support in seeking debt waivers and reduction in settlement amount, as well as providing guidance in budgeting/debt management/saving processes and Graduate Access scholarship applications.

Legal sector collaboration - National Student Legal Services Network (NSLSN)

The Umsu Legal Service continued to co-chair the NSLSN in 2025, facilitating this space for student legal services around Australia to connect, share information, and collaborate on advocacy and law reform initiatives which benefit students.

The NSLSN was co-created in 2023 by our Principal Lawyer Isabelle Butler together with lawyers from the ANU Students' Association Legal Service and the Youth Law Australia/Tasmania University Students' Association Legal Service. Since its inception, the NSLSN has achieved many important goals, including providing expert advice on the creation of several proposed new student legal services in Australia, which were partly inspired by the NSLSN's work.

Pro bono partnerships

The Umsu Legal Service continued to operate its expanded pro bono partnerships in 2025, including a secondment program with the law firm HWL Ebsworth and a pro bono tenancy law clinic in partnership with the firm Maddocks.

Through these programs, the Legal Service has been able to increase capacity for direct advice and casework. Leveraging pro bono engagement programs like these mean the Legal Service can directly help more students with more legal matters.

These pro bono relationships also allowed us to tap into private firm's specific expertise, which led to us providing a more comprehensive service to students.

Law reform and advocacy work

In 2025, the Umsu Legal Service continued advocacy efforts across areas of law important to students. To advocate students' housing rights, submissions were made to the Consumer Affairs Victoria's Rental Taskforce to ensure better compliance and enforcement with Victoria's tenancy laws. The Umsu CEO was also supported in the meeting with the Minister for Consumer Affairs to advocate for the removal of the unfair exemption that the University has in its accommodations.

Community legal education

The UMSU Legal Service continued to deliver legal education services in 2025, proactively helping students to identify and respond to common legal issues.

Two sessions were delivered on housing rights to students on Australian Awards Scholarship.

The financial counsellor took part in six training sessions for new and outgoing executives of UMSU clubs and societies. The topics discussed included budgeting, sponsorship, grants, banking, receipts, record-keeping and who is responsible for financial decisions. These comprehensive and practical training sessions included materials such as budget templates and spreadsheets for the executives.

Additionally, approximately 125 written resources were distributed on areas of law relevant to students, including police powers and bike law.

Practice management work - Comprehensive policy review

In 2025, the UMSU Legal Service continued the work commenced in 2024 to comprehensively overhaul our practice management processes, creating a more robust service to improve service delivery and facilitate future expansion.

Throughout 2025, Principal Lawyers managed a project to undertake a compliance and policy review of the Service to ensure alignment with the new CLC Risk management Guide released in late 2025.

2025 statistics

The UMSU Legal Service delivered 498 advice, casework and legal information and referral services in 2025. Approximately 65% of services delivered were to graduate students (35% to undergraduate students), and around 62% were to international students (38% to domestic students).

The UMSU Legal Service also helped 59 students with their financial counselling matters.

Employment and Career Support

Students@Work Mentorship Network. A SSAF grant program which cultivated meaningful relationships between former interns and the inaugural cohort of Narm Scholars, offering hands-on guidance on securing campus jobs and preparing for internships, facilitated through interactive group 'lunch and learn' sessions and personalised, sponsored one-on-one coffee chats.

Transition to Employment program. GSA continued to expand its Transition to Employment program in 2025, delivering a mix of large-scale events, industry partnerships, and accessible online programming to support graduate students in building career readiness and professional connections.

Future Careers Expo. Now in its second year, the Future Careers Expo was delivered as a two-day event connecting graduate students with purpose led employers through innovative engagement design and strong industry partnerships. The Expo attracted over 300 students and more than 20 employers alongside a speaker panel featuring industry experts and University of Melbourne alumni. Strategic outreach secured in kind sponsorships, demonstrating growing employer confidence in GSA's reach and credibility.



GSA Future Career Expo. Photo courtesy GSA



GSA Future Career Expo. Photo courtesy GSA

Inaugural Hackathon. GSA delivered its inaugural Hackathon in partnership with Victorian Government organisations, providing 22 graduate students with hands-on experience working alongside industry professionals. The Job Application Challenge continued to grow, with registrations increasing by 37% compared to 2025, and more students completing the full application process and receiving personalised feedback.

Alongside these in-person initiatives, GSA’s career webinars and workshops remained a key component of its career support. While fewer sessions were delivered in 2025, engagement increased significantly, with average webinar attendance rising by 23% and workshops recording a 15% increase in total attendance and a 27% increase in average attendance per session.

Collectively, these outcomes reflect sustained growth in engagement and the continued strength and impact of GSA’s career support programming, providing graduate students with accessible, practical pathways to employment.

Women’s Speaker Series. GSA launched its first Women’s Speaker Series to celebrate women’s achievements in management, technology, education, and journalism. The series inspired female graduate students to pursue leadership roles and careers in male-dominated industries, offering them a platform for networking and professional growth.

Libraries and reading rooms (other than those provided for academic purposes)

Rowden White Library

2025 was another thriving year for UMSU's Rowden White Library (aka the Rowdy). Curated around broad student interest, and with a focus on popular culture, this year saw 172,283 visitors and 205,564 total interactions.

Most notable were increases across loans and new borrower metrics. There was a 2.9% increase in the number of loans and an impressive 28.4% increase in new sign-ups.

The Rowdy was home to an array of exciting events and workshops throughout the year. In total the Rowdy hosted 78 events. From student music performances and professionally led art and craft workshops, there were so many opportunities for students to engage and fire their creativity and self-expression.

The vinyl record listening station was a real hit and offered even more avenue for students to tune out and try something new within our relaxed space.

The RWL survey was back this year, and with over 330 responses, it remains a valuable tool for students to provide their feedback and help shape our programming and spaces.

The annual book sale was as popular as ever. It's always fun to see so many happy students leaving with a quality bargain (or two) to add to their bookshelves.

2025 saw the first intake of Rowdy volunteers. Twelve volunteers were recruited from a rich pool, and they all did an amazing job in promoting the library.

An assortment of clubs have found a home here. A mini-film festival was hosted along with creative writing workshops, and the Above Water Launch in November showcased the best in student writing and poetry.

The new Library catalogue (Spydus) has provided fresh ways to engage with the collection this year. This will further cement the Rowdy as a unique destination with a mix of books, games, and activities you'll find in no other library on campus.



Creative Collage Workshop in the Rowdy. Photo courtesy UMSU



Origami workshop in the Rowdy. Photo courtesy UMSU.

For additional information about the programs funded by SSAF please visit:

- [MUS Sport Annual Report](#)
- [UMSU Annual Report](#)
- [GSA Annual Report](#)

SSAF Revenue Summary

	2025 Allocation \$ ¹	2025 Actual \$
SSAF Revenue	\$24,996,918	\$24,755,100
SSAF revenue carried forward from 2024	\$3,151,819	\$2,173,096
Total SSAF funds available for 2025	\$28,151,737	\$26,928,196
SSAF revenue carried over into 2026	\$2,835,362	\$2,208,836

¹ Allocation refers to the SSAF funds expected to be received in the reported year (i.e., budgeted SSAF revenue).

SSAF Charge Summary

The student services and amenities fee (SSAF) charged to students must not be above the maximum fee for a calendar year. The maximum SSAF is indexed annually as required by the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (the Act). In **[insert reported year]** the maximum SSAF was **\$(insert maximum SSAF for the reported year)**.

Student Status	2025 SSAF charged \$ ²	Number of students charged 2025 ³
Full-time ¹ (> 0.75 EFTSL)	\$365	48,292
Part-time ¹ (< 0.75 EFTSL)	\$273	24,467
	Total:	72,759

¹ Note: As per Part 2 of the *Higher Education Support (Administration) Guidelines 2022* (Administration Guidelines), students studying on a part-time basis must not be charged more than 75 per cent of the maximum SSAF that a higher education provider determines for students studying on a full-time basis. The term “part-time basis” means a study load of less than 75 per cent of the normal full-time student load for the period to which the fee relates. As per part 7 of the Administration Guidelines, the normal EFTSL value for a full-time student studying over a period of one year is 1.0.

² Note: As per Part 2 of the Administration Guidelines, a higher education provider may choose to determine a different SSAF for particular categories of persons, including a zero amount.

³ Note: Students are categorised as full-time or part-time students based on the total EFTSL value of the units of study they undertook in [insert reported year]. For example, a student undertook a full-time study load in Semester 1 which was equal to 0.5 EFTSL and undertook a part-time study load in Semester 2 which was equal to 0.375 EFTSL. This student would be categorised as a full-time student in 2025 as the total EFTSL they undertook in 2025 was equal to 0.875.

Student Status	2025 SSAF charged \$ ²	Approx. number of SSAF students remote learning 2025 ⁴
Remote learning/Online only	49,360	168

⁴ Note: The Department of Education understands that not all higher education providers capture mode of study in their information systems, and many students undertake a mixed mode of study such as face-to-face and remote learning. The data provided above is for students who undertook remote learning for 100% of their units of study. Please note, due to the limitations of our information systems, the above data may be approximate.

SSAF Allocation Summary

Key areas of expenditure 2025

Subsection 19-38(4) of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (the Act) provides a list of 19 allowable expenditure items which higher education providers may allocate and spend SSAF revenue on.

Please note, under subsection 19-38 of the Act, SSAF revenue must not be spent to support a political party or the election of a person as a member of the legislature of the Commonwealth, State or a Territory, or a local government body.

Key Area (reporting against these are mandatory)	2025 Total Allocation \$	2025 Total Actual Spend \$	Are services available online?	Estimated No. of students accessing services
1. Health Services	606,764	800,845	Y	45,116
2. Clubs or other associations			Y	
a. Sporting	5,745,445	5,756,170	Y	28,050
b. Internal student politics	5,820	5,221	Y	1,263
c. Gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, or nationality-based	122,844	106,296	Y	10,560
d. Areas-of-study related e.g. law	549,018	503,736	Y	40,387
e. Other activities e.g. music, debate, chess	219,261	181,673	Y	9,035
f. Other	0	0	Y	17,828
3. Accommodation	0	0	N	0
4. Employment/career services	2,010,244	1,286,387	Y	43,409

Key Area (reporting against these are mandatory)	2025 Total Allocation \$	2025 Total Actual Spend \$	Are services available online?	Estimated No. of students accessing services
5. Legal aid	1,387,615	1,319,883	Y	6,152
6. Support for financial affairs	1,053,313	753,043	Y	5,939
7. Other student amenities	5,628,241	6,134,371	Y	193,286
8. Orientation	233,549	390,423	Y	53,126
9. Food or drink	0	462,065	N	124,604
10. Advocating students	2,052,631	2,214,155	Y	38,247
11. Student Governance and Elections	46,723	47,418	Y	13,288
12. Recreational activities	377,143	370,567	Y	38,575
13. Non-Academic Library (RWL)	583,739	612,552	Y	11,503
14. Student Arts	1,317,964	1,345,658	Y	27,066
15. Student Media	230,459	213,627	Y	36,390
16. International Student needs	294,644	303,528	Y	13,390
17. Childcare	539,910	607,367	Y	434
18. Travel Security Advice	155,215	148,914	Y	5,243
19. Tutorials, Study & Learning Services	690,785	527,014	Y	5,097
20. Internships, advice, food relief, workshops & grants	1,425,555	1,899,999	Y	86,979
Total	25,276,882	25,990,914		854,967

Organisations, bodies or third-party providers that received SSAF funding in 2025

1. Allocation of SSAF revenue – non-student-led organisations

Organisation Name ¹	Australian Business Number (ABN)	Supported Key Area	Total SSAF Funding Received from provider \$	% of total SSAF revenue collected by the Provider
Melbourne University Sport (University of Melbourne)	84 002 705 224	2.a	5,737,300	23%
Student and Scholarly Services (University of Melbourne)	84 002 705 224	1, 4, 6, 7, 17 ,18, 19 & 20	6,381,209	25%
Total SSAF provided to non student-led organisations			\$12,118,509	48%

¹ Note: Only organisations, bodies or third-party providers who receive over \$1,000 in SSAF funding are expected to be disclosed.

2. Allocation of SSAF revenue to student led organisations – evidence of meeting requirement of 40 per cent

Organisation Name ²	Australian Business Number (ABN)	Supported Key Area	SSAF Funding Received from Provider \$	% of total revenue collected by the provider	If below 40 per cent, is there an agreed transition plan in place	Details of transition plan
University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU)	78 125 531 707	1, 2.a, 2.b,2.c, 2.d, 2.e, 2.f, 5, 7, 10, 12,13, 14,15 & 16	9,354,293	37%	NA	NA
University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association (GSA)	11 274 192 974	1, 2.a, 2.b, 2.c, 2.d, 2.e, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18 & 19	3,804,080	15%	NA	NA
Total SSAF provided to student-led organisations			\$13,158,737	52%	NA	NA

² Note: Only organisations, bodies or third-party providers who receive over \$1,000 in SSAF funding are expected to be disclosed.

[Under the Act and the SSARA Guidelines, for an organisation to be eligible to receive 40 per cent of SSAF revenue the provider will need to ensure that the organisation meets the:

- definition of being a student-led organisation as set out in Section 19-39 (3) of the Act;
- requirement that decisions of the organisation can be taken independently of their provider as set out in Section 20(a)(i) of the SSARA Guidelines;
- requirement that audited accounts are kept and published providing transparency about income and expenditure as set out in Section 20(a)(ii) of the SSARA Guidelines; and
- good corporate governance standards in relation to record keeping, risk management, fraud prevention and financial controls as set out in Section 20(a)(iii) of the SSARA Guidelines.

3. Attestation that student led organisations in receipt of a minimum of 40 per cent of SSAF revenue are meeting governance requirements

Organisation Name ¹	Majority student-led	Democratically elected leaders	Independence	Audited accounts	Corporate Governance policies and procedures established and adhered to	If replying no on any measure, is there an agreed transition plan in place?	Details of transition plan
University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	NA
University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association (GSA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	NA

Declaration by Person of Authority

I, Catherine Burnheim, Executive Director, Office of the Provost at The University of Melbourne, declare that the information provided in this Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) Allocation Report is to the best of my knowledge true, complete and correct.

I further attest that the information provided in this Report meets the requirements of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and the Higher Education Support (Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy) Guidelines 2022 and that, where transition arrangements have either been sought or approved, information is provided on this.

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Signature of Person making Declaration



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Full name of Person making Declaration

Dr Catherine Burnheim

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Position of Person making Declaration

Executive Director, Office of the Provost

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Date

22 June 2026