

# University of Melbourne Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) 2024 Allocation Report



*Wominjeka. O-week 2024. Photo courtesy SASS*

## Contents

Introduction .....	2
SSAF Consultation and Achievements .....	3
Consultation.....	3
SSAF funded activities across 2024.....	4
Academic Skills Support.....	4
Support for Food and Cost of Living Pressures.....	5
Health and Wellbeing .....	8
Connection.....	9
Events and Creative Activities .....	11
Sport and Recreation .....	17
Legal Support, Advocacy and Representation.....	18
Employment and Career Support.....	21
Libraries and reading rooms (other than those provided for academic purposes) .....	24
SSAF Revenue Summary .....	26
SSAF Charge Summary .....	26
SSAF Allocation Summary .....	27

## Purpose of this report

The University of Melbourne presents this *SSAF Allocation Report* in accordance with the *Higher Education Support (Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy) Guidelines 2022* (SSARA Guidelines) requirements for providers to publish 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.

## Summary

In 2024, SSAF supported a wide range of student-focused activities across all University of Melbourne campuses, contributing to student wellbeing, inclusion, academic and career development and campus vibrancy.

Of the \$25.6 million SSAF collected and spent, over 53.8% (\$13.7 million) was allocated to student led organisations, the University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU) and the Graduate Student Association (GSA), with the remaining 46.2% (\$11.7 million) allocated to University portfolios including Student and Scholarly Services (SASS) and Melbourne University Sport (MUS).

Consultation for SSAF priorities was based on the 2022 SSAF Student Survey and ongoing feedback mechanisms including annual UMSU, GSA and MUS satisfaction surveys and stakeholder meetings to identify areas of collaboration.

SSAF-funded activities in 2024 included programs and services in the following key categories:

- Academic Skills Support – workshops, thesis bootcamps, tutoring and writing advice services
- Support for Food and Cost of Living – fresh produce, frozen meals, free breakfasts/lunches, Union Mart and financial counselling
- Health and Wellbeing – mental health support, sexual health programs, fitness sessions and wellbeing events
- Student Connection – peer mentoring, social collectives, international student buddy programs and sustainability initiatives
- Events and Creative Activities – art classes, cultural festivals, theatre, music, student publications and orientation festivals
- Sport and Recreation – subsidised fitness programs, club sports, water safety education and casual recreation access
- Legal Support, Advocacy and Representation – legal services, advocacy casework, submissions to government and student representation
- Employment and Career Support – barista training, expos, mentoring, career advice and employability programs
- Libraries and Reading Rooms – recreational library (Rowden White Library), workshops and cultural collections.

# 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 2022 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.

Top activities considered of highest importance by 75% of the sample in 2022 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 2024, the Office of the Provost worked in partnership with UMSU, GSA, MUS and SASS to explore opportunities for collaboration across services and activities, aiming to deliver better outcomes for students. UMSU, GSA, and MUS also conduct annual satisfaction surveys to assess the effectiveness and relevance of their services and make improvements based on student feedback.



*GSA Music Group. Photo courtesy of GSA*

## SSAF funded activities across 2024

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.** In June and November, UMSU provided over 100 volunteers to support stalls across Parkville and Southbank, answering questions, promoting support services and handing out study supplies and snacks, including thousands of pieces of fruit thanks to the Health Promotion Program. 100s of students visited the stalls each day, and the volunteers made a visible difference to student wellbeing on campus.

**Exam Support Program.** GSA partnered with campus cafés to distribute 1,000 digital coffee vouchers. GSA also hosted its first Family Fun Day since COVID-19, featuring face painting, a jumping castle, a DJ, dance activations, and giveaways, fostering connections among student parents.

**Transition support for new students.** SASS provided students with a combination of orientation program workshops, subject-specific support and English language support provided by the Academic Skills team. Subject-specific support includes developing and delivering discipline, subject and assessment-specific workshops and designing and curating tailored self-access learning resources for students. In 2024, Academic Skills delivered subject-specific support to students in 249 subjects, with workshop attendances of approximately 15,569 students – a 55% increase compared to 2023.

**Time Management and Goal Setting workshops.** GSA, in collaboration with Campus Consultancy, ran workshops to equip students with valuable tools to kick-start their academic year productively.

**'Shut Up & Write'.** This popular program was expanded to weekly hybrid sessions, offering greater flexibility for students to focus on their writing at different times throughout the week. These structured social writing sessions, designed to overcome student isolation and help beat procrastination, offer support and a productive and social space for focused writing sessions.

**Thesis Bootcamp.** Run by GSA, this three-day intensive writing program is designed for later-stage candidates who are in the write-up stage of their thesis. The in-person event includes a selection of thesis-specific support and opportunities for social connection each day, as well as relaxation, fun, guest speakers and strategies for writing productively and activities to refresh the students' minds. 2024 saw strong growth, with registrations increasing by 11% in Semester 1 and 59% in Semester 2.

**Academic English Tutorials (AET).** SASS provided either a 3-day intensive or 9-week semester long program that develops a range of vital skills for graduate coursework students including critical reading and note taking, academic writing and referencing, oral presentations, participating in tutorials and Australian academic culture and expectation. 2024 saw the program's highest ever participation rate, reaching 1,758 students, with consistently positive feedback across all variants of the program.



UMSU Volunteers serving free food. Photo courtesy UMSU



GSA food insecurity. Photo courtesy GSA

## Support for Food and Cost of Living Pressures

**Breakfast Club.** The GSA Breakfast Club program continued in 2024 offering free meals and informal networking to graduate students. Overall, the program provided 6,030 meals an increase of 10% from 2023.

**Fresh Food Project.** This SASS run program provided students with locally sourced fresh fruit and vegetables from *The One Box*. In 2024 over 95,500kg of fresh fruit and produce was provided free to 8,573 unique registered students over the course of the year.

**Frozen Meals Program.** Facilitated by SASS, *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.

**Lunch Socials.** GSA run fortnightly free lunches for postgraduates, with a rotating menu and a chance to connect with fellow students over a delicious meal.



*GSA O-Week. Photo courtesy GSA*



*GSA Open Day. Photo courtesy GSA*

**The Social Lunch.** SASS provide a weekly free ready-to-eat social meal program targeted at specific cohorts lacking food security, including 'At Risk' students, students accessing Financial Aid, and identified students from rural and regional backgrounds. The program was adapted to support other groups as well such as the new Naarm Scholars, and an ad hoc event for Bangladeshi students, to support this cohort in response to the deadly riots that took place across Bangladesh during August 2024. Overall, 468 unique students attended The Social Lunch across the course of the year.

**Welfare Brunch.** UMSU served 300-500 students each Thursday morning during semester with a large portion of plant-based curry and an opportunity to socialise with their peers.

**Welfare Dinner.** Launching towards the end of 2024 in response to student demand for an evening meal, this UMSU run dinner gave around 100 students each Wednesday a chance to sit down and chat about their day over a free meal.

**Health Promotions Cooking Classes.** SASS ran 115 workshops designed to empower students with the skills to create nutritious, budget-friendly and delicious meals. Information from the workshops is also readily available on the healthy eating website.

**Union Mart.** A team of nearly 500 UMSU student volunteers, working closely with Foodbank Victoria and other providers to provide free groceries to support 750+ students weekly with the cost of living crisis. 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 extra students who were facing more significant financial difficulties, including those with families, on scholarship or living on the PhD stipend.
- **Southbank.** In 2024 Union Mart expanded to Southbank, with volunteers and UMSU Southbank representatives working together to provide groceries each Tuesday for around 50 students.
- **Winter Pop-Up.** During the winter break, Union Mart ran an additional pop-up to help more than 300 students prepare for winter. Products included heaters, heated blankets, beanies, jackets and scarves.

**Cost of Living.** GSA provide a well-stocked student kitchenette with tea and coffee in the 1888 building created a welcoming space for graduate students to study and unwind. Family rooms and parenting and studying workshops were provided to support graduate parents, and graduate students received grocery and coffee vouchers to help with daily expenses.



GSA Marketing Banner. Photo courtesy of GSA

**Financial Counselling.** GSA helped 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. They also supported Graduate Access Melbourne scholarship applications– all of which were successful - on behalf of students wishing to undertake post-graduate studies by coursework.

**Rental Housing Toolkit.** The GSA Policy and Advocacy team partnered with *the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Healthy Housing* to develop the *GSA Rental Housing Toolkit*. The *Toolkit* was developed in response to graduate students expressing a need for comprehensive, reliable and practical housing information to be presented to students in a way that is engaging and accessible.

**Accommodation Workshop.** Run by UMSU International, workshop is an opportunity for new incoming international students to learn about accommodation and renting in Australia.

**UMSU Welfare Newsletter.** The newsletter is a new initiative from UMSU Welfare, intended to provide a variety of entries, from cheap eats on campus, to recipes, comic strips, and creative writing.

**Clothes and Book Swap.** Run by UMSU, second-hand clothing and books were redistributed free to students – not only directly supporting students but also contributing to waste minimisation.

**Early Childhood Education Services (ECES).** This SASS service provided financial support for local and international students and their families. 56 students had children enrolled in one the three University ECS centres, and financial support was provided for a further 26 students whose children attended a non-university operated ECS. A student rebate scheme was also applied to assist low-income local and international student families with childcare fees.

**School Holiday Vouchers.** The GSA voucher program was designed for graduate students who are parents or carers and supports participation in MUS’s School Holiday program, allowing children to engage in a variety of activities, easing the financial burden on student families



Pass the Parcel at Winterfest. Photo courtesy UMSU



GSA Rental Housing Toolkit. Photo courtesy GSA



Sexual health week. Photo courtesy UMSU Int



Rock up sport – mixed netball. Photo Courtesy MUS

## Health and Wellbeing

**Mental Health Nurse.** This SASS role coordinates the Mental Health Program at the Health Service. In 2024 this role provided both direct and indirect care for hundreds of students, including interim and crisis support where needed; delivered training and events; developed educational resources and participated in research.

**Safe Partying Workshops.** Working with *Harm Reduction Victoria*, UMSU Welfare provided workshops for 30 students on the dangers of drug use. Without condoning illegal drug use, the workshops provided students with the skills to ensure that those around them are as safe as possible. This included a token for a drug testing kit from *Harm Reduction Victoria*.

**Sexual Harm Response Coordinator Team.** The UMSU team provides independent support and advice to students affected by sexual violence; 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 sexual violence. Work included:

- **Casework.** Assisted 24 individual students with advice and support regarding sexual misconduct.
- **Ignore No More Campaign.** Funded by the Respect Initiatives Team, the campaign included materials and merchandise for student leaders who completed the workshops on developing educational messaging for students on bystander intervention, how to access support services, and recognising inappropriate behaviour. Stalls were also held at key UMSU events to raise awareness about resourcing and support for students at the university.
- **Pop-Up Consent Workshops.** In collaboration with the Respect Initiatives Team five-minute consent workshops were held for over 400 students during Respect Week.
- **Primary Prevention Workshops.** 35 workshops were delivered to 583 students primarily on *Clubs and Societies Bystander Intervention* and *Responding to Disclosures* training, which improved participants' knowledge of and confidence in, dealing with bystander issues.

**Safer Sex Practices Program.** Working with the SASS Health Promotion Team, this UMSU program empowers students to make safer sex choices by providing free sexual health information and

contraceptives like condoms, lubricant and dental dams. The program has seen an increase in uptake since the collection lockers were moved to a more accessible location in 2024.

**Health and Wellbeing Sessions** As part of GSA’s Health and Wellbeing initiative, graduate students were invited to attend a variety of in-person wellness classes including dance, music expression, yoga, Pilates, Zumba, and meditation. In 2024 Yoga attendance increased by 25.8% and Pilates by 33.9%. These free activities promoted physical and mental wellness, encouraged creativity, and offered a social outlet for stress relief and self-expression.

**Stressless Week.** UMSU’s stressless week ran as a large-scale event in week 12 of each semester to destress students in the build-up to exams. Destressing activities included *Donuts & Crochet*, *Arts & Crafts Market*, *Yoga*, *Zumba*, *Tai-chi*, *Thrift Market*, *Silent Disco*, *Origami workshop*, *pass-the-parcel*, *Arcade games*, *POC Cookout*, *Dogs and Donuts* (with therapy dogs) amongst much more.



GSA Grad Groups Expo. Photo courtesy GSA



Oktoberfest. Photo courtesy UMSU

## Connection

**Peer Program Pilot.** The GSA Policy & Advocacy team launched the pilot of GSA’s GR Peer Program in collaboration Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS). The program sought to pair new MDHS PhD students with mentors in the later stages of their degrees to foster connection and support. At the end of the program, mentees reported they had increased their confidence and made new connections in their Faculty, while mentors were able to enhance their communication and leadership skills.

**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.



*GSA Bike n Blend. Photo courtesy of GSA*



*International student hangout. Photo courtesy UMSU Int*

**Speed Friending.** 675 students engaged in a one-hour relaxed friendly UMSU run session to meet new people, chat about their lives and swap socials – and maybe meet their best friend.

**Sustainability Events.** The GSA ran a range of sustainability events including: 2 Bike’n’Blend smoothie bikes; 2 ‘How to organise a sustainable event’ internal GSA workshops; Buy/Swap/Sell Thrift Market; ‘Ride to Uni’ awareness and support; an internal waste education seminar; participation in the Sustainability Fair in collaboration with the UoM Sustainability team and sponsoring a Global Health and Climate Change conference.

**Collectives.** UMSU’s collectives are run by and for students with shared identities or shared political aims. They foster community and solidarity, giving students a place to be themselves and connect with their peers. Our 2024 Collectives included:

- Queer People of Colour Collective
- People of Colour x Queer x Southbank Collective
- Disabilities x Southbank Collective
- Women’s Collective
- Women’s x People of Colour Collective
- International Collective
- Bla(c)k Collective
- Aro/Ace Collective
- Trans Collective
- Queer Lunch
- G&Ts with the LGBTs.

**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.

**International Graduate Student Buddy Program.** A new GSA initiative in 2024 to help international students to find their feet and make connections.

**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.



*Summerfest. Photo courtesy UMSU Int.*



*BABBA in the amphitheatre. Photo courtesy UMSU*

## Events and Creative Activities

**Graduate Orientation.** GSA Orientation activities included: Summer Soiree/President's Welcome, Welcome Day, an afternoon social with therapy dogs and outdoor games, along with Building Tours and Speed Friending to help students connect. Art Classes, encouraged self-expression, while the International Fiesta celebrated cultural diversity with food, drinks, and performances. In celebration of its 30th Anniversary, GSA hosted live entertainment and extended Orientation events to Southbank and Werribee campuses, ensuring all students felt included.

**SummerFest.** UMSU's largest orientation festival is designed to welcome and engage incoming and returning students. This three-day program, held across three campuses, featured over 20 events and saw 8,500 student registrations. A key part of this festival was the Clubs Expo, which facilitated 23,000+ new student memberships, helping students connect with clubs and societies from their first days on campus.

**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.

**Cultural Events.** GSA hosted significant cultural events to promote appreciation and respect for diverse cultures. These included celebrations such as Easter, Ramadan Iftar, International Fiesta, the Moon Festival, and Diwali.



GSA Disco Ball. Photo courtesy GSA



Diwali. Photo courtesy SASS

**2024 Disco Ball.** The GSA ball featured an exciting lineup of entertainment, including a live band, DJ, improvised dance performance, and a photo booth. Overall, the event received positive feedback from attendees, who particularly enjoyed the live band and the interactive dance performance, which encouraged audience participation and added to the high-energy atmosphere of the night.

**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.

**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.

**End-of-Exam Party.** Held in June and run by GSA, this event is especially for mid-year graduates and attracted over 300 students who were given the opportunity to unwind and celebrate after exams.

**Farrago.** The UMSU student magazine, produced by elected student representatives and featuring the work of hundreds of students covering news, fiction, poetry, opinion pieces, photography and visual art. Farrago is available to students and the public online and in print.



Diwali. Photo courtesy SASS



GSA End of Exam party. Photo courtesy GSA



*Farratography photo exhibition launch event. Photo courtesy UMSU*



*GSA Monthly Thrift Market. Photo courtesy GSA*

**Art Classes.** Hosted by GSA, this program sees students getting creative, destressing and meeting other like-minded people at weekly art classes. Growing by 34% in 2024, each session focuses on a different subject matter or medium, such as painting, drawing and collage making.

**Art Prize.** An annual event aligned with the GSA’s Engaged and Healthy Communities mandate, that celebrates the diverse creativity of graduate students, offering an outlet for expression beyond academic endeavours. In 2024, over 170 submissions encompassed a range of media, including photographs, digital artwork, paintings, and drawings.

**30<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party.** GSA created lively entertainment and food, culminating in a spectacular giant birthday cake. 400+ attendees joining in the festivities, the event was a testament to the strong and enduring graduate student community that GSA has cultivated over the past three decades.

**Knitting Workshop.** A one-week workshop from UMSU Welfare provided a space to socialise and learn how to knit, crochet and make friendship bracelets from provided materials.

**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.

**GSA Monthly Market Day.** Showcasing graduate groups, vendors and performances, the market day creates a vibrant space for networking, creativity, and collaboration.



*GSA 30th birthday party. Photo courtesy GSA*



*Radio Fodder. Photo courtesy UMSU*



*Drawing with Ashley Ronning. Photo courtesy UMSU*



*UMSU Art Prize. Photo courtesy UMSU*

**Tastings.** UMSU Creative Arts Department and Events team collaborated on this weeklong program on the theme of *Togetherness* that featured theatre showcases, short films, photography exhibitions, dance performances, and concluded with a Battle of the Bands in collaboration with the UMSU Media department.

**Arts Programs.** UMSU hosted exhibitions, workshops and collaborative projects, as well as an artist-in-residence and supporting two curatorial student internships. In 2024 Arts Program Staff along with 120 student artists and curators delivered 20 exhibitions to 8,745 visitors.

**Arts Collection.** The UMSU collection is displayed in public areas throughout the Arts and Cultural Building, Rowden White Library, and Building 168 as well as in UMSU Student Office Bearers offices for all students to engage with and enjoy. In 2024 the Collection expanded with the acquisitions of artworks by Zachary Beven, Shannon Costa, Nichoas Currie, Dylan Marriott and Ella Rizzi from Victorian College of the Arts Graduate exhibition.

**Arts Lab.** An UMSU open access studio offering skill-building through a dynamic creative workshops program. In 2024, 51 workshops spanning textiles, ceramics, printmaking, photography and much more, engaged over 1,100 students. While student groups and clubs hosted an additional 30 creative and educational activities across the year.



*GSA Art Prize. Georgia Anne. Photo courtesy GSA*



*Active Screen-Printing Workshop presented by Troppo in the Arts Lab. Photo courtesy UMSU*



*The Possibilities are Immense 50 years of the George Paton gallery 24. Photo courtesy UMSU*



*3-Shot Film Festival curated by Simin Dolatkah. Photo courtesy UMSU*

**George Paton Gallery.** A dynamic UMSU program of student exhibitions was complemented by three landmark projects:

- **Light Play by Kayley Martinez.** George Paton Gallery Exhibition Award.
- **The Possibilities Are Immense: Fifty Years of the George Paton Gallery.** A series of exhibitions spanning five decades, reflecting on the Gallery's legacy and future with particular thought to its reputation as a as a pioneering platform for risky and rigorous contemporary art within the student union
- **Art Prize.** This inaugural UMSU event showcased 49 exceptional works created by students from all parts of the university.

**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.

**Union House Theatre (UHT).** UMSU supported theatre productions, creative and technical workshops, industry pathways, mentorships, residencies, performances and more. Supporting 27 autonomous Student Theatre Groups as they create their own productions, as well curating a dynamic program of events and workshops, UHT delivered over 70 events in 2024, with a record breaking 15,007 patrons engaging with performing arts on campus.

**Theatre Volunteer Program.** 78 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.



*Pony Cam Theatre Takeover in the Union Theatre. Photo courtesy Andrew Sig*



*Potluck in the Guild Theatre. Photo courtesy Nam Nguyen*



*UMSU dance battle. Photo courtesy Nam Nguyen*



*Guild Fringe Dance Edition. Photo courtesy Nam Nguyen*

**Student Theatre Groups.** 33 UMSU theatre productions and 20 dance works – including 22 new student works – presented by 1,794 cast, crew and creatives. In addition, administration support was provided for 27 affiliated Student Theatre Groups including governance, facility-access, public liability insurance, induction and training.

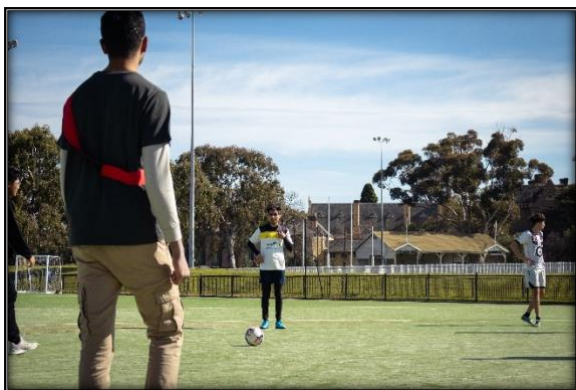
**African Dance and Wellbeing.** Supported by UMSU and a University of Melbourne Health Promotion Grant, five participatory lunchtime African dance sessions were held in the amphitheatre.

**Arts and Culture Film Festival *Live Remains*.** Curated by UMSU’s archive intern and Master of Cultural Materials Conservation student Arabella Frahn-Starkie, this festival enlivened this extraordinary archive by drawing out the history of students’ arts on campus.

**UMSU Dance Battle in Collaboration with Cypher Culture.** More than 600 students gathered to watch 48 student street dancers show off their moves and battle it out in the amphitheatre for International Dance Day.

**Guild Fringe: Dance Edit.** Inspired by the UMSU archive and stories of Guild Theatre Dance, this two-week program of events as part of the 2024 Fringe Festival, included 14 events along with 10 commissioned works, alumni community gatherings and industry discussions to celebrate the passion for dance and movement on campus. With over 900 audience members in attendance and many more passersby who engaged in site-specific and film work, the festival was an enormous critical and creative success.

**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, 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.



*International Sport Carnival. Photo courtesy UMSU Int*



*Semester 2 Orientation Week Clubs' Day. Photo courtesy MUS*

## Sport and Recreation

**Sport Fitness Program.** In a commitment to keeping costs as low as possible, MUS 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.

**Sport Subsidised Casual Access.** New MUS program initiatives were introduced 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-hit' programs allowing students to access venue hire facilities for no fee, including access to tennis, squash and badminton courts.

**Student Life Active Pass.** The pass was created by MUS to introduce new students to the full range of recreation, fitness and sport offerings at the University - including 'come and try' sessions for sporting clubs and programs; fun weekly events, activities and giveaways; exciting trips and tours; social sporting competitions; and games and pop-up activities throughout the campus.

**Sport and Club Support.** MUS supported 47 affiliated clubs with a combined membership of 7,738 members (an increase of 11% from 2023) comprising 4,740 students (an increase of 12% from 2023). Clubs were provided with a range of supports to help ensure success.

**Informal Physical Activities in New Recreation Spaces.** MUS provided free pop-up 'casual' activities such as pickleball, badminton, spikeball and table tennis located in campus areas with regular student traffic increased opportunities for the University's community to engage in more spontaneous physical activities helping to create a vibrant campus experience. There was also free access (9am-5pm) to a new recreation room within the sports precinct containing billiards, table tennis and an air hockey table as well as Apple TV and KAYO on the big screen (via projector).

**Water Safety Program.** A free aquatics education initiative from MUS 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. 2024 continued to see strong enrolments numbers, with 911 students participating in Semester 1 (83% female, 90% international), 834 in Semester 2 (81% female, 94% international) plus the introduction of a shortened 8-week

intensive program which was attended by an additional 181 students (86% female, 96% international) in October.

**International Student Sports Carnival.** MUS and UMSU International ran their inaugural international student carnival with over 300 registrations. Three action packed days of sporting fun, and chance to show off skills, compete with friends and enjoy a delicious BBQ.

**International Student Bike Awareness/Care sessions.** Provided by MUS 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.



*Beyond Borders. Photo courtesy UMSU Int*



*Mini carnival. Photo courtesy UMSU Int*

## Legal Support, Advocacy and Representation

**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. 2024 highlights included:

- Refined and redeveloped the service delivery model, restructuring and expanding resources to increase capacity to meet demand.
- Introduction of a real-time hotline between the UMSU Information Desk and the Advocacy Service to provide support to front-line staff helping a student in immediate distress.
- Developed new, and refined existing self-help resources, such as the *Safe Student Activism on Campus* webpage.

### Submissions and Public Advocacy

- *UMSU Briefing Paper: Student Placements Working Group* – better support for students on professional placements.
- Consultation on a National Student Ombudsman in response to the Budget 2024-25.
- Delivered two rounds of training for new volunteer student members for University Discipline Panels.
- Provided support and advice to UMSU Welfare Department's *Cost of Living Crisis Report*.
- Provided support and advice to elected Student Representatives for their contributions to meetings of Academic Board, Elected Reps, TALQAC and Academic Programs Committee.

- Provided support and advice to UMSU President and General Secretary on the University’s project to improve special consideration policy and processes.

**Cost of Living Report Launch and Advocacy.** Based on a student survey with over 1600 responses UMSU Welfare developed *A Campus in Crisis*, a 100+ page report detailing how students at the University are struggling with the cost of living crisis. This formed the basis for UMSU’s submission to the Victorian Parliament’s Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria. The Welfare Officers were invited to present their findings to the Committee and results from the report were cited in the Committee’s final report as tabled in Parliament.

**City of Melbourne Draft Homelessness Strategy 2024-2030.** GSA’s submission provided feedback on the City of Melbourne Draft Homelessness Strategy 2024-2030, from a student perspective. Recommendations were made to both the Strategy and the Action Plan. These recommendations were based on the understanding that graduate students are a unique cohort in need of specialised support and advocacy. The submission recommended that, to understand the needs and priorities of graduate students, the City of Melbourne should engage with them and their representative organisations.

**Assistive Technologies Library Accessibility Survey Report.** GSA developed a survey to learn more about the experiences of graduate students who use assistive technologies to complete research and study. While the results of this survey are not representative, they highlight the nature of the accessibility issues faced by graduate students using assistive technologies. The survey report made several recommendations to the University, including actions that would improve the University’s interfaces and services. The report also recommended that the University advocate for publishers to ensure their resources and websites are accessible for people using assistive technologies.

**2024 Food Insecurity Survey.** Run by GSA, this survey highlighted the drivers and impacts of food insecurity among graduate students at the University of Melbourne, as well as barriers they faced when accessing food relief. The survey was completed by over 550 graduate students across all faculties at the University. Data from this survey shaped GSA’s submission to the Victorian Government’s inquiry into food security in Victoria.



*International Brekkie. Photo courtesy UMSU Int*



*International Expo. Photo courtesy UMSU Int*



Heads of Clubs. Photo courtesy UMSU Int



Charms and Chats. Photo courtesy UMSU Int

**Submission to the inquiry into food security in Victoria.** GSA's submission highlighted the drivers and impacts of food insecurity among graduate students, as well as the barriers they face when accessing food relief. The submission made several recommendations which focused on increasing the food security of graduate students. GSA's Policy and Advocacy team were invited to expand on the findings of the submission at the inquiry's public hearing. Several of the inquiry's final report recommendations aligned with recommendations made by GSA.

**Supplementary Submission to the Select Committee on Cost of Living.** The GSA submitted a supplementary submission to the Select Committee on Cost of Living. This submission included additional information and expanded recommendations, based on new data outlining graduate students' food insecurity, renting and placement experiences. The submission also explored the impacts of the rising cost of living on inequality in higher education and the future workforce, as well as the other long-term impacts of the cost of living.

**UMSU Legal Service.** An accredited community legal centre that provides 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 2024, the UMSU Legal Service engaged in a wide range of advocacy and collaborative activities which continued to raise the profile of the service; implemented new practice management systems to streamline data entry and intake processes; and built further professional connections to expand capacity and promote students' legal rights. Key highlights included:

- **Legal Sector Collaboration.**
  - **National Student Legal Services Network (NSLSN).** UMSU Legal Service continued as co-chair in 2024, facilitating this space for student legal services around Australia to connect, share information, and collaborate on advocacy and law reform initiatives which benefit students.
  - **Pro Bono Partnerships.** The UMSU Legal Service expanded its *pro bono* partnerships in 2024, setting up a secondment program with the law firm HWL Ebsworth. Through this program, the Legal Service has been able to increase capacity for direct advice and casework by having a law graduate seconded to the service on a weekly basis.
- **Law Reform and Advocacy work.** In 2024, the UMSU Legal Service contributed to advocacy regarding the Victorian Government's Housing Statement and the

implementation of significant reforms to the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic). These reforms include changes to the law such as improving the options to end a fixed term lease early, and reforming processes for renters to resolve disputes. These are among some of the most common rental issues which the Legal Service sees, and the reforms should directly benefit student renters.

- **Community Legal Education.** Working with the University a series of Rental Rights seminars were delivered on both Parkville and Southbank campuses with the sessions available online with live translation to Mandarin Chinese and Bahasa Indonesian. Moving out and ending tenancy sessions were held for Australia Awards Scholarships students. Training sessions on budgeting, sponsorship, grants, banking, receipts, record-keeping and who is responsible for financial decisions were held for new and outgoing executives of UMSU clubs and societies. Approximately 200 written resources on areas of law relevant to students, including police powers and bike law were provided.
- **Collaborated with the Australian Human Rights Commission** to support their delivery of consultations with students on sexual harassment and the workplace on campus, for a 2025 report on the topic.

**Public Advocacy Submissions and Reports.** UMSU: 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 Future Career Expo. Photo courtesy GSA*



*GSA Fiesta Soundbath. Photo courtesy GSA*

## Employment and Career Support

**Barista Training Program.** GSA launched a Barista Training Program in Semester 1, which offered graduate students practical skills for crafting café-quality coffee. With a high attendance rate and great interest, this initiative also helped students gain skills for part-time jobs in the hospitality industry, supporting them with cost of living pressures

**Future Career Expo.** The GSA hosted a successful inaugural Future Careers Expo in October, with over 300 registered students engaging with employers and panellists, the event brought together nearly 30 employers and industry leaders. The Expo showcased emerging career opportunities for

University of Melbourne graduate students, emphasising future-ready skills and cross-sector employment.

**The Graduate Catalyst Program.** A new initiative by GSA aimed at providing graduate students with mentorship, leadership, and development opportunities. The program offered participants practical work experience to support their transition into professional environments, while also contributing to GSA's organisational goals. Participants were employed and compensated as casual staff members.

**LEAD (Leadership Exploration and Development).** A GSA-run leadership program designed to help graduate students build awareness of their values, strengths, and leadership style. It aims to unlock the potential of students who might not view themselves as natural leaders but possess the potential to make a meaningful impact. The LEAD program ran twice in 2024, with applications increasing 40% from the previous year, reflecting strong graduate student interest.

**Students@Work Mentorship Network.** A SSAF grant program which cultivated meaningful relationships between former interns and the inaugural cohort of Narrm 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.** GSA provided support graduate students with career-focused webinars and workshops led by the experts from the Future Career Design Team. Sessions covered career planning, CV writing, interview training, LinkedIn strategies, finding part-time work and more. In 2024, webinar attendance grew by 7% (639 attendees), with the net promotor score (NPS) rising from 72% to 88%. Workshop attendance increased by 10%, while the NPS improved from 83% to 88%.



*Bookbinding workshop in the Rowden White. Photo courtesy UMSU*



*Student Impact at the Guild Theatre. Photo courtesy Nam Nguyen*



UMSU volunteers. Photo courtesy UMSU



GSA Fiesta. Photo courtesy GSA

**Volunteering.** 640 new students signed up to volunteer with UMSU in a combined total of 18,988 volunteer hours to support services, events and initiatives across the entire union.

**Volunteer Program.** A new UMSU program in 2024 recruited 192 volunteers in just a few months to support a wide range of union activities such as Bites & Bustles, UMSU Collectives and large-scale festivals.

**Employability Summit.** Run by UMSU International, students heard guest speakers and were provided with opportunities to network with like-minded individuals while exploring career opportunities.

**Welfare Volunteers.** Union Mart, Welfare Brunches and other UMSU Welfare volunteering opportunities enabled students to gain Melbourne Plus accreditation. Further, the volunteering roles with their vertical progression acted as a valuable experience for student resumes. The Welfare Officers acted as employment references for numerous volunteers.

**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.

**Writing Advice Service (WAS).** Employing recent graduates, graduate researchers and Academic Tutors, this SASS service offers students personalised feedback on their writing, including advice about resources, skills and techniques that students can apply to further develop their writing. 2024 saw sustained high demand, with approximately 2,572 students receiving personalised feedback. Service satisfaction was very high (4.7/5), with students being particularly grateful for the quick turnaround in providing clear, direct and relevant feedback on their writing.



*Creative Collage Workshop in the Rowdy.  
Photo courtesy UMSU*



*Origami workshop in the Rowdy.  
Photo courtesy UMSU.*

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

**Rowden White Library.** Now in its 86<sup>th</sup> year, the ‘Rowdy’ was voted the most popular UMSU service in the annual UMSU Engagement Survey. Housing a diverse range of fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, comics, graphic novels, manga, eBooks, eAudiobooks, emagazines and high-end gaming machines curated around broad student interest and with a focus on popular culture, this recreational library saw 175,958 visitors across the course of the year and 207,777 total interactions. Semester 2 saw the introduction of regular workshop and event programming for the library. From mandala and origami workshops, to live music and zine making. Overall, events and workshops were attended by more than 500 students.

**Archive and Vinyl Collection.** The UMSU Archive is a significant cultural collection under the care of the RWL for over 30 years. Every year two archive interns undertake various projects within the archive. Archive material requests for research are facilitated by the library staff. The RWL vinyl collection is now housed in the IDA Bar for the enjoyment of all students and Radio Fodder.



*Ida Bar vinyl collection. Photo courtesy UMSU*



*Ida Bar. Photo courtesy UMSU*



*Fiesta del Sol. Photo courtesy SASS*



*O-week. Photo courtesy SASS*

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

[MUS 2024 Annual Report](#)

[UMSU 2024 Annual Report](#)

[GSA 2024 Annual Report](#)



*Mid-Autumn Moon Festival. Photo courtesy SASS*



*Mid-Autumn Moon Festival. Photo courtesy SASS*



*GSA Disco. Photo courtesy GSA*

## SSAF Revenue Summary

	2024 Allocation \$ <sup>1</sup>	2024 Actual \$
SSAF Revenue	\$20,798,191	\$23,100,749
SSAF revenue carried forward from [insert previous reported year]	\$3,954,754	\$3,994,197
<b>Total SSAF funds available for 2024</b>	<b>\$24,752,945</b>	<b>\$27,094,946</b>
SSAF revenue carried over into 2024	\$3,256,626	\$2,173,096

<sup>1</sup> 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 **2024** the maximum SSAF was **\$351**.

Student Status	2024 SSAF charged \$ <sup>2</sup>	Number of students charged in 2024 <sup>3</sup>
Full-time <sup>1</sup> (> 0.75 EFTSL)	\$351	47,653
Part-time <sup>1</sup> (< 0.75 EFTSL)	\$263	25,881
		<b>Total: 73,516</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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 2024. 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 [insert reported year] as the total EFTSL they undertook in 2024 was equal to 0.875.

Student Status	2024 SSAF charged \$ <sup>2</sup>	Approx. number of SSAF students remote learning 2024 <sup>4</sup>
Remote learning/Online only	<b>58,839</b>	<b>209</b>

<sup>4</sup> 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 2024**

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)	2024 Total Allocation \$	2024 Total Actual Spend \$	Are services available online?	Estimated No. of students accessing services
1. Health Services	621,840	648,893	Y	49,906
2. Clubs or other associations	454,706	213,432	Y	100,470
a. Sporting	5,990,552	5,958,313	Y	27,304
b. Internal student politics	5,849	7,460	Y	1,187
c. Gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, or nationality-based	72,196	119,970	Y	11,046
d. Areas-of-study related e.g. law	346,207	466,601	Y	38,322
e. Other activities e.g. music, debate, chess	57,285	170,958	Y	8,271
f. Other	0	0	Y	14,340
3. Accommodation	0	0	N	0
4. Employment/career services	1,460,997	1,341,519	Y	41,993
5. Legal aid	1,181,371	1,153,522	Y	4,577
6. Support for financial affairs	968,946	862,727	Y	10,451
7. Other student amenities	5,947,931	6,201,593	Y	272,990
8. Orientation	363,587	363,587	Y	28,035
9. Food or drink	0	182,509	N	76,725
10. Advocating students	2,062,294	2,008,465	Y	46,435
11. Student Governance and Elections	58,355	58,355	Y	11,636
12. Recreational activities	506,786	669,913	Y	38,694
13. Non-Academic Library (RWL)	594,723	590,025	Y	7,649
14. Student Arts	1,287,108	1,391,738	Y	5,897
15. Student Media	239,079	242,082	Y	40,552
16. International Student needs	337,908	348,080	Y	17,137
17. Childcare	492,249	492,249	Y	278
18. Travel Security Advice	148,812	149,867	Y	4,010
19. Tutorials, Study & Learning Services	665,784	608,797	Y	5,983
20. Internships, advice, food relief, workshops & grants	1,547,193	1,338,447	Y	38,302
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,411,757</b>	<b>25,589,102</b>		<b>801,720</b>

Organisations, bodies or third-party providers that received SSAF funding in 2024

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

Organisation Name <sup>1</sup>	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	\$5,993,954	23.6%
Student and Scholarly Services (University of Melbourne)	84 002 705 224	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20	\$5,753,365	22.6%
			<b>Total SSAF provided to non-student-led organisations</b>	<b>46.2%</b>
			\$11,747,319	

<sup>1</sup> 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 <sup>2</sup>	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	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 & 20	\$9,714,056	38.2%	N/A	N/A
University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association (GSA)	11 274 192 974	2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 & 20	\$3,950,383	15.6%	N/A	N/A
<b>Total SSAF provided to student-led organisations</b>			\$13,664,439	53.8%		

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

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

Organisation Name <sup>1</sup>	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

I, Catherine Burnheim, Executive Director of the Office of the Provost, of 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.



Signature of Person making Declaration

**Dr Catherine Burnheim**

Full name of Person making Declaration

**Executive Director, Office of the Provost, University of Melbourne**

Position of Person making Declaration

**27 June 2025**

Date