**2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

**Jordan Anderson**

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 **REPORT ON THE RECENT ACTIVITIES OF THE PGSA**

**Membership**

PGSA membership stands at 1225 as at 22nd September 2017. With the addition of more social and membership events this year, the PGSA has been able to increase its reach. As we continue to increase the effectiveness and value of our events, our postgraduate community will be similarly strengthened.

**Membership Raffles**

We have held two membership campaigns in 2017. In March and September/October, we called for signups from postgraduate students, and from those that joined we randomly awarded six $50 VicBooks vouchers each time.

Joining the PGSA allows postgraduates at VUW to be kept in the loop with PGSA events, grant and funding opportunities, professional development opportunities, and important postgraduate issues. Although we do not exclude non-members, communication is much easier once postgraduates become members of the PGSA.

**Academic Conference Grants**

This year the PGSA awarded Academic Conference Grants to three applicants as listed below. These awards are generously sponsored by Vice-Provost (Research) Kate McGrath, and provide funding for the conference fees of PGSA members who are attending an international conference. If you are interested in applying for a conference grant, check out the terms and process on our website, or email pgsa@vuw.ac.nz for more details.

Huu Trung Truong Engineering & Computer Studies $973.46
Luke Santamaria Education $379.17
Kelsi Hall Biological Sciences $1000

**Student Representation**

The PGSA represents postgraduate students on key Boards and Committees at Victoria University, at both the Faculty and University level. Representatives on these committees are drawn from the Executive Board and other postgraduate volunteers.

The PGSA thanks all those who have contributed to the postgraduate community through service on a University Board or Committee. This year, the PGSA has hosted two Committee Reps Morning Tea events on 11th April, 18th July, and we have another coming up on 17th October. We currently have representatives on the following committees:

* Academic Board Jordan Anderson
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* University Research Committee Hamish Simmonds
* URC Intellectual Property Standing Committee (IPSC) Vlad Samoylov
* Human Ethics Committee Josh Brian/Schyana Sivanantham
* Faculty of Graduate Research Board Kris Santoso/Priyanka Roy
* Faculty of Health Curriculum Committee Max Baddeley
* Faculty of Health Academic Committee Tosin Popoola
* FHSS/Education Research Committee Hayden Thorne
* FHSS Faculty Board Lehyla Heward/Corrina Connor
* FHSS Academic Committee Emma Wollum
* FHSS Postgrad Committee Setor Donne Novieto
* Faculty of Science Animal Ethics Committee AEC rep (confidential)
* Faculty of Science Board Charlotte Gutenbrunner
* Faculty of Science Research Committee Charlotte Gutenbrunner
* Faculty of Engineering Board Farzana Fadaker
* Faculty of Commerce Board Solmaz Nazari Orakani
* Commerce Graduate Research Degrees Committee Aditya Kusuma
* Pipitea Human Ethics Committee René Versteegh
* Faculty of Law Board Nathan Ross
* Faculty of Education Board Xuechan Yang
* Faculty of Education Academic Committee Vacancy
* Faculty of Education Learning & Teaching Committee Vacancy
* Faculty of Architecture & Design Board Rehan Shaikh/Birgit Bachler
* Library and Information Services Committee Jayden Nowitz
* VUW Equity and Diversity Committee Rochelle Nafatali

For any postgraduate students interested in taking up a representative position on a Board or Committee, please contact our Representation Coordinator, Josh Brian (jshbrian@gmail.com ) to register your interest.

**SUBMISSIONS / REVIEWS**

The Minimum Resources Agreement, which governs the minimum resource rights of all full time research students at Victoria University, is currently being renegotiated. Vice Provost (Research) Kate McGrath is chairing the review committee, and the new MRA should be finalised by the end of 2017. Once the agreement is final, the PGSA will distribute the updated version to all members, and the website copy will be updated.

The PGSA submitted on the Maori and Pasifika Interventions Review in August 2017. After wide consultation, the Executive found that there was insufficient information available at the school level for postgraduate services for Maori and Pasifika services. The PGSA commended the Maori Learning Advisor role at Student Learning Service, as well as the Pasifika Postgraduate Network run out of Te Putahi Atawhai, as exemplary programmes helping postgraduate students with their unique needs.

The PGSA submitted on the Accommodation Review in June 2017. Again after wide consultation, the PGSA contributed to a joint submission with VUWSA which outlined the detrimental effects that the disestablishment of Uni Hall would have on postgraduate, and particularly international postgraduate students and their families. Following the submissions and a second proposal from the review committee, any decision on Uni Hall was delayed, and students were no longer faced with the imminent end of their access to university accommodation.

**EVENTS**

**Interactive Postgrad Forums**

PGSA has hosted four Interactive Forums this year. Interactive Postgrad Forums have run since 2010 and provide an opportunity for postgraduates to present their research and ideas in a friendly environment among their colleagues. They can obtain constructive criticism and feedback on their work, network with other postgraduate students and forge effective relationships that enhance their personal and professional development. Any postgrad who is keen to develop their presentation skills and promote their research, can book into a 2018 event through our Executive Administrator today.

**Quiz Night**

The 2017 PGSA Quiz Night was held on 9th May with lots of great prizes won, and all proceeds donated to the Red Cross Refugee Resettlement Programme. This was one of our major social events of the year, and it was a great success, with 25 teams participating, and $770 raised for the Red Cross.

**3 Minute Thesis Competition**

The 2017 3 Minute Thesis competition at VUW was a great success. With 40 registrations, the enduring popularity of the event among research students is clear. Engaging and entertaining presentations were demonstrative of the high quality of research being undertaken across the university. The 3 minute limit, along with the non-specialist audience provided a challenge to our participants which they took in their stride, making the task for our judges a difficult one.

Seven finalists (winners of the faculty heats) and the Honours winner presented at the 3MT Final on 18th August. The Masters winner went on to represent VUW at the National 3MT Masters final on 24th August, and our 1st place winner represented VUW at the Asia-Pacific 3MT Final in Brisbane on 29th September.

**Kickstart Workshop Pilot**

The PGSA’s first foray into communal writing events got off to a great start with the pilot of Kickstart Your Thesis running on Wednesday 6th September. Registrations filled up quickly for the 25 available spaces, and there was excitement in the air on the morning of the workshop.

Communal writing can be a powerful tool for getting concerted chunks of work done in a supportive and quiet environment. When there are 24 other people around you working hard on their research, you tend to jump on board and produce some great work too!
The workshop ran from 9am-5pm in the Student Union Building, with snacks, drinks and lunch provided by the PGSA. At the beginning of the day, each participant set two ambitious goals for their time in the workshop, and as the goals were achieved, participants received rewards.
There was plenty of positive feedback on the day, and the PGSA are happy to announce that (after a bit of fine-tuning) the workshops will become a staple in our calendar, running five times a year from 2018.

**First Fridays**Held at Kelburn on the First Friday of every month, this casual breakfast event provides postgraduates with an opportunity to meet their colleagues, and have a casual breakfast/coffee and chat.

**Tuesday Chats**

Held at Pipitea campus on the first Tuesday of each month, Tuesday Chats provides an opportunity for postgraduates to meet their colleagues, and have a casual coffee and chat.

 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Tuesday Chats**

2:30pm, VicBooks Pipitea, 3rd October

**First Fridays**

9am, Milk & Honey, 6th October

**Interactive Postgrad Forum**

4pm, Student Union Building 217/218, Kelburn Campus, 21st November

**Victorias Awards**

5pm, The Hunter Lounge, Thursday 30th November

The Victorias Award ceremony is an opportunity for the PGSA to celebrate excellence across the university, with awards for postgraduate teaching, supervision, general staff, all round postgraduate achievement, and grants for research excellence. This will be a great way to wind up the academic year – contact our Executive Administrator for tickets today!

**PGSA EXECUTIVE BOARD**

The PGSA Executive Board is the core leadership team of our Association. Below is a list of members and officers of the Executive Board:

**President**: Jordan Anderson

**Co-Vice-Presidents**: Josh Brian, Priyanka Roy

**Treasurer**: **Rehan Shaikh**

**Executive Members**: Alyssa Ryan, Kris Santoso, Taylor Cooney, Amy Yang, Emma Wollum, Schyana Sivanantham, Emerald Nguyen (resigned).

**Executive Assistant**: Sue Kelly

**Volunteers**

The PGSA is always on the lookout for keen people to join us! In addition to being a member, you might be interested in joining the Executive, or contributing to the student representation the PGSA coordinates by taking a seat on one of the many boards and committees at the university. If you are interested, please contact pgsa@vuw.ac.nz for more information!