

ANU Observer General Meeting

2019/10/23

Item 1: Meeting Opens and Apologies

Quorum met at 6.27, meeting opens

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

Delivered by Eliza

1.2 Apologies

Lottie Twyford - Reporter.

Procedural motion to consider Item 4 next

Moved by Adelle

Motion passes unanimously

Item 4: Items for Resolution

5.1 Motion to adopt the Team Regulations in Appendix F as a Regulation of the ANU Observer, to come into effect on 1 December.

Eliza: Motion to pass the chair to Adelle.

Eliza moves the motion.

Seconded by Julian Lee.

Motion passes unanimously.

Speak to motion:

Eliza: team regulations states what teams will exist, teams proposed for this period are news, finance, digital content and web team, I commend this motion

Moved by Eliza.

2 abstentions.

Motion passes.

5.2 Motion to amend the [Electoral Regulations](#) as follows, to come into effect on 1 December:

- Replace all instances of "News Editor" and "News Editors" with "Editor" and "Editors"
- Replace all instances of "Digital Editor" and "Digital Editors" with "Visual Content Executive" and "Visual Content Executives"
- Replace all instances of "Editorial Board" with "Editorial Committee"
- Replace all instances of "Council" with "Board"

- Amend 2.8 to read as follows:

2.8. Number of Positions

2.8.1. Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution, Policies, or Regulations, the General Meeting specified in 2.2.1 of this policy shall elect:

- a) Three (3) Editors;
- b) One (1) Executive for every Team apart from the Editorial Team; and
- c) One (1) Secretary.

2.8.2. The Council may, from time to time, decide to increase the number of Editors and/or Executives.

2.8.3. This decision must be made by unanimous vote.

2.8.4. Where such a decision has been made, the Council Chair or Secretary must promulgate the decision within one (1) week, and call a General Meeting to be held within four (4) weeks of the decision.

2.8.5. This General Meeting shall elect the Editor(s) and/or Executive(s) in accordance with ss 2.1-2.7 of this policy, unless:

- a) A member has submitted to the Arbitration Panel that such an increase in the number of Editors or Executives should not occur, and
- b) The Arbitration Panel has agreed with this submission.

2.8.6 If the created position(s) is/are not contested, and no submission is made and upheld under section 2.8.5, then the position will be automatically filled at the scheduled time of the general meeting. This is regardless of quorum and other procedural requirements.

Procedural motion to stop reading out motion

Moved by Eliza

1 Against

Passes

Eliza: changes are to account for changes to constitution, vote this one up if you like regulations that are consistent with the constitution

Moved by Eliza.

Seconded by Hayley.

Motion passes unanimously.

Chair passed back to Eliza.

5.3 Appointment of Arbitration Panel Members.

Arbitration panel nominees: Jason Pover, Jessica Whiting, Michael Turvey, Kevin

Motion to suspend standing orders to allow arbiters to answer questions

Moved by Eliza

Seconded by Skanda

Passes unanimously

Jason: I used to be in Observer, I was a reporter, then a News Editor and then a Council Member. Then I was a secretary and I had interpretive power over the constitution. It prepared me quite well. This year I was in Clubs Council as a Secretary which is an interpretive role... you can read my interpretation register from that. Arbitration deals with Honoraria. My complaint with Arbitration is that people on the arbitration panel did not fully understand how Observer operates, I do but I'm far enough removed not to have significant conflicts of interest.

Jess: I was a reporter last year and Editor afterwards. I had enough time and distance from the team, have a clean slate starting next year, I have strong views about honoraria, especially how to make it easier for reporters to submit.

Michael: I set up the Observer with Eliza back in the old days. I was Chair from 2017-2018-ish, helped write regulations and set up policies. I've been away from the organisation for about a year and half now. I don't know really anyone on the team, at least in a personal capacity. It gives me the kind of distance to be able to make calls, having the knowledge of how the news team works but also distance from the team prepares me quite well.

Kevin: (not in attendance)

Part of the ANUSA committee, but unable to attend because he is in another meeting.

Questions

Skanda: All of you have previous experience, spoke about benefits, do you have any previous working relationships with anyone on the team? Would your involvement in Observer bias you in disputes, if complaint of reporting incorrectly?

Michael: I worked with Kon and Adelle but I don't share my secrets with them. I don't know any of these people who run it now, part of the purpose of setting up Observer was about editorial standards, more about doing the job well than the institution.

Jess: Closest working relationship with people continuing next year, emotionally attached to Observer? (yes) I'm not the type of person to tow the party line, rigorous standards, not a person who will get emotionally involved.

Jason: Worked with Kon and I was in Council with him. Adelle was on my team. I wouldn't pretend that's a bias I'd be able to escape, I would recuse if related directly to someone I would know, I love Observer, I am very attached to it, but my mentality is to be critical of things that I like so that they stay good.

Ebe: Personal relationships you would like to declare among the nominees?

Jess: Michael's my partner. I make my own decisions, need to be 100% happy that it is my decision. Jason has known us for a while and would be good at recognising if that is problematic.

Jason: I'm friends with these two... personal relationships in governing bodies is not a new thing in Observer, it's just something to manage, it can be problematic at times... I think if you are aware of it, you can manage it. If you think you can't (you should recuse).

Michael: Who are the other members?

Eliza: It is Jack Crawford and Fred

Michael: I know those people [currently on the panel]... they are both fine. Echo what Jess said.. Relationship between people on arbitration is less important than relationships between people on the panel and in the team...

(Nominees left the room)

Votes

Jason 26, Jess 28, Michael 25, Kevin 6

Jason, Jess and Michael appointed.

Motion to resume standing orders

Moved by Michael

Passes unanimously

Item 2: Minutes from the Previous Meeting including Matters Arising

2.1 Minutes from the Previous Meeting

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a7muARc390OoTqdrnpH1dzia_nP4-uyVF_NJQWTEAIbw/edit?usp=sharing

Moved by Julian Lee.

Seconded by ?

1 Abstention.

Passes unanimously.

Item 3: Reports and Matters Arising

3.1 Report of the Chair of the Council

3.2 Report of the Chair of the Editorial Board

3.3 Report of the Digital Team

3.4 Secretary's Report

3.5 Treasurer's Report

Chair of Observer council (Eliza)

Chair passed to Adelle.

Take report as read

Started Observer in 2017 and now I'm graduating. I love Observer highly recommend people get involved, super stressful but great. I'm really excited to see how Observer goes, we've got the foundations for a long lasting university institution.

Questions

Jason: How's the ssaf proces do you have confidence and how do you think (people will go)

Now with Richard Baker not arounds instead a panel, looks like a good panel, I think this process is good, the proof will be in the pudding... we hear back next week, Kon and I presented ... I'm optimistic at this stage...our bid was for 55-56 grand...our approach is to maintain and expand a little. I encourage everyone to submit feedback if they have feelings

Jess: In terms of the office space, Have you let your grievances known to the ANU

Person i was liaising with has apologised multiple times ... I didn't want to kick up a fuss to jeopardise our office prospects but now more possible ... this seems like an ANU wide issue, and they seem aware of this issue
FnF under-resourced

Skanda: Small organisation with dedicated people...do you think workload is sustainable? Is it sustainable if the university does not give enough ssaf?

What I think isn't sustainable if people are only casually involved... you really see your skills and interest decline if you aren't involved for a period of time ... dedication important for quality and quantity

Brandon: renovating or taking office space as it is?

Eliza: only need to pay one month of rent, office is much larger than we were expecting... actually going to be full-on office so we can make some trips to IKEA... obviously we are renting so can't make modifications

Report accepted

Chair passed back to Eliza.

Chair of the editorial board (Executive editor) (Anthony)

Take my report as read

Questions:

Ebe: what editorial practices do you have in place to avoid misgendering people?

Anthony: Something we need to talk about in depth and have a process in place.

Jess: Source diversity, noticed most people are connected to the Observer, how will this be addressed?

Anthony: Make more connections, know more people and seem more open to people.

Skanda: Topic areas you regret not having done more, and hope to do more in the future?

Anthony: Next year will be the ground for finding those passions ... as an organisation, Natcon is coming up ... i think that's a good suggestion...

Jason: Do you think the news team has been putting the work in source cultivation?

Anthony: Honestly i'm not exactly sure the best path to doing that ... making sure the door is open at all times and continuing that relationship.

Ebe: volume of long form investigative, explainers and analysis has gone down significantly?

Anthony: There have been resource issues ... Hopefully training we've been putting into reporters will pay off more next year.

Jason: Expand how conflicting schedules of editors can be resolved?

Anthony: Better communication ... not as ad hoc.

Skanda: Aims for how many stories want to be published?

One every two days is probably a good pace

Motion to pass the report.

Moved By Julian.

Secondly by Konstantine.

Passed unanimously.

Digital editor report (Kon)

Report as read

I would like to thank everybody, we've had a few hard times, we tried to do things differently this year.

In my handover I have a plan for next year. If you want to hear more about it ask.

Ebe: Amazing job this year ... the new division of the digital team into two distinct spheres is positive, but doesn't address the digital team getting lumped with marketing and communications, how do you think this can be addressed? Doesn't seem to be a clear role for marketing and targeting.

Kon: It shouldn't be just a digital thing ... we produce photos for articles... something that can be addressed with the whole team in how we can be more accurate and our direction. But we can do better.

Jess: What cool new things do you want to put in the office?

Kon: Lots of exciting things we can do once we get the space, part of the reason our video content got slowed down was because we had problems with storing equipment

Brandon: Favourite part of observer this year?

Kon: Election week was quite intense, but exciting at the same time. I think the whole experience...working with people was nice.

Tristan: Did we apply for a drone in SSAF?

Kon: No. As much as I would like to, maybe not just yet.

Motion to pass the report.

Moved by Brandon.

Seconded by Adelle.

Report passes unanimously

Did not receive report from secretary, not here

Treasurer's report (Julian)

Take report mostly as read.

I've been with Observer for a year and a half now ... it's been amazing working with everyone...sincere thank you to everyone on the team.

We haven't spent a large amount of money because a lot of it would be predicated on having an office ... Glorious IKEA furniture (dollar dollar bills).

Jess: Are we still compelled to use the legal line item?

Julian: Yes.

Motion to pass the report.

Move by Jason.

Seconded by Skanda.

Report passes unanimously.

Item 7: Elections

Returning Officer: Eben Leifer

7.1 Election of News Editors

7.2 Election of Digital Editor

7.3 Election of Secretary

7.4 Election of Treasurer

Chair passed to Eben Leifer.

Eben: Secretary: Hayley Hands

Digital editors: Tristan Khaw and Angus Brooks

Treasurer: Konstantine Katsanis

News editor: Adelle Millhouse

Eben: People can nominate from the floor, and that was the impression they gave me also last year.

Nomination from the floor: Anthony Lotric - News Editor

Returning officer report (Eben)

Eben: I declare all those named all duty elected.

Secretary: Hayley Hands

Digital editors: Tristan Khaw and Angus Brooks
Treasurer: Konstantine Katsanis
News editor: Adelle Millhouse and Anthony Lotric

Motion to move the Returning Officers report.

Moved by Eliza.

Seconded by Michael.

Passes unanimously.

Chair passed back to Eliza.

Motion to suspend standing order to allow 8 minutes of questions.

Moved by Skanda.

8 Against.

Passes

Michael: What do you see as the optimal size of the observer news team?

Adelle: Four editors and two reporters to each editor.

Jess: To the digital editors: Plans for next year?

Tristan: Something i want to bring... standardising and systemising observer in general, but digital team in particular like what anthony brought up before.

Angus: Make the website a bit more aesthetic.. Better with social media as well.

Skanda: What is your goal for Observer?

Anthony: Survival.

Adelle: Sticking to one article every working day... getting people paid.

Jason: How do you plan to achieve that?

Adelle: Constantly bringing on people ... baby reporters at every meeting ... but it can be done.

Michael: for news editors, assuming you don't think it's perfect right now would you select one area of news coverage that Observer has under-covered or over-covered?

Anthony: Campus matters under-covered, possibly.

Adelle: A lot of stupid stuff that we covered this year was to the detriment of other areas ... we missed the booking fees story.

Eliza: Source protection is important to us ... Ophel trial pushed back meeting with Matthew... we didn't prioritise it the way we should have and we thought we had the time.

Ebe: Question for incoming treasurer- why?

Kon: I experienced the ssaf process for the first time this year ... I want to stick with observer ...make sure that we get our stipends and our equipment budget.

Julian: While I will no longer be treasurer ... I plan to stay on to assist the incoming treasurer with his role... the role requires tutoring and training.

Brandon: At the start of 2017, I liked how there were a tonne of explainer articles... Do you think it will make a comeback?

Anthony: We've been training a lot of people this year.

Adelle: A lot of new reporters.

Eliza: That's the end of question time.

Jason: Dissent.

Adelle nominated new chair

Jason: This is an election, not an office. Membership, not an office.

Eliza: This doesn't need to happen right now. It is not in the constitution, it is in the constitution coming into effect in 1 December. The Board may appoint anyone to be honorary life member, the Council has the power, not an ordinary general meeting.

Jason: If ...doesn't have power ...it's fine.

Meeting closed at 7.35 PM