

## Meeting 01/2019

A meeting of the **Monash Postgraduate Association (MPA) Executive Committee** was held from 11:00am to 1:00pm on Wednesday 20 February 2019 in Meeting room, Sable Drop cafe, Building H, basement, Caulfield campus

Jenny Reeder  
MPA Executive Officer  
[jenny.reeder@monash.edu](mailto:jenny.reeder@monash.edu)

## MINUTES

The meeting was opened at 11:02am.

### 1. Formal matters

#### 1.1 Acknowledgement of country

The MPAEC acknowledged and paid respect to the people of the Kulin nations as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of this land.

#### 1.2 Attendance

Present	Robyn Oxley (Chair), Avinash Dahre, Belle Lim (from item 2.1 to item 5.3), Karan Mehta, Roy Rozario (up to 4.2.8, votes for item 5 provided), Devendra Singh, Chloe Tang (from item 4.1.4 to 5.3), Roby Vota, Emily Xue
Cooptees	Razie Alibazi, Gustavo Arechiga Munguia, Madeline Barrow, Taniya Bose, Kelsey Ffrench, Jenny Jin, Sameer More, Cammi Murrup-Stewart (left at 5.2), Egor Skaletckii, Chavathana Te, Iris Tong
In attendance	Janice Boey, Zuzana Quinn, Jenny Reeder, Kim Trahar, Jessica Van Gent, Kristy Welch.
Apologies	Ash Solanki, Jeane Freer
Absent	Claire Nicholls

#### 1.3 Consideration of the agenda

No further items were added.

### 2. Minutes and Action sheet

#### 2.1 Minutes of MPAEC December meeting 01/19 for confirmation

It was moved:

*That the minutes of the December MPAEC meeting 11/2018 be confirmed.*

Moved: Robyn Oxley  
Seconded: Roy Rozario  
Carried.

#### 2.2 Action sheet

Noted.

### 3. Reports

#### 3.1 President's report

Noted.

### **3.2 Office-bearer reports**

Noted.

*Roby Vota, Queer Officer*

Roby added to his report that he was also working on a number of queer events for semester one, and would provide more information soon.

### **3.3 Staff report**

Noted. Janice thanked Avi and Dev for volunteering as AMIGO administrators for the MPA. AMIGO is the new Monash student connectivity and social inclusion app.

### **3.4 Financial reports – Nov & Dec 2018**

Noted.

### **3.5 Reports to university committees**

Noted.

### **3.6 MPAEC meeting attendance records**

Noted.

## **4. Business**

### **4.1 Business arising**

#### **4.1.1 2019 Returning Officer appointment**

The Executive Officer explained that the appointment of a new casual staff member to act as the Returning Officer for the MPAEC elections each year was a time-consuming process and the incumbent required training each time. The elections were conducted online by BigPulse, an independent election company. The Returning Officer ensured that regulations were followed, but in reality, the majority of their time was taken up with liaising between eSolutions and BigPulse on technical matters. It was proposed that the task be included in the duties of the newly created Student Representative Liaison position, allowing for continuity and the development of expertise. For this to occur, an amendment was required to the MPA Election Regulations. The committee discussed the matter and it was moved:

*That the tracked change amendments to the Election Regulations be approved.*

Moved: Robyn Oxley  
Seconded: Roy Rozario  
Carried.

#### **4.1.2 Updated student association contacts**

It was noted that an updated student association contact list had been distributed to all secretaries of university committees as well as key administrators responsible for seeking student feedback. The document was produced by MPA staff to assist in clarifying the different representative bases of the various student associations across Monash. It was produced in an effort to counter the recurring problem where the university consistently

“forgot” to consider postgraduates when creating policy, running events and developing programs, leading to very undergraduate-focussed outcomes.

#### **4.1.3 Program of MPA orientation activities**

The MPA’s orientation event program was distributed to the committee. Janice Boey encouraged all MPAEC to attend the MPA orientation sessions to meet the new postgraduate students.

#### **4.1.4 Report from 2018 CAPA ACM**

The CAPA ACM report produced by Roy, Dev and Dorothy was noted. They strongly encouraged the MPAEC to send at least one representative to CAPA council meetings and encouraged MPAEC members to run for positions on the CAPA executive. They also highlighted the need for the MPA to create a five-year strategic plan, and to be part of CAPA’s new mental health campaign. Additionally, Dev requested that the conference travel allowance budget for meals and incidentals be increased in value and flexibility. The HR & Finance Officer will look into the regulations and provide updated draft guidelines for approval by the MPAEC.

### **4.2 General Business**

#### **4.2.1 MPA name change**

Due to the University’s decision to refer to postgraduates as “graduates”, it was proposed that the MPAEC consider changing the organisation’s name to reflect the new nomenclature. It was proposed that the MPA consider changing its name to the “Monash Graduate Association” to minimise disruption of current branding and wastage of pre-printed merchandise. The change was of the name only, with no change to the colours or style of the logo. The committee were asked for their thoughts on the change, with final approval requiring a constitutional change at the AGM in May.

The following suggestions were made by the committee:

- To include a word to clarify that the MPA serves current students, not those who are graduated;
- That the name can stand the test-of-time and not need to be changed in the foreseeable future;
- That the MPA considers how other postgraduate student associations refer to themselves; and
- That the MPA considers the use of the acronym within Monash and the broader community.

It was noted that MGA currently refers to the Monash Gallery of Art. The MPA staff will investigate what other organisations the various proposed acronyms represent, and provide that information at the March meeting.

#### **4.2.2 Postgraduate Advisory Committee Structure**

It was proposed that the MPA formally establish advisory groups on each campus to work with the campus representatives in planning and running events. The advisory group would comprise interested postgraduate volunteers. The MPAEC expressed interest in the proposal and it was suggested that this could be trialled with the 2019/2020 committee, and perhaps a small trial run with the cooptees from this meeting.

#### **4.2.3 Financial support program**

Two budget amendments were proposed to the committee. With no objections, it was moved:

*That the 2019 MPA budget be amended as follows: the CAPA line item increased from \$32,000 to \$33,573 and the overall budget deficit be increased by \$3000 to establish a new line item entitled 'Financial Support Program'.*

Moved: Robyn Oxley  
Seconded: Karan Mehta  
Carried.

#### **4.2.4 Staff debit card approval**

Due to a changeover in MPA staff and to increase the ease of purchasing for events, it was moved:

*That the MPAEC approve the issuing of debit cards operating from the MPA account BSB 033 181 A/C 345 569 for Sandra Azavedo, Marketing and Communications Officer and Kim Trahar, Volunteer Program Officer.*

Moved: Devendra Singh  
Seconded: Roy Rozario  
Carried.

#### **4.2.5 Membership on discipline panels**

It was noted that any MPAEC member interested in sitting on a University panel (discipline, grievance or termination) should contact Kristy Welch, MPA Student Liaison Officer.

#### **4.2.6 CAPA 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

The CAPA Executive requested that the MPA consider organising and funding the CAPA 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. A guest list of 35 people were expected, primarily past Presidents from CAPA and postgraduate associations across Australia. The proposal was to hold an afternoon tea or pre-dinner drinks on the Caulfield campus which was more easily accessible by visitors. The committee agreed this would be a nice gesture, and moved:

*That the MPA allocates up to \$3500 to cover the costs of hosting the CAPA 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event.*

Moved: Robyn Oxley  
Seconded: Roy Rozario  
Abstentions: Karan Mehta, Roby Vota

#### **4.2.7 Global postgraduate orientation/connection**

Robyn spoke to a proposal from the Monash University Malaysian Pro-Vice-Chancellor on the creation of a global online community of postgraduates that would allow students on Malaysia campus to connect with students on the Australian campuses. The committee expressed interest in supporting this project, and agreed to issue a standing invitation to the Malaysian

postgraduate association president, to sit as an observer on the MPAEC monthly meetings.

#### **4.2.8 MPA generic awards**

Roy proposed that the MPA consider having an additional range of awards to acknowledge the contribution of university staff members to MPA seminars. It was suggested that the awards should be broader than just for staff who helped with seminars – it could offer a way to show appreciation to those staff members who were especially helpful to the postgraduate community. The committee discussed the proposal and the logistics of nominations. It was agreed that the awards needed to be separate to the SOTY and LOTY awards. Concern was raised about the nature of awarding a ‘winner’ as it was felt that this type of award should not be pitched as a competitive process. It was suggested that the MPA could create a certificate of appreciation which would be awarded to all worthy recipients. Expressions of interest were sought for a subcommittee to investigate the idea further and present a proposal to the committee. Roy agree to chair the subcommittee which included: Chloe; Karan; and Dev.

### **5. Membership**

Elections for cooption to the three vacant MPAEC positions - Indigenous Officer; Clayton campus representative; and General representative - were conducted, with the Executive Officer acting as the Returning Officer.

One application was received for the Indigenous Officer position, from Cammi Murrup-Stewart. Cammi was given the opportunity to speak and answer any questions the committee had. As there were no other nominations, and no opposition to her application, Cammi was announced as the MPA Indigenous Officer for the 2018/19 committee.

Five applications were received for the Clayton campus representative position: Chanvathana Te, Egor Skaletckii, Gustavo Munguia, Iris Tong and Sameer More. Each cooptee was given the opportunity to speak and answer committee questions. Chanvathana Te left the meeting, and did not speak to the committee. An election was conducted. Egor Skaletckii was declared elected to the position of Clayton Campus Representative with a majority of the vote.

Fifteen applications were received for the General Representative position. Eight were deemed ineligible due to election regulation 5.4.2 regarding faculty and mode maximum quotas. As the MPAEC currently has two Faculty of IT coursework members in the general representatives pool, all applications from IT coursework students were removed from consideration. Xiaohan Weng withdrew their application just prior to the meeting. The remaining six eligible applications for the General representative position were: Jenny Jin, Kelsey Ffrench, Madeleine Barrow, Razie Alibazi, Sameer More, and Taniya Bose. Each cooptee was given the opportunity to speak and answer committee questions. The committee discussed the applicants and an election was conducted. Sameer More was elected to the position of General Representative with a majority of the vote.

The committee thanked all nominees for the time their interest in the MPAEC and encouraged them to apply again in the upcoming 2019/2020 elections. The committee welcomed Cammi, Egor and Sameer to the team.

**6. Next meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled to be held at a time and date to be decided via electronic polling. Dependent on room availability, the meeting would be held between Monday 18 to Friday 29 March.