

## Meeting 10/2018

A meeting of the **Monash Postgraduate Association (MPA) Executive Committee** was held from 11:00am to 1:00pm on Tuesday, 27 November 2018 in Seminar Room 1, 43 Rainforest Walk, Clayton campus.

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## MINUTES

### 1. Formal matters

#### 1.1 Acknowledgement of country

*We the MPAEC would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the people of the Kulin nations as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of this land.*

#### 1.2 Attendance

Present Avi Dahre, Eniola Ibraheem (Chair), Roham Hosseini, Dorothy Mak, Karan Mehta (via teleconference), Bec O'Connor, Robyn Oxley, Dev Singh, Ash Solanki (via teleconference), Chloe Tang, Roby Vota  
Observers Mary Mansilla, Claire Nicholls (teleconference)  
In attendance Janice Boey, Jenny Reeder, Jessica Van Gent  
Apologies Belle Lim, Jeane Freer, Roy Rozario, Emily Xue

#### 1.3 Consideration of the agenda

No further items were added to the agenda.

### 2. Minutes and Action sheet

#### 2.1 Minutes of MPAEC August meeting 09/18 for confirmation

It was moved:

*That the minutes of the October MPAEC meeting 09/2018 be confirmed.*

Move: Roby Vota

Seconded: Roham Hosseini

Carried.

#### 2.2 Action sheet

Noted.

### 3. Reports

#### 3.1 President's report

Eni added to his tabled report that the MPA President had been invited to sit on the selection panel for Monash University's new PVC (Academic). As he was unavailable he had handed the task to the Vice-President. It was noted that as this PVC position would oversee the delivery of the University's coursework programs, it may be more appropriate to nominate an MPAEC coursework postgraduate to the selection panel.

#### 3.2 Office-bearer reports

Noted.

### **3.3 Staff report**

Noted.

### **3.4 Financial reports – Sept & Oct**

Noted.

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

Noted.

Devendra added that he was running for Academic Board and encouraged all committee members to vote in the elections.

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

Noted.

## **4. Business**

### **4.1 Business arising**

#### **4.1.1 Mental Health program**

It was agreed that discussion on the MPA's mental health program would be held over until the December meeting when Jeane would be available to speak to her proposal.

#### **4.1.2 MPA feedback on Diversity & Inclusion action plans**

The collated feedback from MPAEC members and staff on the Diversity and Inclusion action plans was submitted as part of the first round of consultations.

#### **4.1.3 Jacinta Allen response to Fares Fair campaign**

The letter received from MP Jacinta Allen, State Minister for Public Transport in response to the MPA's letter asking for her support to introduce transport concessions for Victorian postgraduates was noted.

#### **4.1.4 OB guides online**

Draft office-bearer guides for each position have been created and are to be shared with MPAEC members via a digital platform. OBs are encouraged to use, update, and make notes on these guides to assist future incumbents. Questions surrounding use of these guides can be directed to Jenny.

### **4.2 General Business**

#### **4.2.1 Budgets – 2018 amendments and draft 2019**

Jenny reminded members that the MPA's budget was tied to enrolment numbers because the MPA was funded via 40% of postgraduate SSAF. She explained that due to a sharp and unexpected increase in the number of coursework postgraduates enrolling at mid-year in 2018, there had been a corresponding promised increase in the MPA's budget in July. Under the new Funding Agreement the university requires all 2018 SSAF income received by the MPA to be expended in the year it is received. In response the MPAEC had approved the appointment of additional staff and increased their operational budget to cater to the growing numbers of postgraduates attending

MPA events. However the time needed for the staff appointment process would mean that new staff were not ready to start until December, making it difficult to responsibly spend the additional income at time when the majority of postgraduates were not on campus. The committee agreed that any normal annual purchases that could reasonably be made in 2018 should be made, such as merchandise for the 2019 orientations. The MPA will request to hold over any remaining surplus for expenditure during the first semester of 2019, which would ensure that the students who had paid the mid-year SSAF would still benefit from the expenditure.

The 2019 MPA budget was presented to the committee for approval. The committee discussed the 2018 and 2019 budgets and changes in allocations. After consideration of the proposals, it was moved:

*That the 2019 budget be approved.*

Moved: Bec O'Connor  
Seconded: Robyn Oxley  
Carried.

#### **4.2.2 Events overview**

Jan Boey spoke to a powerpoint presentation outlining the extensive range of events and programs run by the MPA in 2018. Dorothy requested that in 2019 the MPA considers extending the Fuel Your Study/Free breakfasts program to run over SwotVac and the entire exam period. Roby requested that the MPA look at expanding the volunteer program to incorporate work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and the Queer communities.

#### **4.2.3 2019 Returning Officer appointment**

Noted. The position is to be advertised in the next MPA newsletter to attract recently graduated postgraduates.

#### **4.2.4 MPA Instagram**

Noted. A trial of the MPA running an Instagram account will take place across semester 1, 2019.

#### **4.2.5 MPA Feedback on Scholarships policy**

The MPA submitted feedback to the university on their proposed changes to the Scholarship Policies and Procedures.

#### **4.2.6 LGBTIQ national conference**

Roby provided the committee with a comprehensive proposal to send two postgraduates with him to the upcoming Better Together conference in January 2019. It was agreed that the conference was beneficial for the Queer community and would be added to the MPAEC annual conference attendance list. A call for expressions of interest to attend would be sent out via the MPA's Queer facebook page and social media accounts. The successful applicants would be selected by a panel of postgraduates. Jan and Jess to work with Roby to organise the event.

## 5. **Membership**

### **President**

An office-bearer election was held to pre-elect the MPAEC President to take over from Eni on 11 December when he completes his course. The Executive Officer acted as Returning Officer. Nominations were received in November for Robyn and Ash. Each candidate was allocated a few minutes to speak to the committee. Voting was carried out as per the MPA General Regulations. After the first round of voting, no absolute majority was reached. After the second round, Robyn Oxley was declared elected to the position of President with an absolute majority.

### **International Students' Officer**

Eni announced that Philip had resigned from the MPAEC in November, leaving a vacancy. Nominations were invited for the position of International Students' Officer. Devendra was nominated by Karan and accepted the nomination. There being no further nominations Devendra Singh was declared elected unopposed to the position of International Students' Officer.

### **Off-campus and Distance Education Officer**

The vacant position of the newly created Off-campus and Distance Education Officer was advertised via the MPA newsletter and social media channels. Three cooption applications were submitted. Prior to the meeting, the application from Clara Pusztay was withdrawn. The two remaining applicants, Mary Mansilla and Claire Nicholls, observed the November meeting making them eligible for cooption. Both applicants were given the opportunity to speak to the committee and answer any questions. An election was conducted, but no absolute majority was reached in the first round of voting. After the second round, Claire Nicholls was declared elected to the position of Off-campus and Distance Education Officer with an absolute majority.

The committee thanked Philip and Bec for their work on the MPAEC over the past few years.

## 6. **Next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Parkville campus from 1pm – 3pm on Monday 3 December, in the Large meeting room, Building 4, level 5, room 5-505.