



# THE ANU OBSERVER

## **General Meeting 2025-05-05**

Agenda

Location: ANU Observer Office and Zoom Hybrid

1/25 Childers Street

Time: 1808

## **Item 1: Meeting Opens and Apologies**

### **1.1 Acknowledgement of Country spoken by Rowey Worner-Butcher**

I wish to acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples as traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. Sovereignty was never ceded. I'd like to acknowledge that storytelling and knowledge sharing has been taking place on this Country for time immemorial, and I would like to pay my respects to the strong and enduring cultures of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples, and extend that respect to any other Country where people may be joining us from today.

Apologies: Anneysa Sarkar

## **Item 2: Minutes from the Previous Meeting including Matters Arising**

### **2.1 Minutes from the Previous Meeting**

Moved by: Saffron Geyle

Seconded: Sophie Felice

## **Item 3: Reports and Matters Arising**

- 3.1 Report of the Chair of the Board (Appendix A)
- 3.2 Report of the Chair of the Editorial Committee (Appendix B)
- 3.3 Report of the Visual Team (Appendix C)
- 3.4 Report of the Web Executive (Appendix D)
- 3.5 Report of the Community Executive (Appendix E)
- 3.6 Secretary's Report (Appendix F)
- 3.7 Finance Executive's Report (Appendix G)

## **Appendix A: Report of the Chair of the Board and Appendix B: Report of the Executive Editor combined**

### **Prepared by Rowey Worner-Butcher, Editor-in-Chief and Chair of the Board of ANU Observer**

It's been a great semester for the ANU Observer, and a pleasure to serve as Editor-in-Chief for the organisation so far.

This semester, Observer has published 28 articles, just over two a week. This includes 28 graphics which have been beautifully crafted by our visual team and complement and finish every written article. We've also kicked off the year of our IAC coverage with livestreams of theatresports, and the upcoming BNO. Our team has attended multiple SRCs and OGMS of other organisations, attended protests, interviewed countless students and staff, as well as political candidates. We've hosted a career's training night, with journalists from Win News and

The Daily Telegraph coming in to chat with our news team. With all this achieved, I'm looking forward to all that's yet to come in the next year.

I'd like to thank my fellow editors Sophie and Darcy for their time, dedication, and humour this semester. They make the work we do here more meaningful and more joy bringing, and I know are greatly valued by not just me but the wider team as well. I feel excited for whoever the fourth editor we elect tonight to join such a supportive and fun team.

I'd also specially like to thank Maddy and Mackenzie, our two departing members of our board.

I joined the board at a similar time as Maddy, and it's been such a pleasure to work alongside her all this time. It's a real privilege to work alongside someone who I trust so completely with some of the hardest aspects of the management of this organisation, and I deeply admire the tact and dedication she has brought to this team. I don't say it lightly when I say Observer would look like a very different organisation without her input. Though I'm sad to see Maddy go, I look forward to working with Anish, our incoming finance executive, who is taking the baton from Maddy.

I'd also like to thank Mackenzie for her continued work and dedication in her role as community exec here at Observer. In my time here, I've learned that creating a positive workplace culture is something which takes time, effort, and many weeks of tea and snacks. I appreciate Mackenzie for all the work she's done, and know she's set an excellent precedent for whoever will follow in her position.

I'd also like to thank our outgoing Arbitration officer, Oscar, who has worked for Observer for the last two years in his role, and I wish all the best in his studies and career moving forward!

Finally, I'd like to thank the rest of the board, Shé, Anneysa, and Saffron, who have made such an excellent team to be a part of, and who I look forward to working with for the rest of the year.

## **Appendix B: Editor – Sophie Felice, Darcy Davitt**

### **Sophie**

It's been really exciting returning to the position of editor on the board this year, I'm very grateful to the news team for having me back! We've had a really successful semester so far with excellent and timely news coverage, some great interviews and really consistent reporting. That really speaks to the skill, commitment and passion of the news team. I feel like everyone is excited about their part in Observer and after a challenging year in 2024, I feel confident in the future of this organisation. Some of the main things I'm focusing on and try to bring to the editorial team and board include more rigorous organisational process (basically I just love a spreadsheet), increased communication with other key stakeholders like ANUSA and ANU media where possible, and bringing a sense of fun and trust to our news meetings. We have some new multi team projects emerging for semester 2 which I'm really excited about. While being an editor is a labour of love, I'm still so passionate about the work this organisation does and the people who make it happen. It's been such a joy working beside Darcy and Rowley, they

genuinely bring such positivity and trust to the team that I couldn't be more grateful for. As always, I'm so proud of the whole board team. We really are so privileged to have the leadership we do at Observer, and I'm grateful to witness it first hand so regularly.

### **Darcy**

It's been lovely coming into the position of Editor this semester, I'm grateful to have gotten the opportunity and have really enjoyed learning how things work both as an Editor and member of the Board. I think the quality and quantity of coverage has been really impressive this semester, it's been super fun and rewarding editing lots of the articles our reporters are putting out. Shoutout to the new Reporters who have come in this semester who I think have added a lot to the team, so I want to thank them for their work and for their presence, and I'm excited to see you guys keep learning and producing amazing articles. Working with Sophie and Rowley particularly has been very rewarding, I think our collaboration's been good and the vibes are strong, which makes it very easy to pitch different ideas and ask questions where needed because I've come into a really supportive group. I'm excited for some of our new projects and ideas to get going next semester, and think the future of Observer looks bright! Also, want to thank our outgoing Finance Exec Maddy and Community Exec Mackenzie for their presence and very strong vibes, which I remember made me feel comfortable and welcome when I felt a bit daunted starting as a reporter a couple years ago. Also looking forward to the couple new board members next sem and to work alongside a new Editor who can bring new ideas and energy to the role.

### **Appendix C: Visual Content Executive Report – Shé Chani**

My role in the last semester has involved a continued partnership with IAC: one that has allowed both myself and the visual team to grow and develop our respective creative skillsets. It has involved continuously developing and forming the ANU Observer's visual identity, and the way in which our organisation communicates with the student community at the ANU. Beyond this, the role has also been fun. I've had the privilege of collaborating with our reporters Evie and Nuria, and our social media manager Nick on a soon to be released video interviewing café owners around campus. This idea proved to be more time-consuming and challenging than anticipated but offered us an opportunity to interact with members of our community and discover cafes we never knew existed. We also started a continuing series called "Observing the Observer" highlighting the work and talents of our team. Along with this, we've printed zines designed by our graphic designer James providing context around our visual team through a fun and engaging medium. So, while the role has been challenging, I feel it's been a privilege. Not only has it involved working with a group of talented journalists, it's also encouraged me to continue conversing, connecting and engaging with members of our ANU community in ways that I am passionate about.

### **Appendix D: Web Executive Report - Anneysha Sarkar**

Dear members of the ANU Observer and the wider ANU community,

My name is Anneysha, and I serve on the ANU Observer Board as Web Executive. In addition to my responsibilities as a Board member, I manage several day-to-day tasks within the Web portfolio. These include inducting new members into the ANU Observer system, managing and maintaining our website, and monitoring our web infrastructure to ensure stability

and robustness. We've experienced a few website shutdowns due to ageing infrastructure, and I've had the opportunity to resolve those for you.

This semester, the Web portfolio welcomed its first new member in years -- Pauravi Mishra. Pauravi is currently learning the ropes of managing our web systems and will be assisting with upgrading our web interface next semester as part of our end-of-life upgrades.

I've also been contributing to our new and exciting initiative -- the newsletter. In the coming weeks, as the newsletter team takes shape, I'll be running some training on how to use our newsletter system and will also be developing a local interface for it (details coming in Semester 2). Lastly, I've been working on cybersecurity training for Observer members, which is scheduled for Semester 2 as well.

Apologies for not being able to make it to the OGM tonight, but feel free to reach out to me via Slack anytime.

### **Appendix E: Community Executive Report - Mackenzie Watkins**

With this being my final semester as Community Exec, I focused most of my energy on preparing for the next person elected to my position by ensuring that all Market Day organisation and budgetary considerations were clear and concise. I also facilitated the fixing of the air conditioner and heating unit, and found the cheapest quote I could find in Canberra with short notice, which it was no easy feat.

As always, my primary focus was on the management of the office, maintaining positive relationships within the Observer team and providing food and beverages at weekly news meetings. I was also a very involved member of the board, attending fortnightly meetings and ensuring the operation of Observer was as smooth as possible and that Observer would continue to have a wonderful future.

The most crucial part of my role this semester was organising the Market Day stall. Weeks of planning went into the event, by supplying over 10kgs of lollies, organising signage and coming up with creative ways to make our stall appealing, such as having an easel and a big foam board for people to put their best headline ideas and a large lolly giveaway. For the first time since I took this position, I focused on being as environmentally conscious as possible, with reducing all plastic wastage and using QR codes alongside paper in a bid for us to save unnecessary paper wastage.

On the day, many members of Observer, with a special thank you to Rowey, Darcy, Finn, Jasmine, Shé, Angela, Anneysha, Bri and Sophie for all their help, worked incredibly hard from 7 am - 4 pm to interact with the ANU community and recruit many new members of Observer that now sit alongside us tonight.

I want to thank everyone during my time at Observer for the past 4 years for the wonderful community I have been able to be a part of, and that I am now lucky enough to call my friends, too. It has been my utmost pleasure to have been the Community Exec, and I appreciate the opportunities and connections I have been blessed with immensely. I know that whichever candidate gets my position next will do a wonderful job and serve the Observer well. Thank you.

## **Appendix F: Secretary's Report - Saffron Geyle**

In my first term as secretary I've really enjoyed working with the board and the news team to efficiently oversee the smooth running of our organisation. Thus far I've worked with members of our board to improve upon areas of our team and organisation where necessary. I will say so far there have been very few problems that have arisen for us this semester, and so most of my contributions in my capacity as secretary this year has involved taking minutes at and organising board meetings. However, there have been instances in which I have had to review our constitution, and in doing so I have decided to amend item 10.3 of our constitution by adding item 10.3.2, in which we will discuss later on.

I look forward to working more with the board, and would like to thank our editors, our web executive, visual executive, and community executive for being helpful and passionate in the work that we have done and are yet to do.

## **Appendix G: Finance Executive Report - Maddy Burns**

This is my third and final semester as the Finance executive at ANU Observer and this year I have been focused on preparing the strongest financial handover for Observer. At the end of last year we secured a two year SSAF deal and cleaned up financial practices, and this semester I focused on maintaining the new standard of financial practices. After receiving the allocation amount of \$130,000 for 2025 I set to creating the budget for 2025 to ensure that not only our base costs were covered but so that we could maximise the projects that we will deliver in 2025. My second big project over the summer holidays was completing the 2024 financial audit, which involves collating the whole year's transactions and receipts for verification by an external body. The audit came back clean, meaning that all financial transactions were legal and in line with ANU and Observer's policies. I continue to fulfill my usual duties which include payment of allowance and honorarium, approving payments, reimbursement, tracking all spending, liaising with the university, and preparing and presenting SSAF reports. I also continue to serve as an active member of the board and contribute to the strategic vision and longevity of Observer. It has been a pleasure to be the Finance exec and I am so grateful for the things that this role and the organisation has taught me, and I am sure that Observer will be in great hands with the new Finance Executive, Anish.

## **Item 4: Items for Decision**

### **Item 4.1: Elections**

Returning Officer: Thomas Foley

Candidate statements will be read out.

Voting polls close at 6:45pm.

### **Editor x 1**

Outcome of election: Eduardo

Returning officer's decision as legitimate:

Moved: Saffron Geyle

Seconded: Bri Elliott

**Arbitration Panel Member – 4 vacancies and 4 nominations**

1. Zoe Theodorakis
2. Drew Davison
3. Amaya Garwood-Blue
4. Rayyaan Khaleel

**Finance Executive – Anish Singhal**

**Community Executive Position – one vacancy and one nomination**

Urja Parhi

Nominations meet vacancies, can appointed without contest

Moved: Bri Elliot

Seconded: Rowey Worner Butcher

**Item 4.2: Addition to item 10.3 of the ANU Observer Constitution**

***Item 10.3.2 – When an elected official has reached the end of their term (in reference to section 10.3.1), their position must be put up for election or casual vacancy in the following election period.***

Passed by Majority

**Item 5: Items for Discussion**

There are no items for discussion.

Moved: Saffron Geyle

Seconded: Darcy Davitt

**Item 6: Other Business**

No other items for business.

Moved: Rowey Worner Butcher

Seconded: Nuria Olive

**Item 8: Date of next meeting and Close of Meeting**

Close of meeting: 6:53pm 5th May 2025.

Date of next meeting: To be confirmed, semester 2.