

# RMIT UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION: FIRST QUARTER REPORT

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REPORTING PERIOD:  
1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2016

**RUSU**  
RMIT UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Ariel  
**ZOHAR**

What an exciting time to be part of the RMIT Student Union. As students new and old filled lecture halls and classrooms our representatives, staff and volunteers were there to make the transition a little easier with the resumption of our regular events and welfare programs. As we celebrate our 72nd year we are as excited as ever to keep improving in all aspects of our role as a support for students and advocate for their rights.

The RUSU Welcome Bash, held on Thursday, February 25, was a huge success with more than 1200 students enjoying food, drink, and tunes in the Alumni Courtyard. This is an important event for RUSU as it's a chance to introduce ourselves to a new cohort of students and reinforce our brand with current ones. Other events held in the first quarter include the multiple Welcome Days, Clubs Day, an open-air cinema in Brunswick, a block party in Bundoora, and even a boat cruise – once again showing that RUSU is a major part of student life at RMIT!

The early part of the year has seen a huge amount of interest in our volunteer program, with more than 400 students expressing interest through the RUSU website. We have multiple volunteers stationed at our information counters, which means they can now stay open all day, while our Healthy Breakfast program and Chill 'n' Grill lunches are very well supported.

2016 is shaping up to be a huge one for the RMIT Student Union, and I couldn't be more proud of the work it's doing.

Don't forget to become a RUSU financial member today for only \$10 at [bit.ly/rusumembership](http://bit.ly/rusumembership)

Ariel Zohar  
President  
RMIT University Student Union



Welcome Bash 2016

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Just as the end of February marks the change from balmy summer afternoons to crisp autumnal mornings, so too does it mark the change from self-assured high school graduate to impressionable first year university student.

February is the time for welcoming new members to our RMIT family, and this has been the focus of the Activities Department over this reporting period.

### STANDOUT EVENTS

#### RMIT Welcome Events

- » 10/2 VE Welcome – Brunswick
- » 11/2 VE Welcome – City
- » 17/2 Global Mobility Welcome
- » 23/2 Welcome Day – Brunswick
- » 24/2 Welcome Day – Bundoora
- » 25/2 Welcome Day – City
- » 3/3 Clubs Day
- » 4/3 Foundation Welcome

At all these events RUSU provided a space for students to learn about our services and functions, and sign up for our collectives, clubs and financial membership.

#### Welcome Bash 2016

The Welcome Bash was held on the afternoon of Thursday, February 25, between 4pm and 9pm in Alumni Courtyard.

The event attracted over 1200 attendees (all RMIT students) and featured free food, free alcohol with music provided by a mix of RMIT students and prominent local DJs. This event was made possible by a SSAF grant.

#### Brunswick Open Air Cinema

This event was held on March 2, and was the first major Orientation period event to be held by RUSU at Brunswick campus for many years.

The night included a showing of Love Actually on a large inflated screen, a bar and food trucks. Attendance was approximately 250, with highly positive feedback from attendees. This event was also made possible by a SSAF grant.

#### 'Under the Sea' Boat Cruise

This event was held on March 16, with the 350 capacity of the boat being sold out within two weeks of tickets going on sale.

#### Pub Crawl

This event was held on March 31, with the 100 capacity of the event being sold out in less than a week.

### MEMBERSHIP

2666 RMIT students became financial members of RUSU in the period up to 31 March. This was a massive start to our membership drive.

# VOLUNTEERS



The year began with a pleasing response to the call for volunteers with 411 expressions of interest for the City campus. Along with the students who were involved last year we were able to support RUSU’s programs with a mix of experienced and new volunteers. The opportunity for experienced volunteers to train and support newcomers is a progressive development of the program.

The first quarter has also been a time where we have looked to the opportunities for Bundoora students to engage with RUSU and become regular volunteers. The engagement of Bundoora students has been encouraging as we continue to grow numbers.

Training	
Program Induction	121
Responsible Service of Alcohol	60
Safe Food Handler	60

Volunteer hours worked first quarter: City Campus	
Activities & Events	506
Realfoods	390
Administration	202
Compass	93
Healthy Breakfasts	43
English Language Workshops	35
Student Rights	25

Volunteer hours worked first quarter: Bundoora Campus	
Activities & Events	61
Realfoods	55

## ACROSS THE CAMPUSES

### CITY

Both RUSU information counters at building 5 and 57 functioned as important information and contact points for RMIT students this quarter. The beginning of the year proved to be extremely busy, with many students signing up for RUSU memberships, accessing RUSU services and seeking student rights advice and advocacy.

The admin volunteer program has grown exponentially, with the program now also offered in RUSU’s Building 57 front office. A team of 30 volunteers staff the Building 5 and 57 offices during peak periods of the day, providing RUSU volunteers with experience in administration and student focused customer service.

#### Student Employment

In February, RUSU employed six new student casual Info Counter Assistants this quarter, adding to the two continuing on from last year. These student casuals hail from a variety of academic disciplines and form an invaluable part of our team, working collaboratively with the City campus Student Liaison Officers to provide basic advice and referral to students and

support to student representatives and staff in the effective operations of the student union. They also help out with events across all the RMIT campuses, as required. Welcome to the team, Info Counter Assistants!

#### Chill ‘n’ Grill

The City Chill ‘n’ Grill continues to be our largest regular event with between 1000 and 1200 students attending regularly for free lunch and a large cohort of our members availing of our free bar, too. During semester one we held a number of special events alongside our regular Chill ‘n’ Grill. We hosted PBS DJ CC:Disco! On International Women’s Day.

### BUNDOORA (EAST & WEST)

The first quarter of 2016 has been a busy one at Bundoora. We’ve been pleased to welcome two new student casuals as Front Counter staff at our Bundoora East offices, and the new staff of the Bundoora Realfoods which opened at Bundoora West in time for week one.

Bundoora Realfoods has been a huge success with students pleased to have more variety for their meals on campus.

We have also been able to increase volunteer engagement at Bundoora campus with the new Realfoods providing an opportunity for even more volunteers to join the RUSU community and learn valuable skills.

O-Week was busy, with around 10 clubs and the RUSU membership stall itself contributing to a great atmosphere on the day.

### Bundoora Block Party & Outdoor Cinema

Bundoora Block Party was held on March 23 and was enjoyed by all. In a tailor-made chill-out zone at the back of building 204, students enjoyed drinks, free food and music. Many also attended a companion event held later in the evening, a screening of Mad Max: Fury Road on an inflatable outdoor cinema screen by the lake.

### Chill 'n' Grill

Bundoora Chill 'n' Grill has continued to grow this year with up to 600 students availing of our free BBQs in the warmer months and 450 students opting for soup in the colder months. In order to provide some variety we included a food truck week in HE week three which included delicious pizzas and curries supplied by some of our favourite food vendors and provided an ice cream truck in week four.

### Regular Events

Our regular events and programs including the free Healthy Breakfast the Chill 'n' Grill and the English Language Workshops are as popular as ever, and have been supplemented by a number of other events.

### Bundoora Shuttle Bus

Shuttle transport was provided for Bundoora-based students (primarily from the new Bundoora Student Accommodation) to RUSU's Welcome Bash in Alumni Courtyard during O-Week. This transport option ensures that Bundoora students are given the opportunity to safely travel to and from larger events at the city campus and connect with their City-based colleagues.

## BRUNSWICK

It's been a big start to the year at the Brunswick Campus. The Brunswick representatives, Charlotte Whittle and Katherine Villagaray have hit the ground running with great ideas and events for improving campus life.

The first standout event was the Brunswick Welcome day, where there was food, activities and a special 'Howler' event to officially welcome students to and back to Brunswick.

### Open Air Cinema Events

On Wednesday, March 2, RUSU hosted an open-air cinema experience for students. A giant projector screen was set up outside the main building 514, along with bean bags, deck chairs, a bar and a food truck. From all accounts (and visible through sheer attendance alone) this event was wildly successful and students had a great time. I dare say this event will be run again soon.

*Bundoora Outdoor Cinema*





Bundoora Block Party

### Free Healthy Breakfasts

The much loved weekly events of the Free Healthy Breakfast continue to be as popular as ever. This year, the quantity of fresh fruit has doubled meaning we can serve even more hungry and appreciative students. The weekly breakfast now occurs on Monday mornings with many students commenting that coming to 'Monday morning classes are now that much more easy to do.'

### Chill 'n' Grill

Tuesdays continue to host our Chill 'n' Grill event at Brunswick campus. Upwards of 400 students from VE and Higher education programs avail of the free BBQs and soups on a weekly basis. The event continues to grow in popularity with the aim to increase service again in Semester 2 by up to 50 students. We also provided pizzas for students in week three due to a total fire ban meaning we could not safely conduct a BBQ. We also provided free nail painting for students which was extremely popular and free cupcakes from the Women's Department to celebrate International Women's Day. Brunswick was also included in the food truck week with students getting free lunch from one of RUSU's favourite street vendors.

### Women's & Queer Lounges @ Brunswick

This quarter also saw the opening of the Women's & Queer lounges. This has been a long time coming and everyone involved from the RUSU Womens Department, RUSU Queer Collective, RUSU Council, RUSU Staff and Property Services deserves a pat on the back for making the Brunswick Campus that much more inclusive, safe and welcoming for all students.

Thanks everyone for your wonderful efforts. Both lounges are open first thing in the morning and close late in the evening/night.

## CARLTON

The Carlton office in building 57 has continued to play an important role for the organisation, in particular as the main hub for student rights services and administration. The volunteer program has been a success, with a rotating roster of 15 students learning office skills such as customer service, telephony, binding, laminating, and data entry. The Women's and Queer lounges remain popular and well-patronised, while the Catalyst team has been hard at work in their office. The recommencement of the Healthy Breakfast program and free yoga classes, as well as the introduction of the Tradies 'n' Chill event, has brought even more activity and students to the campus.

### VE Social Program and Outreach Events

RUSU launched the first Tradies 'n' Chill event in the first quarter of 2016 and provided two free lunch events specific to VE students. The free lunches have been scheduled as fortnightly events on Mondays from 12pm - approximately 1:30pm in O'Grady's Place in front of Building 57. Approximately 120 students each week enjoyed free serves of Mama Gozleme. Student Rights Officers were present at both events and provided students with information specific to VE related issues as well general information regarding the student rights service. Planning of the larger scale outreach events also started during this quarter.

# RUSU DEPARTMENTS

## WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT

### Orientation and Women's Room Launch at Brunswick

The Women's Department has had an exciting first quarter, particularly as the Brunswick Women's Room (a safe space for female-identifying students) was officially launched during O-Week.

### Stitch and B\*tch

The Brunswick Women's Room has already hosted a number of events throughout the first quarter including the weekly 'Stitch & B\*tch'. This event is held every Thursday and is a new initiative/free weekly event focused on craft workshops and providing students with opportunities to learn new skills and make new friends.

### International Women's Day

The Women's Department partnered with the weekly Chill 'n' Grills across the Brunswick, Bundoora and City campus to celebrate International Women's Day all week from March 8-11. Students at the Brunswick campus were provided with cupcakes and City students were provided with a free brunch. The City Chill 'n' Grill on the Thursday featured a special female guest DJ CC:Disco and the first 'Ladies Night' of the year was hosted on the Friday, which included a movie at Hoyts cinema at Melbourne Central, dumplings and drinks.

The Women's Officer also supported the 'Women Building Futures: Careers in Property, Construction and Project Management' event that was held on International Women's Day by providing information on the Women's Department at this event as well as free key-chain torches for attendees.

## QUEER

### Midsumma

During the Midsumma Festival in January, the Queer Officers collaborated with RMIT Pride Mentoring to facilitate an increased presence in the LGBTQI community, primarily

by promoting RMIT at the Midsumma Carnival and the Pride March. Both these events were well attended, and a good way for potential or current students to know that RMIT is an inclusive university.

### Orientation

Like the Women's Department, the Queer Department also officially launched a brand new lounge at the Brunswick Campus during O-Week. The Queer Lounge is a safe space where queer students can study, relax, meet new people and most importantly be themselves without being judged.

During O-Week, the Queer Department hosted stalls at all three RMIT campuses, and engaged with new students by offering information about events and activities. In addition, the stall also offered all queer people and allies a space to create their own #inclusiveRMIT statement, which was then promoted through the RUSU Queer Department Instagram page. The Queer Department Facebook page has seen round 60 new members since Orientation week. Furthermore, the Queer Department also hosted a stall on City clubs day, further engaging with new students who may have missed the stall during the busy time of orientation.

### Collaboration with RMIT

During this quarter, the Queer Department has actively participated in the Diverse Gender and Sexualities working group by providing feedback on the draft inclusion plan for queer students and staff at RMIT as well as working with the Equity and Diversity Unit staff to help guide discussion as to what things can be improved, particularly working from the results of the LGBTIQ survey which was conducted last year. The Queer Department looks forward to being a student presence at university wide Queer events throughout the year, such as the International Day against Homophobia and Wear it Purple Day, and working more collaboratively with RMIT staff.

### Events

The Queer Department, along with the Women's Department and other groups on campus, participated in the activation

Queer Department: Pride March



of the New Academic Street Portals, by participating in the crafternoon event on March 1. The Queer Department ran a flower crown making table, which was well attended by students from across RMIT.

On March 11, the Queer Department hosted 'Sweet 16', an evening off-campus event to welcome students into 2016 by meeting new friends and dancing at the cosy Hares and Hyenas bookshop in Fitzroy (this event also featured a delicious lolly bar and a very fun 'twerkshop'). The night was a big success, with a turnout of around 20 students, who all gave positive feedback.

The Queer Department has held weekly events in the Queer lounges across campuses. Weekly Monday lunches in Bundoora have been well attended. The City campus queer lounge has held weekly 'crafternoons', games nights and workshops. On March 31 the Queer Department celebrated International Transgender Day of Visibility by hosting Sally from Transgender Victoria in the City lounge, who facilitated an interesting and insightful discussion around current transgender issues.

### Advocacy

On March 21, representatives attended a rally in defence of Safe Schools, to show support for the continuation of this program. The queer department will continue to be involved in advocacy for queer people, not just in RMIT, but in the wider community.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Introduction of WeChat

The International Department created a WeChat Group (WeChat is a mobile communication and social network app) for students who speak Mandarin as a way of being able to network, make new friends and communicate with the International Officer.

## SUSTAINABILITY

### Orientation

The Sustainability Department actively participated throughout Orientation Week at both the Brunswick and City campuses. Engagement with the student body included discussions around environment and social justice at RMIT, promotion of upcoming sustainability-related events and encouraging students to get involved. Interested students were encouraged to sign up to a new mailing list to receive a weekly newsletter about sustainability at RMIT, to like the RUSU Sustainability Department Facebook Page and contact the department via email with any queries, concerns or ideas.

### Ongoing activity, presence and collaboration with RMIT

The first quarter has seen the commencement of a weekly email newsletter that covers recent sustainability activity at RMIT as well as promoting upcoming events. Since its inception, the mailing list has since grown to 100 subscribers. There has also been an increased use of the RUSU Sustainability Department Facebook page for promotion purposes and student engagement, resulting in likes growing from 380 to 496 – an increase of more than 30%.



Sustainability Department

Moreover, at the beginning of 2016 the Sustainability Officer became an active member on the RMIT Sustainability Committee and the RMIT Fair Trade Steering Committee - two opportunities that have not previously been taken advantage of. This has led to an ongoing dialogue between RUSU and RMIT on sustainability matters and has given students a voice, as well as improving the awareness of sustainability opportunities at RMIT.

### Sustainability Week

The inaugural RMIT Sustainability Week took place in week three. This was co-ordinated by the RMIT Sustainability Committee and involved the RUSU Sustainability Department in the form of input into the week, promotion, and the running of RUSU Sustainability Drinks to open the week. RUSU affiliated clubs Greening RMIT and Engineers Without Borders RMIT also put on events in the week - terrarium building workshops at the three major campuses and a screening of the documentary The True Cost respectively.

### Collaboration with RMIT and Clubs & Societies

Throughout the first quarter, the Sustainability Department regularly engaged with a number of RUSU affiliated environment and social justice oriented Clubs & Societies and supported the following activities:

- » Oxfam RMIT - promotion of Close the Gap themed Chill 'n' Grill
- » Engineers Without Borders RMIT - attendance and promotion of events including AGM, documentary screening and regular meetings. Collaboration on bike fix workshops including funding for additional tools, a presence at the launch of the new building 51 bike cage and bike education workshops
- » Greening RMIT - attendance and promotion of skill shares
- » AYCC RMIT - attendance of meetings and encouragement of collaboration with other students and student groups at RMIT
- » Student Association for Sustainable Systems Engineers - support and promotion of SASSE Industry Night

The department also arranged for all of the above Clubs and Societies to be located together on Clubs Day on March 3 to boost the profile of student-led sustainability at RMIT.

## Realfoods Café

The Sustainability Department oversees the management and operation of Realfoods, a vegan, organic fair trade café. The café provides quality and affordable food and drinks with student-friendly prices. To begin the year, this involved the hiring of 10 new staff - predominantly RMIT students - to fill a variety of vacant positions. As well as employing staff, Realfoods provides numerous volunteer opportunities for RMIT students. A second location has also opened at the Bundoora campus.

## WELFARE AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

### Cheaper Textbooks Campaign

RUSU's Education Officer has had a busy first quarter working with the National Union of Students (NUS) on the Cheaper Textbooks Now campaign. This ongoing campaign is focused on petitioning the Federal Government and the Federal Opposition to stand with students and make university textbooks more affordable for students by repealing parallel import restrictions on textbooks. RUSU's General Secretary, Abena Dove, also featured in an article published by The Age on the February 29 regarding the Cheaper Textbooks campaign.

### Free Healthy Breakfasts

The RUSU Healthy Breakfast program has expanded to run five days a week and across all campuses, serving healthy

breakfasts to over 1700 students each week! This year has seen the introduction of some exciting new initiatives such as Fresh Fruit Friday, a weekly event providing more than 200 City campus students with fresh, organic fruit on the go. RUSU has also taken note of the strong demand for free healthy breakfasts on the Brunswick and Bundoora West campuses and is now feeding double the amount of students on those campuses.

In addition to feeding many hungry mouths, the program also performs an important outreach and education function. A dedicated team of 14 Healthy Breakfast volunteers help deliver the city-based events.

## POSTGRADUATE

The Postgraduate Department has had a busy first quarter engaging with post-grad students and issues across RMIT. The Department ran its ever popular Speed Friending event early in Semester 1, with more than 40 students attending. Students got to know one another over fun mingling activities, drinks and snacks at the Bella Union. The Department has revamped its Masterclass program, and this quarter presented a professionally facilitated 3.5 hour workshop entitled 'Unlock Your Potential'. Around thirty post-grad students participated in the personal/professional development workshop which gave students the opportunity to identify, clarify and practice communicating their strengths and goals in a range of contexts.

The Postgraduate Department has also been meeting regularly with the School of Graduate Research, and alongside RUSU's Campaigns Officer, has been participating in the review of and feedback on the newly formatted HDR Policy suite and processes. In conjunction with the Campaigns Officer, the Department has also been planning campaigns for 2016 on a range of issues, including: public transport concession for postgrad students, and greater University support for Higher Degree by Research students who run into issues with their supervisory teams.

The Postgraduate Officer ran stalls at O-Week and Re-Orientation week to introduce the department to new students, and the Student Rights Officer (HDR) also presented at the Higher Degrees by Research Orientation Day.

## REALFOODS

Realfoods reopened in the city this quarter and we were proud to announce the opening of our new café in Bundoora.

The café at Bundoora offers all the same great coffee and grab-and-go items currently stocked in the City campus, plus we have expanded to include our full hot food menu that we featured in 2015. The curries and grains have proven to be an absolute hit with students on campus and the feedback so far has been really overwhelming. This was possible with the recruitment of a new cook who specialises in vegan, healthy food.

The city campus is opened from 8.00am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday right up during semester time which commenced in February. Our Bundoora site is currently open from 8.30am to 3.30pm and is operational only during semester time (33 weeks per year). Both Realfoods sites have been a huge success this semester and particularly at Bundoora we have well exceeded our sales targets.

*Postgraduate Department Speed Friending*





Realfoods: RMIT Student Union's Organic / Vegan Cafe – City Campus

In addition to the cook, Realfoods went through an extensive recruitment process to find ideal candidates for the roles of Barista/Café Assistants for both sites; this role is responsible for overseeing daily operations in the absence of the Administration and Volunteer Support Officer. Six casual front of house staff and two casual baristas (all of whom are current RMIT students) were also recruited.

The focus of the recruitment was to target RMIT students through the Jobs On Campus employment service.

Daily retail operations have continued to be overseen by the Realfoods Café Administrator and Volunteer Support Officer, supported by the Barista/Café Assistants, a team of more than 80 trained volunteers and eight Student Casuals. Casuals are a valuable and highly necessary addition to the running of Realfoods, as their presence makes it possible for the Café Administrator and Volunteer Support Officer to have some dedicated time set aside to work on administration, rosters, future planning, etc.

All food at the City Campus continued to be freshly prepared off site at Invita Living Food who share our ethos in providing organic, vegan, sustainable food. Realfoods continued to provide hands-on hospitality and customer service experience to RMIT students and assisted them in increasing their employment prospects, with most students requesting references for their resumes, and many reporting back that they have found employment. By participating in this program, they not only gain experience, but solid employability skills through certification in Responsible Serving of Alcohol and Food Handling funded by RUSU.

Both certificates can often prove too costly for students to afford. All volunteer time is LEAD accredited. Examples of some of our Realfoods volunteer feedback:

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“I really can't believe how much fun I have when I come here, can I do any extra shifts?” – Deva

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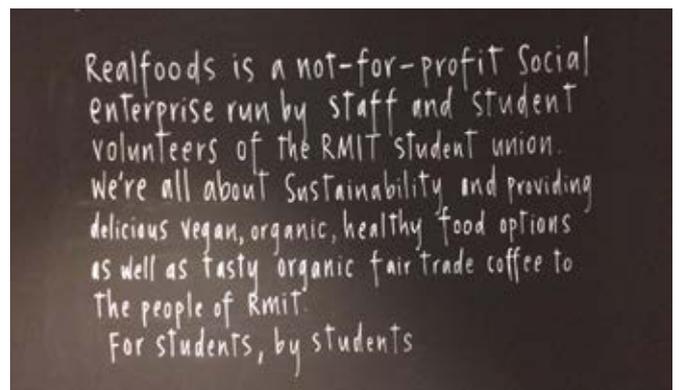
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“I am graduating at the end of the semester but I am loving this experience so much, I wish I could still volunteer here even when I am not an RMIT student anymore.” – Ajay

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It's rewarding to hear of lasting friendships that have been built through volunteering at Realfoods. Many of our volunteers are new to Melbourne and having a support network plays an imperative role in a positive university life. We are hoping the success of both Realfoods sites continues into the second semester and can continue to build on our sales.

Realfoods Wall, City Campus



# CLUBS & SOCIETIES



Clubs Day Orientation

## RUSU CLUB GRANTS

RUSU Clubs & Societies accessed over of \$28,000 in clubs' grants this quarter.

## RUSU CLUBS ACTIVITY

### Affiliation

As at the end of first quarter of 2016, RUSU has 93 fully affiliated student clubs and societies. The distribution of clubs across our different categories breakdown is as follows:

- » Spiritual Clubs: 9
- » Social Clubs: 19
- » Political Clubs: 4
- » Cultural Clubs: 19
- » Academic Clubs: 42

### Brand New Clubs

RUSU welcomes the following new clubs:

- » RMIT Association of Fashion Students (RAFS)
- » RMIT Filipino Club
- » RMIT GO! Club
- » RMIT Automotive Society (RAS)
- » RMIT Management and International Business Student Association (MIBSA)
- » Greening RMIT
- » RMIT Human Resources Association (HRA)

We are also working with a range of new club proposals for mid-year affiliation, some of which are continuing from an attempted calendar year start:

- » RMIT Literary Society

- » RMIT French Club (returning)
- » RMIT Taiwanese Student Association
- » RMIT Furniture Club
- » RMIT Civil Engineering Association (returning)
- » RMIT Thai Society
- » RMIT Bundoora Residents Club

## 1ST QUARTER CLUB ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

### Club Achievements in the Spotlight

More than 80 RUSU clubs participated in the four main University orientation events program including Welcome Days at all campuses and the big day, Clubs Day in the City. For many clubs, organising to participate in these events takes a big effort as they increasingly find more interesting and imaginative ways to engage with new students at these events – a clear development from simply standing behind a table and signing up members which use to be the standard response to these days.

With the loss of Bowen Street this year, RUSU clubs adapted well to the more dispersed event set up across University Lawn, University Way and the Alumni Courtyard on Clubs Day. The new set up did provide clubs with more space as well as providing students with a chance to discover parts of the University they didn't know existed as well as drawing in more South Carlton precinct into the celebration.

The RUSU Clubs Department looks forward to working with University Events and the Orientation and Transition Team to provide even greater opportunities for our clubs to connect with more students during these important events and periods.

## RUSU & RMIT Oxfam 'Close The Gap' Chill 'n' Grill

We would like to congratulate RMIT Oxfam for working with RUSU to present a RMIT Close The Gap Day event. Run in conjunction with a RUSU City campus Thursday Chill 'n' Grill BBQ event our Close The Gap Day event provided students with information about The Close The Gap Campaign, opportunities to demonstrate their support for Close The Gap through petitions and a Close The Gap photo booth. The event was introduced by the 2016 Vice President of the RMIT Oxfam Club Mariah Murphy, followed by our very special guest speakers Aunty Kerrie Doyle - proud Winninninni woman who grew on Datkinjung country and RMIT Associate Professor in the RMIT School of Health and Biomedical Sciences and her Granddaughter, Banok Rind - proud Yamatji-Badimia woman who grew up in Amangu country and Whajuk-Noongar country and is a RMIT Nursing student. We thank both of these inspirational women for participating in the event.

The event highlight was a performance and workshop by RMIT favourites the Indigenous Hip-Hop Project (IHHP) and the usual Thursday BBQ given an indigenous flavour with food provided by Jerry's Burgers and indigenous bush tomato chutney to complete our usual BBQ sausages.

RUSU would like to congratulate RMIT Oxfam for all of their effort in getting this project rolling, organising the guest speakers, working with the Ngarara Willim Centre to ensure all due protocols were met and for setting up their information and campaign table on the day. Staff and Students from the RMIT Willim Ngarara Centre attended and had a great time. Executive members of Oxfam Australia and student members from other Oxfam University Chapters also attended and praised RUSU, RMIT Oxfam and the University for supporting such a great event.

RMIT Oxfam – Close The Gap, Chill 'n' Grill



## Club Activities this Quarter

RMIT Environmental Engineering Student Association (EESA) Welcome BBQ @ RMIT O'Grady Place
EESA & RMIT Association of Chemical Engineers (ACES) O-Week Social @ Workshop, City
EESA & ACES Combined Orientation Lunch @ RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square
RMIT Environmental Engineering Student Association (EESA) Annual Orientation Camp @ Peppin Point Holiday Park, Bonnie Doon
RMIT Information Security Collective (RISC) professional development presentations – Web Application Security and American Fuzzy Lop @ RMIT B80
RMIT Accounting Student Association Professional (RMIT ASA) Networking Evening @ Rendezvous Hotel, City
RMIT ASA Welcome BBQ @ RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square
RMIT Association of Pharmacy Students (RAPS – members attended the National Australian Pharmacy Students Association (NAPSA) Conference @ Townsville, Queensland
RMIT Business Student Association (BSA) launch of BSA Office @ RMIT B80
RMIT Economics, Finance and Marketing Student (EFMSA) Trivia Night @ Queensberry Hotel, North Melbourne
BSA free pies lunch @ RMIT A'Beckett Square
RMIT Supply Chain Student Association (SCSA) Taco Tuesday @ RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square
RMIT Electric Racing display @ Melbourne Grand Prix, South Melbourne
RMIT Geospatial Science Students Association (GSSA) Start of Year Social @ Captain Melville, City
RMIT International Students Association (ISA) Welcome Social @ Queensberry Hotel, North Melbourne
RMIT Management and International Business Student Association (MIBSA) Welcome Pub Crawl @ various locations, City
RMIT Maths and Statistics Society (MASS) Trivia Night @ RMIT B80
RMIT Mathematics, Analytics and Statistics Society (MASS) Welcome Event @ RMIT B12
RMIT Medical Radiation Student Association (MSRA) Hawaiian themed Orientation Pub Crawl @ various locations, City
RMIT Press Club Welcome Social @ Queensberry Hotel, North Melbourne
RMIT Racing (petrol) display @ Melbourne Grand Prix, South Melbourne
RMIT Students Association for Sustainable Systems Engineering (SASSE) 2016 Club t-shirts launch
RMIT Landscape Architecture Body (SLAB) Welcome Social @ Workshop Bar, City
RMIT Australia-China Youth Association (ACYA) AFL Football Match Trip @ MCG, Melbourne

Club Activities this Quarter (Continued)	
RMIT Australia-China Youth Association (ACYA) Weekly "Chat-Time" @ RMIT Building 8, Level 3	RMIT Asian Association (RAA) & Monash Triple C Club (Chinese-Australian Cultural Community) Annual Paint Party @ Royal Melbourne Hotel, City
RMIT PPIA Indonesian Student Association Welcome BBQ @ Verve Apartments, City	RMIT Asian Association (RAA Welcome BBQ @ RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square
RMIT PPIA Indonesian Student Association Annual Leadership Camp MAKRAB (Makin Akrab) @ Portland Bay Lodge, Allestree, VIC	RMIT Beer Brewers and Connoisseurs (BBC) Welcome Meet Up @ Foresters Hall, Collingwood
RMIT African Student Association (RASA) participation in the Australian African Student Organisation (AASO) Start of Semester Welcome BBQ @ Flagstaff Gardens, West Melbourne	RMIT Chess Club Weekly Meetings @ RMIT Building 56
RMIT Hong Kong Student Association (RMIT HKSA) and Melbourne University Hong Kong Student Association combined Orientation Camp @ Lakewood Park, Paynesville, VIC	RMIT Chess Club participation in the Victorian University Intervaristy Chees Tournament @ Games Lab, City
RMIT Japan Club "Icebreaker" event for 2016 members @ RMIT Alumni Courtyard - was last minute venue change from A'Beckett Square due to inclement weather	RMIT Engineers Without Borders Orientation BBQ @ RMIT O'Grady's Place
RMIT Japan Club Weekly Meeting Program @ RMIT Building 80	RMIT Engineers Without Borders "True Cost" documentary screening as part of RMIT Sustainability Week @ RMIT Building 80
RMIT Singapore Student Association (SSA) Bubble Soccer event @ Bubblesportz, Knoxfield	RMIT Entrepreneurs Association (REA) in conjunction with Startup Victoria - hosting of Round One of the University StartUp Battle @ RMIT Kaliede Theatre
RMIT Singapore Student Association (SSA) participation in the Singaporeans of Victoria (SOV) 3rd Intervaristy Games @ MSAC, Albert Park	RMIT Games Manga and Anime Society (GMAS) weekly meetings @ RMIT Building 56
RMIT Singapore Student Association (SSA) Welcome BBQ @ RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square	RMIT League of Gaming Icebreaker Welcome Event @ RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square
RMIT University Korean Association (RUKA) Welcome Party @ Yogi Bar, Melbourne Central, City	RMIT League of Gaming League of Legends Oceanic University Championships qualifying rounds @ online
RMIT University Malaysian Association (RUMA) Welcome BBQ @ Flagstaff Gardens, City	RMIT Oxfam Weekly Meetings @ Various locations, City Campus
(RUMA) Scavenger & Easter Egg Hunt @ Treasury Gardens, City	MIT Science Fiction & Gamers Association - twice weekly gaming program @ RUSU Multipurpose Room, Building 57
Vietnamese International Students at RMIT (VISAR) Welcome to Melbourne Activity @ Various Locations, City	RMIT Socialist Alternative banner making and chalking workshops @ various locations, RMIT and City
RMIT Vietnamese Student Association - combined Uni's Camp @ Licola Wilderness Village, Licola	RMIT Christian Union Weekly Bible Study Program @ various City and Bundoora Campus Locations and Lygon Street Church Carlton
RMIT Vietnamese Student Association - combined Uni's Camp Reunion @ Bridie O'Reilly's, Brunswick	RMIT Christian Union O Week At The Beach @ Port Melbourne Beach
CAINZ RMIT Grad To Work Series Event "Rising to the Summit" with guest speakers Robin Lim (General Manager of Home Lending NAB) and Kevin Xiao (Founder of Breakthrough Group of Companies) @ RMIT Building 80	RMIT Christian Union "Bundy Hangs Event #1: - 1000 Steps Activity (commencing at RMIT Bundoora) @ Ferntree Gully, Vic
CAINZ RMIT Welcome Night @ Jasper Hotel, City	RMIT Islamic Society Welcome BBQ @ RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square
Greening RMIT participation in RMIT Sustainability Week - 2 terrarium building workshops @ RMIT Brunswick and RMIT Bundoora Campuses	RMIT Multicultural Student Fellowship (RMIT MSF) Running Man Activity commencing @ RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square and then to various locations around the City
RMIT Australia China Youth Association (RMIT ACYA) participation in delivery of RMIT Chinese New Year Event	RMIT Islamic Society Weekly Jumah (Friday Prayers) @ RMIT Building 46
RMIT Asian Association (RAA) Annual Orientation Camp - 2016 theme "No RAAgrets!" @ Great Ocean Road, Princetown	RMIT University Jewish Students' Club (RUJSC) Purim Lunch @ RMIT Bowen Street
	(RUJSC) Monthly Meet Up @ Max Brenner, QV City

**Information to RUSU Clubs**

- » Provisional Affiliation Form and instructions
- » Clubs Orientation Events registration form and instructions
- » Annual General Meeting Templates including the Annual Club Financial Report Template
- » How to run Club Elections Guide prepared and distributed
- » Updated “Clubs Guide to Booking Space and Equipment on Campus”
- » Updated Clubs Executive Google Folder resources

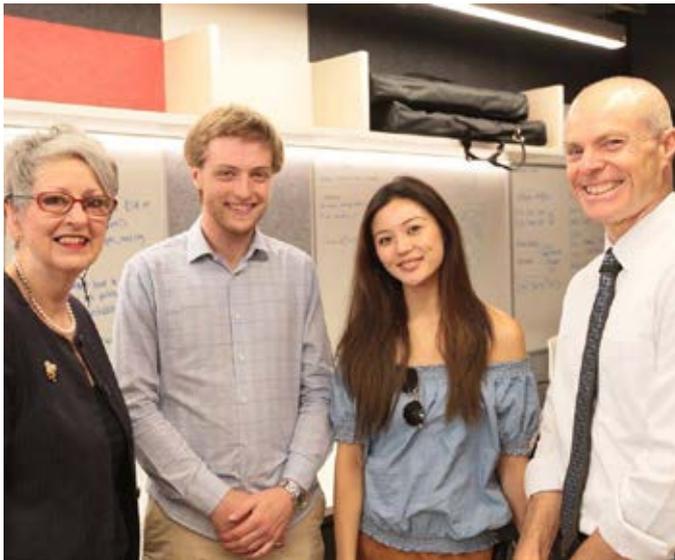
**New Developments & Support to RUSU Clubs**

- » Annual review of RUSU Clubs Grants Schedules approved by SUC
- » Delivery of over 20 hours of Club Executive/RASCAL training
- » Regular Departmental meeting with 2016 Elected Clubs &

Societies Officer to establish annual priorities and plans

- » Meeting with RMIT Venues Manager to look at ways of simplifying clubs on campus space booking processes
- » Meetings with University Property Services to investigate Clubs long term storage needs (lockers etc.) to be able to provide a range of clubs (particularly for games type clubs, spiritual clubs and international student based cultural clubs)
- » Training delivered to RUSU front counter casuals and volunteers to help them respond effectively to club enquiries
- » RUSU Clubs Department representation at a new University wide “Student Life” Working Group aimed at sharing information and working collectively to improve the student experience at RMIT
- » Initial discussions with UniOne to identify opportunities to provide greater online functionality to clubs through a RUSU website redevelopment

*Clockwise from left: BSA Office Launch, RAA Camp, Terrarium Workshop, SSA Bubble Soccer*



# STUDENT MEDIA



*Catalyst Magazine – Issue 1, Volume 72, February 2016*

## CATALYST

Catalyst has improved exponentially over the January to March period. We signed up more than 100 new contributors on City O-Day alone and have new teams of writers, photographers and designers joining us. Issues one and two have been released and delivered to every campus excluding the aviation school at Point Cook, which should happen within the next month.

Our podcast Cataclysm is running smoothly with our new production team releasing episodes monthly. Currently we have students from many schools outside of media and communications working on the podcast.

Currently our co-productions with RMITV have been steadily progressing although there have been some hold ups. We had great success with filmed interviews for the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and worked with SYN to cover the federal budget to promote Politics at the Belleville. Politics at the Belleville has been moving along at a slow pace, although now that we're on the hunt for a new RMITV producer things should be speeding up.

## RMITV

RMITV continues to thrive with many activities taking place in the first quarter of 2016. Our flagship, Offbeat, has kicked off with high levels of student involvement and engagement. The Leak is preparing for their season to begin in May, and many new productions have begun.

### Industry Employment

- » Jess Junor - RMIT Alumni (Production Assistant/Office

Manager, Exit Films, Full Time)

- » Elena Szymanski - RMIT Alumni - Promoted (Producer, CHE Proximity, Full Time)
- » Joseph Potter - RMIT Alumni (Floor Manager, Channel 7, Casual)
- » Nina Weiss - RMIT Alumni (Production Assistant, Family Feud, Casual)
- » Hayden Dib - current RMIT Student (Editor, Haystac Content, Part Time)

### RMITV Members/Alumni Achievements and activity

- » Paul Culliver wins Best Comedy at Fringe World 2016
- » Numerous RMITV members perform at MIFC
- » RMITV Web Series Follies of Youth nominated for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama, Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama and Outstanding Writing in a Drama at LA Web Fest
- » RMITV Alumni Web Series The Happiness Curve nominated for Outstanding Writing, Outstanding Ensemble Cast and Outstanding Comedy Series at LA Web Fest
- » RMITV Member Grace Cunningham is selected as EP of 1700

### RMITV Leadership Team

RMITV welcomed two new members to the Leadership Team early in 2016. RMIT graduate David Spencer has taken on the role of Content and Development Manager, and Current RMIT Student Edward Hirst has taken on the role of Training Development Manager. Bachelor of Communications (Media) graduate David, brings a wealth of freelance production experience and enthusiasm to open up RMITV's content



Cast and crew of 'Offbeat' - Season 2

department in new ways; venturing into animation and experimental content. Edward Hirst joins the management team with a plethora of RMITV Training, Crewing and presenting experience. A passion for audio, Edward has new ways to build members skills and fill the gaps in industry skill shortage areas.

RMITV also bids farewell to General Manager, Jess Junor. After 14 months in the position, Jess has successfully gained full-time employment with the renowned TVC production company Exit Films. As Production Assistant/Office Manager, Jess looks forward to transitioning her skillset into a new environment and continuing to be involved in the media industry.

## RMITV CONTENT: CURRENTLY BROADCASTING

### In Pit lane

IPL is in its 20th year broadcasting! Everything has been more or less smooth sailing for the show except for the hiccups caused by Channel 31 (playing the wrong advertisement as well as playing the wrong episode).

### Offbeat

Offbeat completed season two. We have had a huge number of member engagement throughout the season. Studio availability forced us to try broadcasting from our own mini studio built into the RMITV lounge which after working out the technical kinks was broadcast weekly without issue. Additionally Offbeat hosted the one off comedy event 'Live at the Kaleide' which technically went off without a fault. Apart from some issues with Channel 31 and studio availability this season of Offbeat was a resounding success.

### Tough Times

Tough Times completed their latest season broadcasting on Channel 31. They had reliable regular crew and produced episodes weekly without any major faults.

### Provisionally Approved

Provisionally Approved has undergone many changes

throughout the past few months. The newest group of producers have seen the production undergo a format change, which according to feedback is turning out for the better. The current producers have conducted a more active social marketing plan which has seen viewership increase by over 500%.

## RMITV CONTENT: UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS

### Melbourne Music Tonight

MMT aims to showcase independent and upcoming musicians, bands and artists based in Melbourne. Each episode will comprise of two different musical acts performed in-studio at RMIT University's City campus. The additional incorporation of an interview segment with each band throughout the show will also serve the intent on grasping an understanding on the band, their aspirations and their successes. MMT goes into production in the coming weeks.

### The Leak

The Leak has been the focus of a lot of buzz from our members as the production prepares for broadcast. The Leak goes into production in the coming weeks. According to their producers everything is going smoothly. Aside from scheduling conflicts with the studios availability there haven't been any major issues yet.

### Misguided

An improvised sketch comedy show produced by Phil McKechnie about to go into production on their second season. Apart from some last minute date shifting everything is going smoothly through pre-production for this production.

## RMITV CONTENT: IN DEVELOPMENT

### GAMMA

A documentary series on young successful migrants who have moved to Australia and have made it their permanent home. GAMMA is currently moving through pre-production.

## SOCIAL MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS

### Facebook: 16,655 Likes

Facebook still serves as our number one social media engagement tool, and our presence on the platform continues to grow stronger. Facebook serves as a platform for event advertising for both RUSU events and for Clubs and Societies, and allows students to interact with RUSU via wall posts and photo tagging and to RSVP to events (giving RUSU an idea of numbers beforehand). Post-event photo galleries also continue to be a major drawcard for students on the Facebook platform. Popular events on Facebook this quarter included the RUSU Welcome Bash 2016 and the Brunswick Open Air Cinema.

### Website

RUSU's site continues to be a great platform for delivering news, updates and information about RUSU events and activities. Our ever-changing front page advertises all the latest events. Currently in the pipeline is a radical overhaul of the RUSU website, so watch this space.

### Newsletter

RUSU's newsletter continues to be popular, with more than 6000 subscribers to date, and a readership engagement rate of around 45%, which is far higher than the industry average. To date, there has been one major issue so far in 2016, providing students with the latest news and information on upcoming events and activities. Going forward, we are hoping to update the look and feel of our newsletters with a whole new look.

### Other social media

RUSU's presence on other social media, including both Twitter (1,855 followers) and Instagram (growing steadily, with 144 followers), remains strong. Throughout 2016, we are looking to extend our social media reach significantly, and to concentrate on building our brand in these sectors.

## PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The RUSU Media Department produces a wide variety of publicity materials for RUSU departments, events and clubs. To ensure their suitability over a broad range of printed and digital media, publicity materials are always made in a range of formats. Some of the highlights from this quarter include:

### RUSU Welcome Bash 2016

The biggest event of the RUSU calendar, this year's Welcome Bash had a Welcome To The Jungle theme that was fun, colourful and really stood out! The design included bold, leopard-print graphics, along with bright, neon colours to give students a boost in the new academic year.

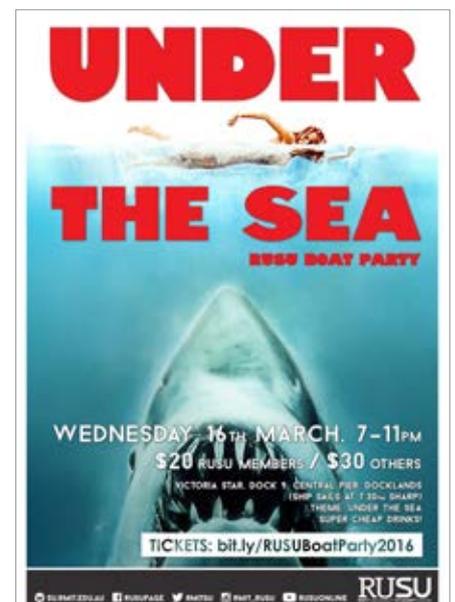
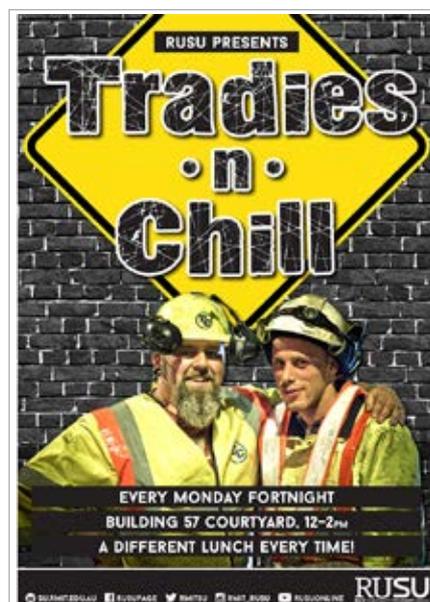
### Tradies 'n' Chill

A brand new, fortnightly lunch event for VE students, featuring a new and different food truck every time, Tradies 'n' Chill is an event designed to give something new to the Carlton campus, who have often missed out on RUSU free food events in the past. Marketing materials featured workmen buddies, road signs and bricks to give a fun, tradies vibe.

### RUSU Boat Party

As it does every single year, the 2016 RUSU Boat Party sold out fast. The Under the Sea theme proved popular with students, with many dressing up in themed costumes to ride the high seas! The poster design featured a riff on the classic, old fashioned JAWS movie poster, which is instantly recognisable and a lot of fun.

*Event Promotional Material*



# REPRESENTATION & ADVOCACY

## COMPASS

Compass had a delayed start to the year with the appointment of Sarah in Thea's absence, opening its doors to students during week one for the first time in 2016. During the time the Compass Co-ordinator role was unfilled, Compass projects and programs were supported by a number of student reps and staff across all campuses. Their hard work and support for Compass was definitely noticed and appreciated.

Twenty-two students were supported by our wonderful volunteers who have come back for another semester. The English Language Workshops, also supported by our wonderful volunteers, have commenced during this period, seeing 84 students across six classes in the City and Bundoora access the inclusive and safe space that our facilitator Nadia has created.

Although we missed our bi-annual opportunity to spruik the amazing volunteer opportunities during orientation week across Social Work, Youth Work and Psychology programs, 19 new volunteers were recruited and will be trained beginning in April.

## REPRESENTATION

### Appeal Committees Reps

RUSU has supported students on the following RMIT hearings:

- » 4 student representatives sat on 7 University Appeals Committee hearings
- » 5 student representatives sat on 8 Student Conduct Board hearings
- » 6 student representative sat on 13 College Appeals Committee hearings

### Student Voice

RUSU elected student representatives provided a student voice on a range of RMIT Committees during this quarter. These included but were not limited to:

- » Academic Board
- » Education Committee
- » Monthly Catch-Up Meetings with the Dean of Students
- » Orientation and Transition Steering Group
- » RMIT Sustainability Committee
- » RMIT Fair Trade Steering Committee
- » Student Experience Advisory Committee
- » Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group
- » RUSU Priorities Working Group
- » Input into the Innovation Team, Shape RMIT, Careers and Employability, Work Intergrated Learning and more

### RUSU/ RMIT Meetings

The RUSU President and General Secretary have continued the regular meetings with the Vice Chancellor, Martin Bean this quarter. A focus of these meetings has been on improving the student experience at RMIT. We have continued our monthly catch up meetings with the Dean of Students

The RUSU President has also meetings with key people at RMIT to provide student and input and feedback on a range of projects and initiatives. These include Chris Hewison (Executive Director Property Services), and Paul Oppenheimer (Executive director for ITS).

## RUSU CAMPAIGNS

RUSU has been an active voice for change at RMIT leading campaigns on issues important to students. Key campaigns that took place throughout the first quarter included:

### Snooze Lounge Campaign

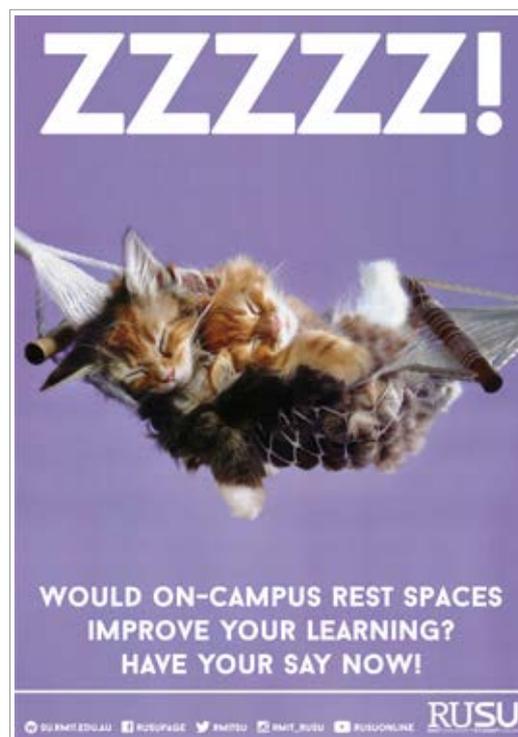
RUSU successfully ran its first campaign of the year advocating for the installation of snooze lounges across the City, Brunswick and Bundoora campuses. Sleep deprivation, exhaustion and the need for safe spaces on campus for students to relax and recharge are issues that the student body have continuously brought to RUSU's attention.

After the RUSU President discussed the need of safe spaces for students to rest (both mentally and physically) in between classes with the Vice Chancellor prior to the commencement of Week 1, RUSU was tasked with gathering a response from the student body to ensure that these spaces were supported by the RMIT community and an appropriate use of space.

RUSU received a tremendous response from students throughout O-Week, Clubs Day and via the social media campaign. On social media, the campaign reached more than 20,000 students and sparked hundreds of comments and conversations online, with all reactions being recorded as positive.

The Campaigns Officer and the RUSU President met with hundreds of students across the three main campuses - City, Brunswick and Bundoora - during the first and second week of the semester with a total of 447 RMIT students and staff participating in the survey either via face-to-face or online. Overwhelmingly, 99% of the survey respondents advised that they thought the snooze lounges were a great idea.

*Snooze Lounge Campaign Poster*



## Snooze Lounge Social Media Campaign



Record engagement for a RUSU campaign:

- » 20,608+ targeted students reached through social media
- » 722 'likes' from RUSU Facebook page
- » Over 270 face-to-face conversations with students
- » 150+ social media comments and shares
- » 447 participants in survey (including both face-to-face and online participants)

Students provided the following feedback when they were asked why they thought safe snoozing spaces were important to have at RMIT:

*"I often see (students) hunched over a library table taking up valuable workspace. If they had somewhere safe to sleep then university space could be used more efficiently."*

*– Samantha, Bundoora Campus*

*"I have to get up at 5.30am to make it to my 8.30 psych lecture, and I often feel sick because I'm tired."*

*– Emma, City Campus.*

*"I think it is important to promote rest and relaxation as a priority in student life, to help students who suffer from a mental illness or students who may become stressed and anxious quite easily."*

*– Abby, City Campus*

*"I suffer from a sleep disorder that causes me to fall asleep multiple times throughout the day, often with only a couple of minutes warning. Having a safe snoozing space would allow me to rest... reducing the chances of falling asleep during class."*

*– Name withheld*

The success of the campaign resulted in RUSU being informed mid-March that spaces for the snooze lounges had been identified by Property Services and that the rooms would be launched prior to commencement of classes in semester two, 2016.

### Update on RUSU Priorities

RUSU has continued to collaborate with other RMIT stakeholders in achieving its 2016 Priorities throughout the first quarter, with particular note to the following:

- » Vice Chancellor, Martin Bean, responded to RUSU's priority list as a guest presenter at the Student Union Council meeting which was held on February 10
- » RUSU President and the Vice Chancellor met following the Academic Board on the February 1 and March 2 to touch base regarding RUSU's priorities (these meetings have been scheduled as ongoing following each Academic Board)
- » RUSU President, Campaigns Officer, Dean of Students and Property Services met on the March 22 to sign-off on

the snooze lounge brief as well as discussing other RUSU priorities

Throughout the first quarter, RUSU has successfully achieved the following priorities:

- » Snooze lounges have been acquired on the City, Brunswick and Bundoora West campus are expected to open prior to semester two
- » Space in NAS for RUSU has been secured
- » Healthier food options have become available on the Bundoora campus with the opening of Realfoods cafe
- » Improved communication with all students via global emails - RUSU secured four global emails per year

### SSCC Student Leadership Summit Preparations

RUSU received SSAF in 2016 to run a brand new SSCC Mentoring Program for SSCC student representatives. Throughout the first quarter, the Campaigns Officer has been collaborating with the RUSU President, RMIT Venues and Careers and Employability to plan and coordinate the first SSCC Student Leadership Summit which will be held in Storey Hall on the April 12.

This summit will be Future Edge accredited and will be focused on developing the leadership and critical feedback skills of the student representatives as well as providing them with an opportunity to network with their peers. It is anticipated that approximately 130-150 student representatives will attend the summit.

The Campaigns Officer has had a busy March coordinating this event (booking guest presenters, arranging the catering and AV requirements, as well as developing the training materials for the student representatives).

### RUSU Internal Meetings

Elected student representatives have been supported and resourced to manage RUSU as a student controlled organisation, including:

- » 3 Student Union Council Meetings
- » 11 Secretariat Meetings - student representatives gaining governance experience on internal Student Union Committees, such as Staffing Committee, Finance Standing Committee and OH&S Committee
- » Elected student councillors supported to act work as governors and managers
- » RUSU student representatives have sat on 10 different recruitment panels for RUSU staff and student casuals this semester

# STUDENT RIGHTS

The Student Rights Team has had a busy start to the year, and during the first quarter has provided advice and information to and representation and advocacy for students across all RMIT campuses. The first quarter saw many students accessing the Student Rights service for assistance with Appeals Against Exclusion and late Show Cause submissions, as well as raft of other issues including special consideration outcomes, fee disputes, complaints, leave of absence, applications to transfer education provider and discrimination. The Student Rights team successfully supported students on a range of matters at an individual and group level. Advocacy included successfully overturning a dramatic fee increase faced by students undertaking a masters level course, campaigning for longer opening hours for the Bundoora Campus computer labs, and advocating for overseas students whose enrolment at RMIT has been affected by international conflicts.

The Student Rights team has also undertaken significant policy input, review and feedback to the University. Members of the Student Rights team, alongside the Campaigns Officer, have played a vital role in reforming the University's Assessment Policy suite, most notably proposing an innovative new model for Special Consideration. Staff and student reps also provided review of the new Enrolment Policy and processes, the Higher Degree by Research Policy and processes, and have participated in the development of a Disability Framework for RMIT.

Staff attended a range of meetings with University representatives and departments. In addition to regular meetings with the Assessment Support Unit, staff met with Student Records Compliance Officers to receive briefing on Victorian Government mandated broadened eligibility criteria for government funded places for Vocational Education students and educated the Student Rights team on this issue. Staff also advocated for students at meetings with University representatives about the new cancellation of enrolment due to debt policy.

## *RMIT CU at the beach*



In addition the Student Rights team participated in numerous orientation week events and presentations, and have continued outreach through the semester at events on all RMIT campuses, to inform students about the Student Rights service.

Some direct feedback from students who have accessed the Student Rights Service this quarter:

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“Thank you very much for the extra help you gave me so I could submit and pass my work. I know how busy you are, so I really appreciated the time you spent to resolve my issue. I am very happy to hear this good news. Also, I appreciate your assistance for everything.”

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“Your considered approach to helping us to understand how to best challenge the initial decision was obviously instrumental in this outcome.”

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“So thank you very much for playing a big role with this application, really appreciated your help.”

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“All of this wouldn't be done with out of your help, I am greatly appreciating your help and support with this issue and honestly it is very nice knowing people such helpful as you, many thanks.”

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# RUSU GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION & SERVICES

RUSU's operations are supported by the Governance, Administration and Finance staff. Some key projects during this period include:

- » Assisting and resourcing RUSU student representatives in meetings with RMIT University
- » Development of briefs with Property Services for RUSU locations in NAS, Building 5, and Brunswick
- » Working with Property Services on the Bundoora Realfoods café project and development of brief for Realfoods café in NAS
- » Supporting and participating in the recruitment and induction of new RUSU staff and student casuals
- » Development of Terms of Reference for the three RUSU teams; Student Rights & Welfare, Student Liaison Officers/ Administration, and Student Life
- » Refining the 2016 RUSU budget in accordance with the RUSU funding agreement and SSAF grant requirements
- » Finance Standing Committee meetings held
- » RUSU Investment Strategy updated for 2016 and approved by SUC
- » Administrative and payroll tasks associated with new RUSU staff and student casuals
- » Undertaking the 2015 Annual financial audit
- » Providing advice to the RUSU management on IT related issues
- » Development of a submission for additional funding to the Vice Chancellor to enable RUSU to lease computers through ITS and to fund RUSU's migration to the UniOne system
- » Meeting RMIT Security Manager regarding RUSU access issues
- » Coordinating and attending Student Rights & Welfare Team Meetings
- » Providing first point of contact Student Rights advice for RMIT students (both on shore and off-shore)
- » Sourcing and resourcing student representatives to RMIT Appeals Committees

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

RUSU Funding from RMIT for 2016 is made up of the following:	
Base Grant	\$2,586,714
SSAF Committee Grants	\$620,000
Non-Recurring Grant	\$110,300
<b>2016 TOTAL GRANT</b>	<b>\$3,317,014</b>
2016 Grant Received to Date	\$3,317,014

The 2016 RMIT/RUSU Deed Agreement has been signed. The 2016 grant was received as a lump sum payment in late January. Like in 2015 this upfront payment will enable RUSU to generate additional income to supplement the grant.

In order to meet legislative requirements, the RUSU financial reports match expenses with "allowable items". Please note that **Table 1** on the following page is based on SSAF Allowable items and expenditure of SSAF funds on these areas. It categorises the SSAF expenditure from the Base grant and SSAF Committee projects into the allowable items. This table does not include activities and services funded by non-SSAF expenditure.

RUSU also receives some funding from other sources. While some of the activities funded through these sources are

reported on in the narrative section of this quarterly report, due to the overlap with other representative, advocacy, administrative, governance and publicity functions of RUSU, expenditure on these projects is not included in the expenditure reported below as it is not SSAF funded.

**Table 2** reports on the specific grants approved by the SSAF Committee.

RUSU is committed to continuous improvement of our financial systems to ensure we both work within our budget provisions as agreed through our funding agreement and to satisfactorily achieve our annual audit of statutory accounts by a registered company auditor.

**TABLE 1: RUSU SSAF GRANT EXPENDITURE ON ALLOWABLE ITEMS:  
1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2016**

Allowable Item	Item Description	YTD Expenditure (SSAF Funded)
Giving students information to help them in their orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Orientation specific events</li> <li>» Re-Orientation Events</li> </ul>	\$4,754
Caring for children of students	Nil	\$0
Providing legal services to students	Nil	\$0
Promoting the health or welfare of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» All activities and events from advocacy and welfare collectives: Queer, Womyn's, Post-Graduate, Environment, Welfare, Education</li> <li>» Campaigns, events, honorariums, programs, marketing</li> <li>» All Compass Centre, programs and staff</li> <li>» Healthy Eating SSAF Grant</li> </ul>	\$46,087
Helping students secure accommodation	Nil	\$0
Helping students with their financial affairs	Nil	\$0
Helping meet the specific needs of overseas students relating to their welfare, accommodation and employment;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» All activities and events from International student department and International Support SSAF Grant</li> </ul>	\$6,569
Helping students obtain employment or advice on careers	Nil	\$0
Helping students obtain insurance against personal accidents	Nil	\$0
Helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Induction programs/Student Representative Professional Development</li> <li>» Volunteer Program &amp; Program Staffing</li> <li>» Student Engagement Officer</li> <li>» Student Union Council Elections</li> <li>» Secretariat Honorariums</li> <li>» All of SUC campaigns</li> </ul>	\$82,248
Providing libraries and reading rooms (other than those provided for academic purposes) for students	Nil	\$0
Supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» RMITV operations, honorariums, special projects, productions, training, website</li> <li>» RMIT Flagship Program</li> <li>» Catalyst magazine operations, student honorariums, publication (online and print)</li> <li>» Communications/Graphic Designer Staff</li> </ul>	\$29,662
Providing food or drink to students on a campus of the higher education provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Campus specific events and marketing (all campuses)</li> <li>» RUSU Realfoods</li> </ul>	\$26,428
Supporting a sporting or other recreational activity by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Major events and intervarsity recreational activities and competitions</li> <li>» Activities and Events Collective including administration, student honorariums, marketing and staff support</li> </ul>	\$51,461

**TABLE 1: RUSU SSAF GRANT EXPENDITURE ON ALLOWABLE ITEMS:  
1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2016 (CONTINUED)**

Allowable Item	Item Description	YTD Expenditure (SSAF Funded)
Supporting an artistic activity by students	Nil	\$0
Supporting debating by students	» Grants paid to debating club are included with clubs reporting	\$0
Supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students	» Administration, grants, equipment and support to student run clubs and societies » Clubs and Societies Staff and other support	\$51,354
Advising on matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described)	» Administration and Support staff members: Administration, Governance and Finance » 5 x Information counter staff and operations (including Bundoora East and SSAF Project)	\$143,859
Advocating students' interests in matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described)	» Student Rights Officers » Student Advocacy materials, campaigns, research and training for staff and student representatives on committees	\$150,331
<b>YTD SSAF EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>\$635,553</b>
<b>YTD 2016 SSAF FUNDS RECEIVED</b>		<b>\$3,317,014</b>

**TABLE 2: 2015 SSAF COMMITTEE GRANT FINANCIAL REPORT:  
1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2016**

Program Title	Grant Amount	Expenditure Jan – March
RUSU Volunteer Program	\$178,000	\$27,096
RUSU Flagship Production (Live on Bowen) and RMITV training program	\$40,000	\$5,939
RUSU International Student Support - conversation classes and city tours	\$33,000	\$4,955
Bundoora Common Lunch Hour (including SRO & BE)	\$76,000	\$10,150
RUSU Orientation Package	\$100,000	\$47,554
RUSU Free Healthy Breakfasts including nutrition & sustainability awareness	\$70,000	\$5,485
Post-grad Support Program (including SRO)	\$36,000	\$7,150
Brunswick Common Lunch Hour	\$27,000	\$1,484
RUSU VE Awareness & Support	\$32,000	\$680
SSCC Mentoring Program	\$28,000	\$ 3,158
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$620,000</b>	<b>\$113,651</b>

# RUSU

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