

WORONI

Australian National University Student Media

Editor-in-Chief's Annual Report 2024

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1. Introduction

My name is Matthew Box and I am the Editor-in-Chief of ANU Student Media for Semester 1 2024, prior to this I was the Managing Editor from June 2022 until November 2023. This Association is an incredible organisation that I am very grateful to have been a part of not least because of the variety of people that are drawn to the organisation and whom I have been able to work with. ANU is a diverse community from across not just Australia but the world and ANUSM is lucky to exist and work within and for it.

Woroni, as a masthead, is a leader in Australian student media, we are the only organisation in the country with regular content produced across Art, Online, Print, Radio and TV and are the largest team in the country. Woroni also remains one of the few student media organisations to be truly independent from their University and student union, this is something that should be celebrated and must be protected.

ANUSM is an organisation which relies on a vast team of volunteers to make us function; the success of the team would not be possible without all of our Editors, Senior Sub-Editors, Sub-Editors, contributors and radio show hosts and I am thankful for the contributions of every one of them.

The last 12 months have been a very significant one for ANUSM and everyone that has been involved should be extremely proud of their work. This report will cover that work and offer some glimpses to the future.

2. Acknowledgement of Country

ANUSM works on the traditional lands of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples. This land was stolen by settlers, it always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

“Woroni” is a word stolen from the Wadi Wadi language. ANUSM aims to recognise this theft and work for reconciliation now and into the future.

3. Association Governance and Management

a. Constitution

Since the last Annual General Meeting significant reforms have been made to the ANUSM Constitution. The principle reform has been the introduction of a ninth member to the ANUSM Board, the Communications Editor. As ANUSM expands, this role will be essential to leading the Association's social media, photography and events teams and strategies which to this point has been led by the Executive Editors. Our Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Charlie Crawford, is to thank for the hard work behind this reform and we will be working to transition someone into this role in the coming months to ensure the role successfully supports the work of the organisation.

b. Policy

As noted in Rose Dixon-Campbell's Annual Report last year, we completed a broad policy review which resulted in changes to changes to a wide swath of our policies. This review was undertaken to bring our policies into line with both current and best practice. Further, the electoral regulations were updated last year to introduce a conflict of interest disclosure requirement aimed to safeguard ANUSM's independence and allow ANU students to make informed decisions when they vote at our elections.

c. Finance

Please consult our Managing Editor, Phoebe Denham's, report and the audited financial statements for a more detailed review of our finances over the last year. Since beginning in February, Phoebe has taken to the Managing Editor role aptly and I'm certain they will continue to effectively advise and lead the Board on financial and other matters.

4. Website

Since the last AGM, the website redevelopment has been completed, this has created a much more streamlined website with more functionality. The new website is especially positive for the Art and Radio teams, the former now has a dedicated space on the website while the later has increased connectivity for spotify podcasts. There are yet more updates to come before the end of the year which we hope will better support our communication and outreach to the ANU community. I'd like to particularly

thank the four Editors-in-Chief prior to me for their work on this redevelopment: Liam Taylor, Juliette Baxter, Rose Dixon-Campbell and Alexander Lane as well as James McNess and the rest of the team at Code and Visual.

The website is performing well, in the last 30 days we had almost 17,000 visitors with almost 65% of visitors viewing more than one page on the site.

5. Novel Print Projects

Over the past year we have sought to undertake projects beyond our regular work, I have called these “novel print projects”. At the end of Semester 1 last year we published the [Un]Real photography zine which was the brainchild and extensively worked on by the Editor-in-Chief at the time, Rose. Again in Semester 2 we published something outside “regular broadcasting” which was The Broadsheet, this was the first time Woroni had published something in a newspaper format since 2018 and while it was a challenge, the dedicated work of all our team but particularly the Editor-in-Chief, Alexander Lane, and the Art Editor, Jasmin Small, made it a successful publication.

This year we have again allocated funding for these projects, the first of which will be released at the end of this Semester, stay tuned!

6. SCRIPT Fund

The SCRIPT Fund is a unique product of ANUSM which allows us to fund the production of other publications on campus which do not themselves receive enough funding to operate. This is a program which, to my knowledge, is not offered at any other Australian University and represents Woroni’s focus on and encouragement of independent student media and publications.

a. Publications

In 2023 we continued our longstanding partnership with the ANU Women’s Department’s magazine, *BOSSY*, as well as funding the printing of the BIPOC Department’s first zine.

Applications for 2024 are currently open and all students and student groups are encouraged to apply, see our [website](#) for more details.

b. Funding Arrangements

In 2023 we secured approximately \$83,000 in unspent SSAF from our budgets between 2018 and 2022 which would be spent over the period 2023-2026, given this for 2024, 2025 and 2026, SCRIPT will be funded through this underspend.

7. Professional Development

ANUSM aims to be the journalism degree that ANU does not offer, in pursuit of this goal we try to provide our teams with professional development which will serve them both here and in their future careers. In addition to more informal training activities, over the last year our team have undertaken a number of more formal PD events. A contingent visited the ABC Canberra office in Semester 2 last year and we had Dan Kaufman from Media Survival provide defamation and general media law training to a significant portion of our team and this is being provided to this Semester's team in the coming weeks. I would like to thank Phoebe Denham for taking over the organisation of this media law training from me in the role of Managing Editor.

8. Events

ANUSM runs events across a number of different focus areas from careers, to social to music. In the last year we ran a number of magazine launches, a 'Night with the Journos' and an end of year celebration of our work and our team. I would like to especially thank and congratulate our Radio Editor for the last year and a half, George Hogg, for their tireless work in both organising and running the Hottest 100 event at the end of last year. I would also like to thank the previous Senior Events Officer Jeffrey Liang for his assistance to me in running the events team from mid 2022 until the end of 2023.

9. Photography

ANUSM photography has grown over the past year. We regularly send photographers to IAC events and on-campus protests as well as engaging them to pursue creative projects such as the fashion photography series. If there is an event on campus which you think should be photographed I would encourage you to email me at woronieic@gmail.com.

10. Social Media

Social media is the main way that we reach students across all of our portfolios other than the magazine. I would like to thank our previous Social Media Senior Sub-Editor Brianna Collett as well as Rose and Charlie for their work managing our platforms.

a. Facebook

Facebook continues to be our best regularly performing social media outlet, with over 11,000 followers we have the second most followed Facebook of any student media in the country despite having a smaller student population than many other universities. This number is more than half the number of enrolled students at ANU and while many of these followers are from previous years, it is encouraging that community members remain engaged with Woroni after leaving university. In the last 12 months we have had almost 48,000 visits to our Facebook page and increased our following by almost 400.

b. Instagram

Instagram remains an area of growth for Woroni and we have seen this in the last year, while a smaller platform than Facebook for us, we have added almost the same number of followers in the same period. This year has seen a refocus on Instagram with the trial of a unified template and aesthetic which we expect to make the process more streamlined and add to our brand recognition.

c. TikTok

In 2024 the ANUSM Board has had a much stronger focus on TikTok and we have already seen some promising results from this with multiple videos going semi-viral. We expect to continue to offer a number of different types of videos from general advertising to news coverage here.

d. Twitter

In the past year Woroni's Twitter has been used much more, principally for live tweeting ANUSA SRC meetings as well as the NUS NatCon, for which I would like to congratulate our News Editor Raida Chowdury and our former News Columnist Luca Ittimani. Tweets have strong interactions, particularly with the people engaged in the events which are live tweeted.

11. Art

As noted in the website section, the Art team now has a dedicated space to display their work. Of course the primary output of the Art team is the fantastic art which accompanies pieces in the magazine and online.

The Art team has been led by the fantastic Jasmin Small for the last year and a half who has done a brilliant job curating the aesthetic of the magazines. Laying out the magazine and liaising with our printer is an unenviable responsibility which requires an incredible amount of work and patience, I congratulate Jasmin on her great work in this regard.

Thanks and congratulations also goes to the whole art team without whom the magazine's unique aesthetic would not be possible. A dedicated art team is something that truly sets ANUSM apart from other student publications and our team does truly outstanding work.

12. Content

The Content portfolio over the past year has been overseen by Lizzie Fewster in 2023 and Claudia Hunt in 2024, both of whom have shown immense dedication to the work of their portfolio.

The Content team is responsible for the sourcing and editing of published, non-news, content both in the magazine and online. While shrinking in size over my time at Woroni, the output of the team has increased and is truly operating at a fantastic level this year. We have seen a marked increase in submissions for the magazine, particularly the second issue of the year, *Home*. This year has also seen an increase in online content produced in house by the team itself. This success is due to the hard work of Claudia in the management and encouragement of her team.

All of the Senior Sub-Editors and Sub-Editors in the content team do fantastic work in bringing students' submissions up to standard and within the style guide for publication, each one deserves a round of applause.

13. News

This time last year the News portfolio was run by Alexander Lane who was replaced by Rosie Welsh who graduated at the end of last year, following this Radia Chowdhury filled the casual vacancy in the role.

The last year has seen the introduction and success of the news radio show, vox pops in conjunction with the TV-News team and an increase in analysis and investigative pieces. This innovation is a reflection of the hard work of each of the News Editors in this period and I am sure that each of these will continue to be successful projects moving forwards. We have also been able to cover the Federal Budget and aim to do so again this year.

Further, we were able to send a team to NUS NatCon in December for the second year in a row. The team consisted of our News Editor Raida Chowdhury and our former News Columnist Luca Ittimani as well as myself as Editor-in-Chief as moral (and financial analysis) support. This is an incredibly tiring event physically, mentally and emotionally and the members of the news team who cover the event fulfil a thankless yet important role in keeping student politicians accountable.

14. Radio

The Radio portfolio over the past year and a half has been overseen by George Hogg as Radio Editor, George has led Radio to its highest number of shows since COVID as well as innovating with the team in other ways.

Radio now not only produces student presenters shows but also produces longer form in house podcast episodes under the creative and features banners. These episodes range from radio plays to interviews and require an incredible time investment on the part of all involved. For this I must thank and congratulate the whole radio team especially for doing this work on top of running our regular broadcasting program.

15. TV

Over the past 12 months the TV team has been run by Virginia Plas who was replaced in a casual vacancy by Lucy Spencely who was finally succeeded by today's TV Editor, the brilliant Arabella Ritchie.

TV over the last year has done some fantastic work in trialling different types of production, from short films all the way to TikToks. The TV-News team has done a brilliant job with their coverage of important issues and their vox pops have been a great way to capture the attitudes of ANU students.

Arabella has done a fantastic job in her time refocusing the team around three core tenets of production: quality, entertainment and relevance, I am sure that this focus will help the team reach for new heights.

16. Equipment Hire

ANUSM provides equipment hire for various pieces of equipment to students and student organisations. These are available for SCRIPT Fund publications and for the running of events as well as general interest use. Additionally ANUSM runs the Woroni Audio Access Program which makes podcasting equipment available to students for the purposes of recording for coursework.

The equipment hire program is run primarily by the Radio and TV Editors with the support of the Managing Editor. Over the last 12 months Woroni has had 34 hire requests for our equipment.

17. Magazine Distribution

ANUSM has sought to increase the distribution of our magazines to more locations around campus. This time last year distribution was limited to the Di Riddell Building, the Marie Reay Teaching Centre, Chifley Library and irregular distributions to student residences. Now we also distribute to Llewellyn Hall, the School of Art, the Research School of Social Sciences and the Research School of Biology. If there is a space you would like to see magazines distributed to I would encourage you contact me at woronieic@gmail.com.

18. Merchandise

In the last year ANUSM has continued with our streak of producing some of the most popular merchandise on campus, this is particularly in relation to our tote bags. The logistics behind merchandise falls principally to the Managing Editor, and I am glad to be rid of this responsibility; while the design itself is left to the Art team and particularly the Editor. I thank Jasmin for her work in creating designs to the Board's specifications and which have continued our tradition of fantastic merchandise.

19. Looking Forward

ANUSM has much to look forward to in the next year. The Board recently elected Charlie Crawford who has been Deputy Editor-in-Chief for just over a year now to be our next Editor-in-Chief, I am confident that he will do a fantastic job in leading our organisation. Additionally, with three years of secure funding, we can be much more confident in our projects and our work between now and 2026.

Finally, 2025 will mark 75 years of the publishing of *Woroni* and 15 years of independence from ANUSA (from 1947-1950 we were published irregularly as *Student Notes: Canberra University College Students Association*). With such a significant milestone, I hope that the Board and the Association as a whole take the chance to celebrate an institution of the University that has been around since the beginning while giving thought to our evolution and our next 75 years at ANU.

20. Conclusion

This is my eighth and final report to a general meeting and my second report to an AGM; I am very grateful to have been able to be a part of *Woroni* and thank everyone who I have worked with over the last two years. Thank you, and goodbye.

Matthew J. Box
Editor-in-Chief