



**UWA Student Guild  
Student Services & Amenities Fee (SSAF) Acquittal  
2022**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UWA Student Guild has performed very well in 2023. The organisation has rebounded from the COVID-19 challenge and the growth of students on campus has been positive, ultimately supporting our organisation.

The UWA Student Guild has been through a year of sustained growth. The organisation has moved forward in its development plan, its services and representation aim and goals. Student Assist, Guild Events, Venture, and Guild Volunteering delivered their respective services well to the student cohort. The Guild also launched its Student Legal Advice Centre (SLAC) which is a new initiative to support students at UWA. The catering and commercial services divisions of the Guild provided positive returns and service.

Guild student membership is again steady at 97% of the onshore student population 21,739 (September 2023 SSAF Reporting).

The growth in student numbers at UWA through its cohort intake and the establishment of UWA College has resulted in greater student activity on campus. This is evident in the number of well-run events being held and attended, plus daily activity on campus in and around the Guild Village.

Our strategy has moved towards planning for the future through initiatives which would strengthen the organisation. Such planning initiatives included a review and development of our catering strategy, as well as the creation of the Guild's Facilities and Infrastructure Masterplan. This gained strong support from across the University community and endorsement from UWA Senate, with phase one, construction, to commence in August 2024.

The Guild also provided submissions to the State & Federal Governments regarding the Western Australian University Sector review and the Federal Accord Review. Both submissions were well received by the respective panels with excellent feedback obtained.

In Semester Two, student representatives and the Guild campaigned for a Yes vote in the constitutional referendum held on 14 October 2023 which proposed Indigenous Voice to Parliament.

This year the Guild utilised its social media platforms effectively, especially the Instagram handle of the Guild. We focused on a style of creating content that is more relevant and relatable for the average university student, so that it encouraged students to reach out and engage with the Guild more frequently.

Our number of followers on Instagram have increased by 3,600 people this year, with overall engagement for 2023 increasing by 52.3%, compared to 2022.

In addition to the SSAF funded services and support for students, the Guild continues to provide discounted food and beverages totalling \$262,089 in 2023. The Guild Bookshop provided value back to students through its exchange service, with discounts amounting to \$23,160.93 in 2023.

## CONTEXT & COMPLIANCE

The UWA Student Guild (“the Guild”) agreed with the University of Western Australia (“the University”) Senate to receive a 50% supply of the total Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) income, and for the benefit of the University to provide various services for students as outlined in this report.

In accordance with UWA Statute Chapter 5, 56 (2) the Student Guild is the recognised means of communication

- (a) between the students or any section of them and the governing authority of the University (the Senate); and
- (b) between the students of this University or any section of them and other tertiary institutions.

The Guild will coordinate and support the system of student representation at Senate, Academic Board, Faculty and School level.

This report has been prepared in compliance with the UWA Statute, Chapter 5, 64 (2) which requires the Student Guild to:

Submit to the Senate within one month of receipt and by no later than six months after the end of the Guild’s financial year —

- (a) a copy of the audited accounts and financial statements under (1) for the previous financial year; and
- (b) a written report on how the proportion of the Amenities and Services Fees it received under clause 62 has been applied to provide amenities and services under the categories referred to in 63.

The UWA Student Guild has been implementing a series of strategic plans to create closer alignment with the University and deliver the Guild’s objectives under the UWA Act or the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth).

The Guild is contracted to supply services in the following areas:

- (a) student representation;
- (b) student societies;
- (c) social activities;
- (d) cultural activities;
- (e) sporting activities;
- (f) welfare;
- (g) catering;
- (h) commercial activities;
- (i) capital funds and infrastructure;
- (j) investments and reserves;
- (k) other services and amenities consistent with the objects and powers of the Guild as defined in clause 56; and
- (l) the administrative costs of any or all of the activities and facilities listed in (a) to (k) (inclusive).

These services create a unique student experience at UWA.

The Guild undertakes that it has spent its allocation in compliance with all relevant legislative provisions, subsidiary legislation and UWA Statute, including the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)*, the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 Guidelines*, *UWA Act* and the *UWA Statute, Chapter 5*.

The Guild has provided three Services & Amenities reports (to the Director UWA Student Life, the Associate Director, Student Services and Engagement and the Associate Director, Student Success and Wellbeing) on progress aligned to our functions and objectives, with monthly meetings held throughout the year. The Guild also works closely with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and other members of the University Executive. Our obligations have been met satisfactory and a strong collaborative working relationship with the University has been developed.

## UWA STUDENT GUILD – KEY INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Guild achieved a series of positive outcomes in 2023, with the focus on operational delivery, event management, compliance, student engagement, catering, research initiatives and capital programs.

This section outlines the key positive outcomes for 2023 in each area that the Guild is contracted to supply services in.

### **Student Representation and Advocacy**

In 2023 the Guild has been heavily representing the student voice through its student representatives, faculty societies, departments, and representative system.

The Guild's primary mission has been to assess and recommend alterations to Guild legislation, aiming to enhance the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Guild as a whole. The Departments which received upgrades or changes to their rules or regulations included:

- Women's Department
- Wellbeing Department (*including a name change from Welfare Department*)
- Education Council
- Residential Students' Department
- Public Affairs Council
- Volunteering
- Guild Elections
- Guild Standing Orders
- Postgraduate Students' Association
- Societies Council
- Student Tenancy Committee.

The Guild has continued to work with other student unions and guilds across the country as well as the National Union of Students (NUS) and the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) to address issues facing students at State and Federal levels.

The Guild lobbied for a Yes vote in the Voice to Parliament referendum, held in October of 2023. The campaign was managed by students through a working group and many dedicated student leaders.

The Guild participated in providing documented input in the Western Australian University Sector Review and the Federal Accord Review into the Higher Education System. Both panels for each review praised the UWA Student Guild's submissions and commentary.

### **Student Clubs and Societies**

The Guild develops and encourages an active student club culture at UWA. This year some initiatives, activities and services included:

- 143 clubs and societies were operating in 2023.
- O-Day 2023 had over 10,000 people attend and engage throughout the day.
- In both March and August 2023, the Guild organised and ran a Club Carnival, an event to facilitating clubs' ongoing exposure to incoming students.
- Since the beginning of 2023, we received strong interest from students wishing to establish new clubs. A total of 28 budding organisations have reached out to the Guild, 9 of which were successfully affiliated to the Societies Council.
- A significant accomplishment of the Societies Council Committee in 2023 was increasing the clubs' grant funding. The Club Grants budget was increased by over \$45,000 this year, and we have restructured the grants allocation process, allowing clubs to claim double the amount of funding per semester, compared to 2022.

The Guild also provides consistent support to clubs and societies on:

- Event Management
- Administration and finance
- Training
- Facilities
- Compliance
- Funding
- Policy development
- Communication, marketing and design
- Catering and function services

### **Guild Events**

The Events Department works closely with UWA Student Guild Departments and Clubs to create exciting, relevant and valuable events to facilitate and build a vibrant and welcoming UWA community.

Continuing the trend of well-attended events in the past few years (since the pandemic), the Events Team ran and approved a total of 3327 student events in 2023 which ranged from Exams RnR activities in the Grove to campus music festivals.

The Guild organised low cost and free student events including O-Day (approximately 10,000 students), the "Barbie" Cruickshank-Routley Memorial Guild Ball, Fever Pitch, Weekly Tav Quiz, Guild on the Green, Welfare events including free weekly Yoga & Pilates and Halloween (End of Semester Tav Party) to name a few.

Guild Events is committed to training students in all aspects of events and leadership with our two-day Student Leadership Training (SLT) providing UWA students with tangible learning experiences. SLT aims to equip student leaders with the tools and confidence to run their Clubs safely and inclusively.

For the third year running, the Guild arranged Defamation Training for the Prosh Directors, Pelican Editors and Marketing/Promotions teams, delivered by an external lawyer.

Guild theme weeks helped to inspire the student cohort across 2023 including:

- Spring Feast – September 2023
- Club Carnival – March 2023 / August 2023
- Women's Week – August 2023
- Pride Week – August 2023
- Access Week – August 2023
- International Students' Week – August 2023

## Total events for 2023

	Guild Events	Club Events	Total Events	YTD Events
January	-	32	32	32
February	18	60	78	110
March	58	342	400	510
April	69	386	455	965
May	77	352	429	1394
June	55	122	177	1571
July	65	151	216	1787
August	122	373	495	2282
September	114	453	567	2849
October	45	223	268	3117
November	19	90	109	3226
December	27	74	101	<b>3327</b>
<b>2023 Totals</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>2658</b>	<b>3327</b>	<b><u>3327</u></b>

This year the Events Department were fully responsible for organising Spring Feast in collaboration with the Guild’s Vice President. The 2023 event was well attended with an estimated 2,500+ in attendance. The 12 corporate food vendors and 12 club stalls all did extremely well with most selling out of product before the end of the evening. 18 performances took to the mainstage with musical acts, dancing crews and even hand-to-hand combat demonstrations.

### Guild Engagement – Marketing and Creative

Marketing and Creative manages the Guild’s marketing, communications, design and digital production.

The focus for 2023 remained on delivering timely information via social media channels, and building a sense of community for students both on and off campus. This began with O-Day, creating useful, informative orientation content for new students to get involved in campus life; and continued throughout the year.

Highlights for Marketing and Creative in 2023 include:

- Conducted Sexual Health survey in collaboration with NORMAL
- Delivered the Guild Weekly e-newsletter to all Guild members every Sunday during semester
- In collaboration with Guild Council, Marketing and Creative produced the first “Guild Zine” for O’Week
- Extensively covered 2023 Guild Elections, including lead up information and results announcements
- Continuing on from the success in 2022, Marketing and Creative ran the 2023 Guild Diary Cover competition (with 2024 diary covers designed by students)
- Launched the first UWA x Champion “Flash Sale” and “Black Friday Sale”
- Designed and marketed the Barbie-themed Guild Ball with theme “hints” and save-the-date posts proving most popular

Top performing Guild website pages included Best Units Guide, Clubs Directory, Student Cafes, What’s On, and Cruickshank-Routley Memorial Prize nomination page.

The Creative department fulfilled 436 jobs across 2023, including the major event projects of O-Day and PROSH, and publications; Pelican (6 editions), Outspoken, Postscript, Damsel & Lighthouse (2 editions).

In addition to these projects, the department provided designs for Guild Ball, Halloween, Oktoberfest, UWA x Champion sales, Voice to Parliament, Department Elections and completed the 2024 diary layout.

### **Guild Volunteering**

Guild Volunteering continues to recognise and celebrate the amazing work our students do in the volunteering space. While 2023 presented many challenges, the students showed their support by consistently attending the many programs and opportunities provided to them in large numbers. In 2023, 18 new external partnerships have been created with not-for-profit organisations and there has been a big focus on maintaining our existing partnerships with another 366 not-for-profit organisations.

1,430 students engaged in volunteering in 2023 and logged 28,288 volunteer hours. Sustainability humanitarian programs proved to be the most popular and well attended by students this year.

Guild Volunteering continues to collaborate and support many UWA events such as Club Carnival, Spring Feast, Guild Ball, PROSH, Relay For Life, Orientation Weeks and Guild on the Green, as well as other initiatives led by the students of UWA. Winter Holidays and Summer volunteer programs such as “24 days of Giving” continue to provide opportunities for students to give their time outside of semester blocks, in what is becoming a fulfilling program on the volunteering calendar.

#### *2023 Volunteering Programs*

- **Perth Homeless Support Group** gives students the opportunity to assist packaging and supplying much needed provisions to people experiencing homelessness on a weekly basis.
- **Micro-Volunteering**, now in their eighth year, have garnered great numbers of students to help not-for-profit organisations with meaningful tasks. It continues to be a leading program that provides students an entry level volunteering opportunity.
- **Swan Estuary Reserves Action group (SERAG), Guild Gardens** and **Friends of Mosman Park** are our environmentally friendly and sustainable programs working hard to revegetate and maintain community environments internal and external to UWA.
- **Inter-Generation visit Residency by Dillon’s**, an aged care facility on a weekly basis to run activities and form relationship with their residents. This program is as significantly rewarding for the students as it is for the residents.
- **Bread Run** program meets twice a week to collect donated bread from generous local bakeries and provide this to the students of UWA, especially during the recent increased cost of living period.
- **PROSH** raised over \$33,000 by selling the 2023 “PROSH TV” themed satirical newspaper to the people of Perth. Hundreds of student volunteers proudly took part in this annual UWA tradition with all money raised going towards the two charities; **Dismantle Inc**, a not-for-profit providing young people with enabling support so they can manage their life in a self-directed way, and **Freedom Centre**, a support service and safe space for the young LGBTQIA+ people in WA.
- **Relay For Life** took place in 2023, this year on Riley Oval, over the weekend of October 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>. Well over 30 teams and close to 475 students participated in the much-loved event raising \$60,000 for the Cancer Council. The event featured many supporting acts and included a silent disco.

#### ***National Student Volunteer Week***

National Student Volunteer Week is one of the biggest weeks of the calendar year for Guild Volunteering, highlighting our programs and promoting the opportunities on offer for all UWA students. Student led programs combined with not-for-profit organisation excursions make up the weeklong



celebration of volunteering. This year we combined Volunteering Fest with Club Carnival which allowed organisations to promote themselves to the UWA community.

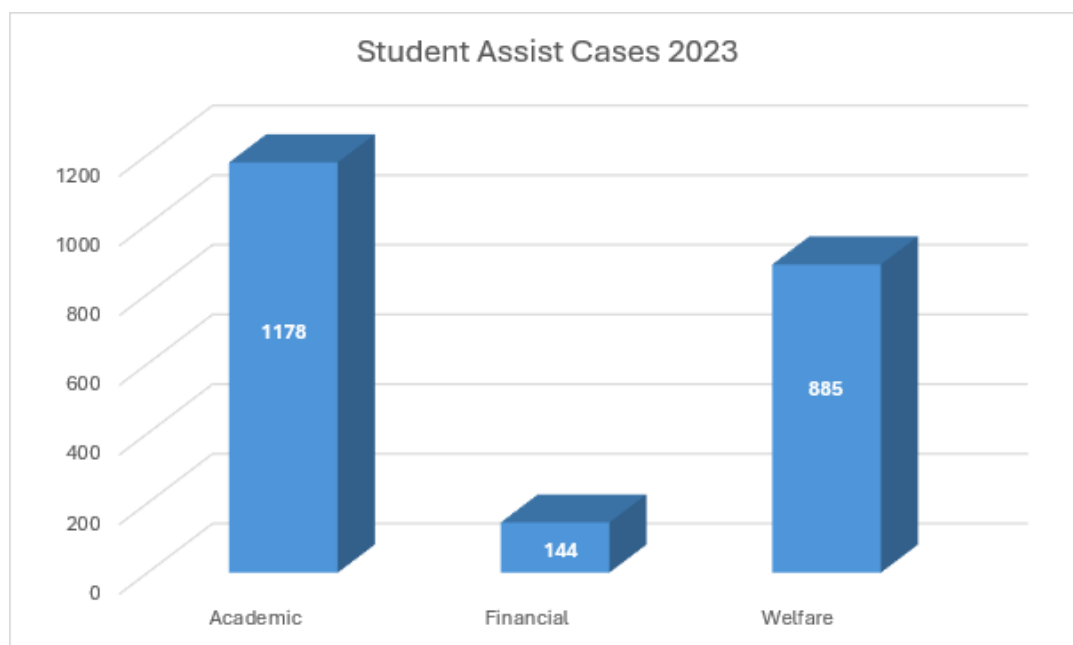
Over 100 students volunteered for the 10 various excursions and student led programs which featured **Kanyana Wildlife Park, Dismantle WA, Ronald McDonald House** and **Little Things for Tiny Tots**. The highlight was the Inter-Uni beach challenge, run by Volunteering WA, that pitted UWA students against competing WA Universities to revegetate as many plants as possible at Leighton Beach, North of Fremantle. The opportunity to promote Guild Volunteering during the week, especially at Club Carnival registered 81 new student referrals as well as raising money for the Cancer Council.

### Welfare, Support and Engagement

In 2023, Student Assist included a team of a Student Assist Manager, three Student Assist Officers and a Wellbeing Counsellor.

The team provided support and advocacy for students regarding academic, financial and welfare matters utilising a strengths-based approach. Guild Student Assist has remained a low barrier service, staffed by a dedicated and hardworking team who always ensure students are the priority.

Unfortunately, in 2023 there was no change in the sheer number of students facing loss of income, issues of loneliness and raised anxiety. The Student Assist team have seen a dramatic rise in students presenting with mental health concerns, homelessness, food insecurity and isolation.



In 2023 Student Assist have worked hard to support the students by:

- Running Mediation workshops (twice a week)
- Running Yin Yoga workshops (twice a week)
- Attending events at College Row, The Living Room and UWA International Student Support Lounge
- Participating in Wellbeing Connect Week
- Attending State Sexual Violence and Strategy Workshop
- Facilitating "Hot Chocolate and a Chat" during exams and Guild on the Green
- Presenting Mental Health Awareness Training at 8 Student Leadership sessions throughout the year

The Student Assist team continues to maintain significant effort to build positive relationships with Guild Student departments and teams across the University to increase communication and broaden collaborative efforts to provide the best services and supports to students.

Similar to previous years, Student Assist highlighted 'R U OK Day' by walking around Campus with cupcakes, offering them to students. This was a meaningful activity which allowed students to connect with Student Assist in an informal way.

There was a significant increase in the usage of the Guild Food Pantry in 2023 with students visiting the pantry **982 times** across year. This highlighted the issue of food insecurity amongst students. Along with non-perishable food items located with Student Assist, students had access to free fresh bread donated by local bakeries that was available twice a week from the Student Assist office.

### **Other Guild Services**

Other support services that the Guild offers include:

- The Guild Bookshop returned **\$23,160.93** to UWA students through the sales of books in 2023. As mentioned previously, the Guild Bookshop was rebranded during the year and is no longer referred to as the Secondhand Bookshop.
- Free tax help sessions
- Lost property centre
- Student Legal Advice Centre (SLAC)
- Student publications
- Free student diary
- Access to discounted visa help

### **Catering Services**

After a difficult 2022, which saw a slower than expected return of students to the campus, 2023 provided a better result (regarding student numbers on campus across our outlets), even despite the temporary closure of Reid Library and its café Quobba Gnarning in October 2023.

Labour shortages made it difficult for Guild outlets to operate efficiently during 2023, with increased cost pressures through wage increases, and cost of goods. This reduced the profitability of our catering operations overall and stemmed from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Guild continued to provide value to students across all outlets, providing discount on food and beverage to the value of \$262,089 throughout the course of 2023. This is an increase of \$107,000 from the previous year in 2022. This discount value was delivered whilst maintaining prices lower than the industry and providing student discount for food in the Tavern for the first time since 2018.

The catering department undertook a major upgrade to the point of sale (POS) system within our outlets with the integration of Bepoz Point of Sale software. This upgrade is expected to provide a more intuitive system in line with student engagement and reporting requirements.

The Guild also engaged Future Food (a food and hospitality consultancy) to conduct an external review of our catering operations. This highlighted some recommendations in the overall operation of our outlets for 2024. The review provided a template for our marketing and promotional activity for the next 3 years, through app development, website design, and digital signage upgrades.

## **Infrastructure and Capital Projects**

The Guild worked with the architectural firm Taylor Robinson Chaney Broderick (TRCB) on finalising its new Masterplan. Many students were consulted in the process, ensuring we developed the best design to cater to students' needs now and in the future. The Masterplan is designed to achieve the following four core goals:

- Improve the facilities for students to study, explore and experience UWA.
- Drive on-campus student engagement and support UWA's unique club and society culture. *(In 2023 the Guild had 143 clubs and societies and oversaw 3,327 events at UWA)*
- Support the expected growth in student numbers and increasingly diversifying needs of the UWA Student cohort.
- Significantly improve accessibility requirements, lighting on campus, safety for students, security and meet compliance requirements.

The Masterplan was first presented to the 110<sup>th</sup> Guild Council in March 2023, where it was endorsed and approved by the elected Student Representatives. The Masterplan was then presented to the UWA Senate at the July 2023 Meeting by Geemal Jayawickrama (Guild President), Viknash VM (Postgraduate Students' Association President) and Tony Goodman (Managing Director of the Guild). There was a common agreement amongst the Senators that it is important for both the University and its students that a project of this scale should go ahead and be financially supported by the University.

The 110th Guild Council passed a motion in October 2023 to approve a spending of \$1.9m for the initial stage of the plan, which includes the renovation of the Guild Precinct and the Tavern frontage.

While highlighting this achievement, it is also important to note that the Guild does not have the capacity to fully commit financially to funding all of the works listed in the Masterplan. At this stage, the Guild is in positive discussions with the University for financial support to actualise the latter stages of the Masterplan into reality and further improve the student experience at UWA. The ongoing discussions include the Guild getting locked in the University's budgetary cycles, ideally from the year 2025.

Another avenue the Guild is pursuing, to raise the necessary funds for the completion of the Masterplan project, is developing an ongoing Partnership with UWA Development and Alumni Relations, and the University.

A crucial component of the Masterplan is its approach to addressing the accessibility issue at Cameron Hall. The TRCB architects' masterful design tackles this issue by introducing a lift outside the historical building, as depicted in the plans. The addition of a lift is a specific aspect of the project that the Guild is eager to collaborate on with the University.

The Guild's Masterplan is crucial in addressing significant deficiencies in accessibility, compliance, lighting, security, and the availability of seating.

## REVIEWS & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- The Societies Council facilitated the establishment of new clubs by updating outdated guides and creating a single standalone Club Affiliation Guide, which has significantly streamlined the process for starting a new club and improved the quality of new clubs' applications.
- The Guild invested more into Student Leadership Training program which was designed for Guild Student Representatives and UWA Club and Society leaders. Across the year the Guild put 124 students through the courses. The Guild had staff and student project leaders undertake defamation training as well, particularly around Pelican, Prosh and UDub Radio.
- Guild Audit and Risk Committee with four (4) external members met twice during 2023, to discuss and review risks to the organisation.
- The Guild implemented two major surveys in 2023 to help find out more about student needs. These surveys covered topics including orientation experience, lifestyle and engagement interests, as well as student demographics.
- The Guild continues to operate its computer renewal program to ensure the required hardware is up to standard.
- In 2023 the Guild tendered for new external financial auditors to ensure a fresh view is undertaken regarding the organisation's compliance, legal and financial obligations. After the conclusion of agreement with the previous auditors Deloitte, the Guild have now appointed Nexia to conduct its audits for the next three years.

## SUMMARY

The Guild has met all its obligations delivering its contracted services and conducting the required reviews in 2023.