



2021 PGC Annual Report



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Introduction

PGC Mission and Values

The Postgraduate Council represents the postgraduate students of UNSW to the University administration, all levels of government, the local community and peak national representative bodies. Postgraduate student representation is provided through the PGC, individual Office Bearers, Committee Liaisons, and Committees.

The PGC deals with all representation issues that are specific to postgraduate students whose needs and student experiences are different to those of the undergraduate students. The PGC's core mission is founded on main three values:

Advocacy

- a. To amplify the desires of the postgraduate voice at different University levels.
- b. To strengthen the student voice by connecting student bodies within UNSW such as Student Representative Council, Academic Board, and Arc Board.

Engagement

- a. To organise flagship university-wide events that foster community building, celebrate student achievements, and encourage a social atmosphere.
- b. To organise professional development events that educate postgraduates on entering the job-market and guide their transition from postgraduate student to employee.

Support

- a. To offer a first point-of contact for postgraduates with coursework and research inquiries.
- b. To promote the diversity and inclusion of all postgraduate students.
- c. To connect postgraduate students with UNSW well-being services.

Composition



Jerry Offor
President



Diana Zhang
Vice President



Constantine Tsounis
Vice President



Liam Cheney
Research Students' Officer



Mariam Soomro
Research Students' Officer



Emilia Nwakpa
Events Officer



Saurabh Kaura
Coursework Students' Officer



Shixiong Xu
Coursework Students' Officer



Rabia Mobeen
Women's Officer



Saltanat Paritova
Women's Officer



Sardorjon Bakhtiyorov
International Students' Officer



Christine Castor
International Students' Officer



Jing Sun
Equity Officer



Chukwuka Madumelu
Equity Officer

Councillors



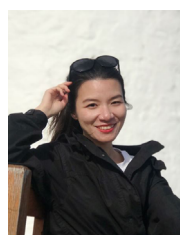
Emmy Lau



Hugo Su



Melve Elsa



Min Huang



Cathy Deng



Gideon George

Past Members

Ramanashree Palakshamurthy, Vice President
Niharika Kodare, Coursework Students' Officer
Vintii Vasundhara Aggarwal, Councillor
Swarali Marathe, Events Officer
Kalyani D. Patil, International Students' Officer
Dimple Lalwani, Councillor
Shruthi Kumar, Councillor



President's Report

The University of New South Wales Postgraduate Council (UNSW PGC) is pleased to provide its inaugural Annual Report. This Postgraduate Council has had a monumental year of advocacy, engagement,

and support. We amplified the postgraduate voice at all university levels and continued to create and implement a range of programmes and activities. We've been able to make major contributions in satisfying the needs and ambitions of the wide spectrum of postgraduate students at UNSW. As the inaugural PGC Annual Report, we're pleased to update you on how our mandate has progressed since we assumed office. We hope you will take the time to read it and we eagerly welcome your thoughts and comments on how PGC can assist you better in future. You can also view our PGC 2021: Year in Review video [here](#).

We began by strengthening Postgraduate Student Orientations at UNSW O-week by arranging a variety of events for both existing and new students. To increase Council diversity, transparency, and accountability, we revamped the PGC mission and structure to better fulfil these mandates.

In this report, you will be taken through a wide range of activities and accomplishments achieved throughout the year that were dedicated to the needs of UNSW postgraduate students. In total, over 60 events were held with more than 3000 registrations. Through these events, we shared an electric atmosphere and celebrated with students from all works of life. Some of the major highlights of 2021 include:

- Working with the university, Arc and Student Representative Council to raise awareness and employment opportunities for women and to offer increased student engagement for all postgraduates
- Organising social, educational, and professional development events
- Ensuring that the interests and views of our postgraduate colleagues are well-represented and addressed throughout the university Academic Board, Committees and externally

- Promoting the well-being of both onshore and offshore postgraduate students by providing independent support that reflects the diversity of the student body
- Contributing to UNSW's bustling campus life and providing a diverse range of opportunities and activities that meet the different intellectual, cultural, and social needs of the postgraduate community

This year also presented new challenges as we had to endure one of the deadliest pandemics in human history. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, PGC continued to enhance student representation at UNSW. We worked more closely with the university and our involvement in various decision-making processes enabled us to make landmark contributions. For example, we were involved in shaping the quality the UNSW MyExperience survey which will significantly improve the quality of teaching in the years and decades to come for all students at UNSW.

We also strengthened partnerships with the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic (DVCA), Pro Vice-Chancellor, Education and Student Experience (PVCESE), Deputy Vice Chancellor Division of Equity Diversity & Inclusion (EDI), UNSW Academic Board, and UNSW administration. For example, we partnered with DVCA to establish the inaugural Arc PGC Ambassador's and Course Coordinator Awards that champion postgraduate coursework students and academic staff. Finally, we continued to represent students on different UNSW committees and working groups, the fruits of which are highlighted in this report.

On behalf of the PGC, it has been our pleasure to learn and grow with you as we worked hard to represent the interests of onshore and offshore postgraduate students at UNSW. As always, we look forward to seeing and hearing from you soon.



Advocacy

EDI Report

More than ever before, globalization in the 21st century has meant that people from varying backgrounds come more frequently in contact with each other. Cultural diversity, especially at the postgraduate level is one of the unique features of studying at UNSW. While this presents distinctive opportunities to learn about new groups of people and their cultures, it unfortunately can also highlight and lead to discrimination and racism within the community.

Through a generous grant from the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion unit of UNSW, a culture and story-telling event, Tell Me Your Story, was organized by the PGC to celebrate the cultural diversity and personal struggles of the over 10,000 postgraduate students. In total, 28 compelling stories were received and compiled into an **e-book**. Twenty of these were selected to be presented in front of a live audience. Held on May 14th, 2021, the flagship story-telling event was attended by over 130 students and staff from within the UNSW community, as well as external visitors, family, and friends.

The event was also judged by eminent cultural and community leaders including senior executives from UNSW EDI, Arc UNSW, and Australian Broadcasting Corporation. This event was arguably the first of its kind in UNSW and will lead to an increase in awareness of different cultures. We anticipate that this event will attract greater and more diverse participation in coming years.





Student Proposals and Partnerships with Student Representative Council, Academic Board and UNSW Council

The PGC had made progress on several fronts by pushing forward a wide variety of student proposals to different university administrations.

Firstly, to increase diversity, transparency, and accountability, and to better reflect the PGC mission, we completed an overhaul of the PGC structure. The restructured positions consist of eight elected, unshared, primary office positions: President, General Secretary, Vice President (VP) International, VP Coursework, VP Research, and VP Equity, Canberra Campus office bearer, Paddington Campus Office Bearer position, and four Committee Liaisons.

Secondly, to amplify the postgraduate voice and to effectively attend to academic matters, we partnered with SRC and Academic Board Representatives. This has resulted in several proposals including revamping course structures, standardising penalties for late submission of assignments (which is currently being recommended by the UAQC to the Board for approval), capping final exams at a

maximum weight of 50%, and having more 24-hour exams to give flexibility for students.

Thirdly, together with Academic Board Representatives, we effectively collaborated with the university stakeholders on the Academic Board, Heads of Faculties, UNSW Careers and UNSW Library. Highlights include the successful re-opening of UNSW Main Library in March 2021 as well as solving several faculty specific queries. These collaborations have helped to sharpen the various responsibilities of student leaders resulting in improved communications among different student bodies at UNSW. We also engaged in extensive student consultations including student surveys on academic issues, focus group discussion, and weekly drop-in sessions.

Finally, the PGC also worked closely with postgraduate representative on the UNSW Council, UNSW's overarching governing body. By having open discussions on the challenges, opportunities and perspectives of postgraduate students across the university, we were able to further embed the student voice on the highest level of UNSW oversight.



GRS

2021 has highlighted another year in the continued partnership between the PGC and the Graduate Research School. With focused monthly catchups, the GRS has been a key proponent in addressing issues that affect higher degree research (HDR) students, such as disruptions to research caused by COVID-19 and offshore student concerns. Furthermore, the GRS also supported our ambition to provide more professional development and entrepreneurial opportunities for HDR students. Finally, running in its 8th consecutive year, we partnered with GRS to host the acclaimed Arc Research Student and Supervisor Awards which celebrated the efforts of HDR students and supervisors in the wake of COVID-19.

The PGC and the postgraduate representative on the UNSW Council also presented a comprehensive proposal to the University Higher Degree Research Committee, chaired by the Dean of Graduate Research, consisting of Associate Deans (Research Training) of each Faculty throughout the university. The focus of the proposal was to increase visibility of the need of HDRs to have sufficient professional development opportunities throughout their degrees. The proposal also called for a structure to be implemented which would further increase the uptake and awareness of professional development opportunities by

the masses of HDR students, embedding these opportunities into the PhD program. These skills are necessary as approximately 50% of PhD graduates find careers outside academia, and for those who stay in academia, professional skills are required to work with a range of stakeholders, maximizing the impact of research.

DVCA/PVCESE

Throughout the year, PGC continued to solidify the relationship between the PGC and key university stakeholders including the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Pro Vice-Chancellor Education & Student Experience, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Partnerships with these university administrations have resulted in many new initiatives and policy changes that will dramatically improve the student experience.



Engagement

Overview

PGC Newsletter reaches **4,000+**
Arc-registered postgraduates each month



PGC Eventbrite has **260+** followers



PGC WeChat has **150+** followers



PGC Instagram has **800+** followers (35+ %
increase in followers since 2020)



PGC Facebook **5,000+** followers (average 500 %
increase in engagement per post since 2020)



PGC LinkedIn has **140+** followers



PGC YouTube has produced **30+** videos
with **2,000+** views





Flagship Events

The UNSW student experience has long been one of the hallmarks of what makes UNSW such an exciting place to study. Undeterred by the bells and whistles of the undergraduate student experience, the Postgraduate Council set out its own mission – to boost the POSTGRADUATE EXPERIENCE beyond imagination. Throughout the 2020-2021 tenure, PGC created an overload of new and exciting events, bookmarked with key flagship events. These include:

Salvation Army Christmas Appeal (December 9-19th, 2020)

The Postgraduate Council led the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal where all donations went towards Christmas gift packs for 90 disadvantaged men and women in Sydney. A total of \$580 was raised through a GoFundMe campaign which went directly to the purchase of Christmas gift packs containing essential items and were lovingly hand-packed and delivered.

Inaugural PGC Virtual Town Hall Meeting (June 21st)

For the first time, members of the general public were invited to attend PGC's Council meeting to contribute to discussions and had the opportunity to ask any questions of desire.



Postgraduate Week Online Edition (June 28th – July 1st)

Whilst the rest of Sydney entered lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, PGC joined forces with Arc to hold UNSW's first Postgraduate Week, a week dedicated to postgraduates. Attended by 1,000+ onshore and offshore postgrads, PGC held 12 virtual career-oriented, professional development, and social events:

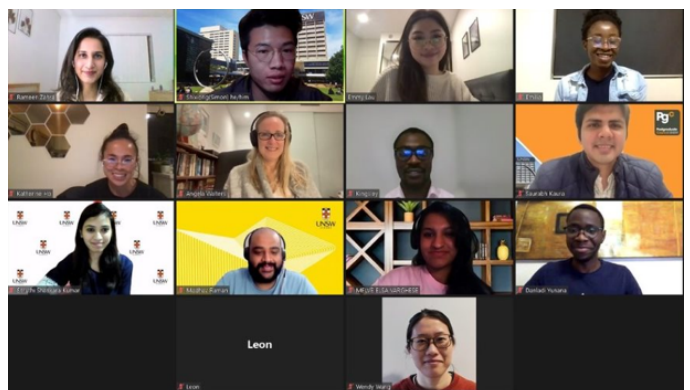
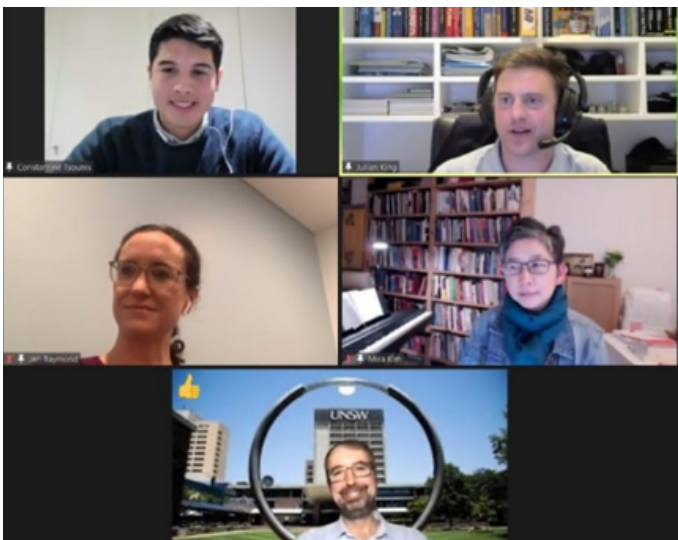
- PGC Weekly Podcast: Helping International students file tax returns
- PGC Webinar: Story of Growing Start Ups
- PhD Shut up and Write
- Career Help workshop w
- Dance with Mili: Lockdown Challenge
- PhD Career Pathways Panel Discussion
- Opportunities Australia Mentorship Conclave Day 1 and Day 2
- EndNote referencing workshop
- PGC Webinar: Legal and Visa advice
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshop
- Speed Networking and Games Night

These events hosted dozens of special guests including UNSW Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Student Life) Prof. Merlin Crossley, renowned sports commentator and soccer player Craig Foster AM, and senior executives from Boston Consulting Group, Citibank, Woolworths, K&L Gates and NSW Police.



Apart but Together (August 27th)

Spurred by Sydney's COVID-19 lockdown, PGC partnered again with Arc, SRC and GRS to bring UNSW's ultimate social event extravaganza. There were 10 themed breakout rooms to choose from- drawing tutorial, dance class, games room, meditation, trivia, coping with covid-19 workshop, cooking class, general chit chat, speed networking,





O-week

As a celebration to the start of a new year or academic term, O-week has been an important milestone for every postgraduate student. Whether for incoming or continuing postgraduates, offshore or onshore, we kicked off each O-week with a bang by hosting different online and offline social events that were inclusive, informative, and fun! Below is a summary of our O-week festivities.

Term 1 (Feb 8-12):

- Wine and Cheese Networking Night (Roundhouse)
- Virtual Games Night (Guess and Draw)
- **Virtual UNSW Kensington Campus Tour**
- Movie Night (Crazy Rich Asians)

Term 2 (May 25-28):

- Postgraduate Pub: Autumn Edition (Roundhouse)
- Dance with Mili
- **Virtual PGC Podcast: Digitalisation enabling business survival during and post COVID-19**
- Coffee Catch-up (Postgraduate Lounge)

Term 3 (Sep 8-10):

- Postgraduate Information Session
- Open Mic Night: Is lockdown a long-term solution for COVID-19 crisis?
- Virtual Postgraduate Pub: Trivia Edition



Dance with Mili

Dance with Milli was a monthly dance class led by Emilia Nwakpa, popularly known as Mili. These dance workshops aimed to promote good health and well-being (physical and mental), burn calories, reduce depression, and lower the risk of cardiovascular disease. It was also an opportunity for postgraduates to connect and experience dance through different cultural backgrounds. [Click here](#) to view some of the epic dance videos.



Coffee Catch-up

The Zodiac Coffee Catch-up was a monthly social and networking series held at the Postgraduate Lounge. This monthly series aimed to help students reduce the stress of academia and provide opportunities for fellow postgraduates to meet and relax in a warm and inviting atmosphere over tea, coffee and snacks.





Movie Nights

Monthly movie nights were also a community-bonding activity that provided an enjoyable, family-friendly night for postgraduate students to relax and network. Screened at the Postgraduate Lounge, these sessions played blockbuster Hollywood movies that were accompanied with drinks and snacks.



Postgraduate Pub

Postgraduate Pub was a monthly get-together series that brought postgraduates together over the classic combo of food and beer. Held at the Roundhouse and Whitehouse, each month had a different theme from Welcome to Term 1 to St Patrick's Day. These pub sessions aimed to provide further networking opportunities in a friendly environment, particularly for international students who could connect with peer mentors and form lasting friendships.





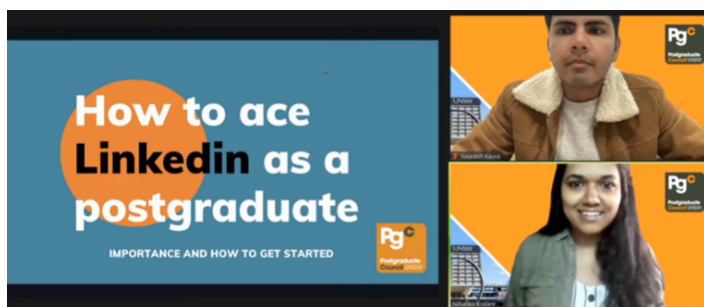
Strike Bowling

In light of the struggles faced by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, PGC and Arc teamed up to organise an exclusive social event for postgraduates. Strike Bowling was an event that aimed to turbo charge social connectivity. Held on Feb 3rd at the Strike Entertainment Quarter in Sydney, postgraduates were treated with a round of showdowns in a friendly game of bowling.



Virtual Education Series

In addition to taking a lead on one of the first podcast series at UNSW and the Mentorship Conclave, this Committee of the PGC also conducted 2 interesting sessions as a part of the Virtual Education Series on the topics of “How to Ace LinkedIn as a Postgraduate” and “Preparing Yourself for the Future Job Market”. Networking on LinkedIn is so critical for all the students these days to create their personal brand amongst the future employers. Both these sessions really played a major role in developing a basic understanding amongst the students as to what all they can do to effectively network over LinkedIn and prepare themselves for the future job market.





A Research Student's Introduction to Entrepreneurship

In collaboration with UNSW Founders, PGC hosted a special entrepreneurship-focused workshop. This workshop aimed to address the growing need for professional development amongst HDR candidates. Held on March 1st held at the Michael Crouch Innovation Centre, this half-day event which involved tutorials, panel discussions and seminar talks from various founders, academic and industry experts, helped to instil an entrepreneurial spirit amongst HDRs and encouraged them to consider translating and applying their research.



FIFA World Cup

Another exclusive social event that brought together sport enthusiasts was the PGC FIFA World Cup. Held on March 5th at the newly renovated Postgraduate Lounge, postgraduates competed against each other in a friendly tournament of FIFA World Cup to see who had the best virtual football skills. Players competed for eye-watering cash prizes and were treated to light refreshments throughout the 3-hour competition

Awards

Ambassador of the Month Awards

UNSW's postgraduate community – vibrant, dynamic, and spirited in nature – is certainly one to be envied. To recognise outstanding postgraduate students who have helped contribute to a livelier and more supportive postgraduate environment, PGC initiated the Ambassador of the Month Series. Through February to May, PGC celebrated the following postgraduates for their efforts in enhancing the postgraduate experience:

- February - Preetham Shivaraj (Masters in Mechanical Engineering) who co-founded Postgraduate Society for Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineers (PGSOMME)
- March – Awni Etaywe (PhD in Linguistics) who is a member of the Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture Dean's Shadow Board and volunteer mentor for international students
- May – Vishnu Nair (Masters in Mechanical Engineering) who is a cultural mentor for international students and digital asset creator in PGC's Marketing, Editorial & Media Committee
- June – Ngozi Chidi-Egboka (PhD in Optometry and Vision Science) who is a Champion of Women in Maths and Science, teaching fellow, and mentor to higher degree research



Awni Etaywe



Ngozi Chidi-Egboka



Preetham Shivaraj



Vishnu Nair

Ambassador & Course Coordinator Awards

The **Ambassador & Course Coordinator of the Year Awards** was one of the key highlights of 2021. As the first of its kind, PGC was extremely proud to host these awards in partnership with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Student Life).

The Arc PGC Ambassador & Course Coordinator Awards aimed to recognise Masters' students and coursework coordinators and lecturers who have helped create a lively study environment and supportive social atmosphere among the UNSW postgraduate community. These awards acknowledged students and staff who have contributed immensely to the enhancement of UNSW postgraduate student's experience in academia, social, health and wellbeing.



Nominations were judged by an external panel of senior UNSW staff members and postgraduate alumni. The Awards were presented to successfully nominated students by the DVCA in a Virtual Awards Ceremony on September 30th.

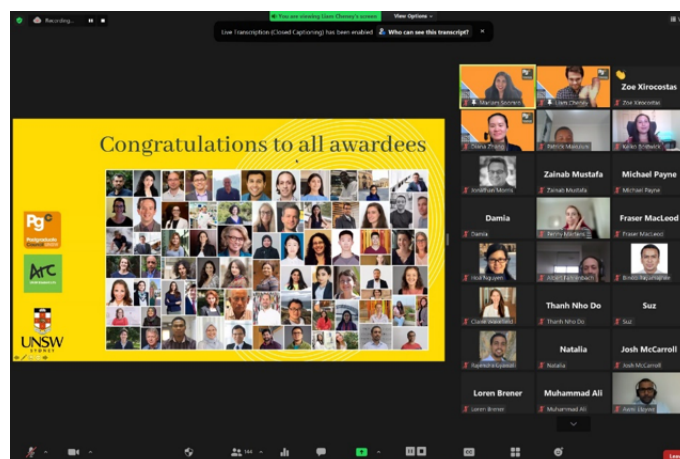
In total, 16 Ambassadors and Course Coordinators were awarded (5 of which were awarded the Outstanding category). We anticipate for these Awards to grow exponentially in the years to come as more staff and students are celebrated for their

Research Student & Supervisor Awards

In its 8th consecutive year, the **Research Student and Supervisor Awards** has long been a flagship event for PGC. Held in partnership with GRS, these awards aimed to highlight community and triumph in the face of adversity brought by the COVID-19 pandemic

In total, over 165 nominees were awarded either the nominee award, general award (top 50%), and outstanding award (top 10%). Nominations were judged by an expert panel consisting of UNSW staff, previous awardees, and PGC members.

The Awards Ceremony was held on October 28th as members gathered for a lively virtual celebration of their peers, supervisors, and students. Following the Awards Ceremony, PGC hosted a Gather Town social event which allowed academics and students to virtually mingle, catch up with old acquaintances,





PGC Committees

Overview of Committee

PGC 2021 was committed to greater inclusivity, diversity, and student engagement. That is why we established 11 committees that would allow postgraduate students to experience first-hand of what it is like at the Council, contribute to the delivery of PGC events, and gain valuable leadership experience. These Committees became the building blocks of the PGC and facilitated a greater grassroots connection with the community.

All committee members received exclusive leadership training with Michael Kelly, who is an acclaimed leadership and communications expert. Committee members who completed 20 hours of voluntary service were also recommended for AHEGs recognition. A summary of the committees and committee members are as follows.



Marketing, Editorial and Media

Co-Chairs: Jerry and Diana

Secretary: Saurabh

Supported by: Hugo, Min, Jing, Emmy, Simon

Hang Thanh Bui

Thrupthi Honnagangaiah Manjula

Anita Trinh

Vishnu Nair

Riddhesh Joshi

Suhyun Kweon

Joanna Teo

Events

Co-Chairs: Emilia and Swarali

Jingyi Wang

Thrupthi Honnagangaiah Manjula

Gideon George Jebarajan

Hrishi Patil

HR & Administration

Chair: Swarali

Co-Secretary: Emmy and Dimple

Hang Thanh Bui

Shivani Mehta

Anita Trinh

Wanqiong Wang

Career Development & Women in STEM

Co-Chairs: Diana, Saltanat and Rabia

Supported by: Min, Viola, Emmy, Cathy, Vintii

Hang Thanh Bui

Annie Chan

Joanne Gladding

Ngozi Chidi-Egboka

Yanran Zhao

Frances Daphne Garela

Educational

Co-Chairs: Niharika, Simon and Saurabh

Supported by: Hugo, Shruthi

Wanqiong Wang

Joshua Karras

James Cheng

Sponsorship and Finance

Co-Chairs: Kalyani and Saltanat

Secretary: Hugo

Sardor Bakhtiyorov

Gideon George Jebarajan

Health, Wellness & Community

Co-Chairs: Mariam and Jing

Secretary: Chuka

Supported by: Jerry, Emmy and Cathy

Binod Rayamajhee

International Student Engagement

Co-Chairs: Christine and Kalyani

Secretary: Shruthi

Azadeh Tavakoli

Yiwen Li

Zhaoyuan Ding

Stella Li

Cindy Paskalina Kweesar

Research

Co-Chairs: Mariam, Constantine and Liam

Joshua Karras

Michael Odutola

Hang Thanh Bui

Shuang Song

Binod Rayamajhee

Networking and Alumni

Chair: Ramanashree

Secretary: Hugo

Hang Thanh Bui

Shivani Mehta

Henry Liu

Annie Chan

Joshua Karras

Hrishi Patil

Sport

Chair: Chuka

Supported by: Saltanat

Preetham Shivaraj

Research Committee

The Research Committee aimed to connect more strongly with and provide professional development workshops for HDR candidates. Consisting of 6 HDR members from a wide range of Faculties and degree stages, the Research Committee has been proactive in organising a catalogue of workshops for the HDR community including the 'PhD Career Pathways' Panel Discussion and 'How to Write an Academic Paper Workshop'. The Research Committee has also been active in raising issues that HDR students face that were passed on to the relevant stakeholders at UNSW, such as the GRS, to address issues and opportunities for HDRs.

Hang's Testimonial:

Moving to a new continent in the beginning of the pandemic and starting my journey of postgraduate research program at the same time is one of the most challenging things in my 10 years of travelling. Seeding and growing a network seem even harder than ever. To be a part of PGC Research Committee, I have numerous opportunities to take part in organizing the workshops, participate seminars from networking, research skills to soft skills and career orientation. Thanks to the committee, I have gained my confidence again, been inspired by many incredible and talented people in the committee and the seminars' guests within variety of workshops. For me, PGC is truly for PG, of PG and empowers PG.



Hang Bui Thanh

Marketing, Editorial & Media Committee

The Marketing, Editorial & Media (MEM) Committee played an integral part in the overall communication strategy of PGC. Tasked with all digital and written communications on behalf of the PGC, the MEM Committee produced material for a wide range of promotional channels including the monthly PGC

Newsletter, PGC website, Facebook and Instagram. To garner greater reach through more diverse social media channels, the MEM Committee also initiated PGC's own Eventbrite, YouTube channel, WeChat, and LinkedIn page.

Thrupthi's testimonial:

Postgraduate Council's Marketing Committee acted as a platform for me to give back to the UNSW community. Initially, I was sceptical about whether I could contribute to the committee completely due to online meetings. But the wonderful team members helped me to adapt to the change smoothly. The constant motivation and support provided by Jerry and Diana have helped us to come up with new ideas to engage the Postgraduate community. Working on the monthly newsletters has helped me to polish my writing and communication skills. Overall, the experience of working with PGC has been an amazing journey!



Thrupthi Honnagangaiah Manjula

Career Development & Women in STEM Committee

The Career Development and Women in STEM (CDWS) committee aimed to develop programs and activities that help promote career development opportunities for all postgraduates. The CDWS Committee aimed to champion female-identifying and under-represented students by increasing awareness of gender equity in STEM education and careers. Highlights include the publication of the PGC International Women's Day e-book that showcases emerging female-identifying postgraduates and a special panel discussion 'Roses among thorns: empowering women leaders in STEM and entrepreneurship' where we discussed ways to increase workplace diversity and combat gender stereotypes.

Joanne's Testimonial:

Being on the CDWS committee has been a valuable experience. It's been great to put my research hat down, expand my horizons, and give back to the UNSW postgrad community. I have enjoyed working with a diverse bunch of people that I would not have otherwise met, especially during such socially restricted pandemic times. All the while, developing important teamwork, event management, creative, and communication skills. The PGC environment has been so supportive of our goals for women in STEM throughout. It's been terrific working so closely with the VP who keeps everyone on track yet allows complete autonomy and independence of our creative collaborations and decision making - enabling our ideas for supporting women in STEM to come to fruition.



Joanne Gladding

International Student Engagement Committee

International Student Engagement (ISE) Committee aimed to provide an inclusive and respectful network among the international postgraduate student community. Due to the ongoing pandemic where many international students were located offshore or had switched to online learning, the ISE Committee played an important role in creating events where students could meet their peers and network virtually. Committee members also took part in organising events such as Postgraduate Pub, Coffee catch ups and 'Tell me your story' and acquired invaluable important skills, experience and networks.

Azadeh's Testimonial

I am happy to be a member of the PGC committee. I have contributed to different events such as Tell Me About Your Story & Culture, Postgraduate Pub, networking events to engage and motivate postgraduate students to be an active part of the UNSW community. Also, I enhanced my professional

knowledge by participating in different workshops organised by PGC. I enjoy being a part of an active group, and I could expand my communication and networking skills and meet new people.



Azadeh Tavakoli

Educational Committee

The Educational Committee aimed to provide greater and unique professional development opportunities for postgraduates. Some of the highlights include the seminars How to ace LinkedIn and Preparing yourself for the future job market. The committee also initiated partnerships with not-for-profit organisations such as Opportunities Australia and various start-ups to host exclusive mentoring workshops for those seeking careers in industry and entrepreneurship.

For example, the Opportunities Australia Mentorship Conclave saw over a dozen senior executives from various industries provide invaluable mentorship to postgraduates.

Sport Committee

The Sport Committee aimed to provide postgraduate students with greater opportunities for exercise, recreation and social engagement. Some highlights included the first-ever PGC FIFA World Cup. In partnership with Arc Sport, the committee also worked towards a PGC 'Olympics' involving indoor and outdoor sports including basketball, badminton, cricket, soccer, snooker. However, these games were unfortunately cancelled due to the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

Events Committee

The Events committee aimed to support all key PGC flagship events held in 2021. For example, the Events committee were actively involved in the planning of the O-week events as well as the PGC Cruise ('the most anticipated PGC event') that was initially scheduled for September 10th but was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. The committee also successfully organised PGC bonding events such as the virtual Karaoke and team bonding dinner that took place on October 25th. All committee members were empowered with invaluable organisational, communication, and leadership skills.

Gideon's Testimonial

Since the start, it's been a great experience in the Events committee. My initial reaction was being in awe of the diversity in terms of culture and educational background. I would like to tell my experience by highlighting 2-3 events. The first event involved providing a bit of support for the 'Tell Me Your Story' event and inviting my friends for the wonderfully conducted event. I also got the opportunity to be involved in taking photos on the event. The second event would be the PGC Cruise, although the event didn't take place, the planning and proposed execution of the cruise was an insightful experience for me.

Finally, the planning is on for a possible Zoom chill event with food for the PGC members. Overall, despite the challenges due to covid, my experience in the Events committee has been great and I enjoyed doing my part with such enthusiastic and passionate members. With Emilia as the chair for the committee, she's taken a lot of effort to ensure that everyone is included and invited for the planning meetings and accommodating them based on their schedules. Also in the meetings, she ensured everyone's ideas are considered in the events planning. From the planning to the execution of the events, Emilia played a key role in making sure the events run smoothly' said by one of the committee members.



Gideon George Jebarajan



Support

PGC Lounge

To truly offer a relaxing and practical space just for postgraduates, PGC completely revamped the Arc Postgraduate Lounge. For the first time, all Arc-registered postgraduate students were given automatic access to the Lounge (located next to Arc Reception). This home away from home features hotspot workstations with brand new desktop computers, hireable lockers, bookable meeting rooms, and an open lounge space. In the new kitchen area is a mini fridge housed with chilled soft drinks, a Nespresso coffee machine with coffee capsules, microwave, kettle, and loads of free snacks and fresh fruit restocked on a regular basis.





Podcast series

To cater for the diverse interests and needs of postgraduates, PGC launched its first ever PGC Podcast series. Hosted by Saurabh Kaura, the PGC Podcast aimed to engage students with a variety of worldly topics ranging from business, technology, philosophy, and future world dynamics.

This series also invited dozens of guests including senior UNSW stakeholders, company founders and human rights advocates. Highlights include Prof David Cohen (President of UNSW Academic Board), Kumar R Jha (Founder of Opportunities Australia), Maryam Popal Zahid (Founder of Afghan Women on the Move) and many more. All episodes are available for playback [here](#).

Concierge for enquiries

Throughout 2021, we introduced various opportunities that would allow for students to communicate directly with PGC. For example, the weekly drop-in sessions aimed to increase the accessibility and grassroots impact of the PGC and served as an opportunity for students to raise concerns, seek guidance on a range of university issues/opportunities, and even just have a conversation. After the COVID-19 restrictions were introduced, these drop-in sessions transformed into call-back forms, where students would have the same opportunity to converse with a PGC representative by simply filling out a form and receiving a call from the most suitable PGC member.

Support groups

In recognition of the different communication channels used by postgraduates and geographical locations that have been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, PGC created tailored support groups. In particular, an offshore postgraduates group was formed to connect those located overseas and to assist with international study-related enquiries.

In addition, we formed a **LinkedIn Postgraduate Community group** to better connect ongoing postgraduates and alumni that would further strengthen our postgraduate ties.

OzHarvest

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, PGC partnered with OzHarvest in 2021 to supply regular food hampers to postgraduate students. These food hampers were delivered to the Postgraduate Lounge by PGC members where the postgraduate community could take as many food supplies as needed. These hampers consisted of a range of food staples, non-perishables, and fruits. So far, we have facilitated the delivery of over 100 hampers, serving 250+ students with daily sustenance.



PGC WEEKLY PODCAST

Join the discussion on

How to Better Prepare Yourself for the Hybrid World

11th June 2021
6pm - 7pm
via
Zoom




Speaker



Jayashri Ravishankar
Associate Professor
UNSW Electrical and
Telecommunication School

Hosted by
Saurabh Kaura
Coursework Officer
PGC, UNSW

PGC WEEKLY PODCAST

Thank You to all the Speakers
























Financial Report

UNSW Postgraduate council reports financial expenses to Arc @ UNSW. Supported by the Finance and Sponsorship Committee, this report details the main financials, budget and expenses of PGC. The following are the main financial milestones PGC achieved:

\$640 raised for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal

\$2,500 Anti-Racism grant awarded by UNSW Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for the event “Tell Me Your Story”

\$250 of proceeds donated to DirectRelief’s COVID-19 fund

350+ additional hours of work provided in-kind to support the student community by the PGC beyond contractual requirements (see **PGC Office Reports** for more information)

CONTRIBUTION SUMMARY



For the Nine Months Ending 30 Sep, 2021

	Year To Date				Rolling Budget
	Actual	Budget	Variance	%	
1401-2453 PGC Meet Ups	-240	-240	0	0.00%	-824
1401-2454 Cruise	-8,000	-8,000	0	0.00%	-8,000
1401-2458 International Students Officer Honoraria	-5,119	-5,338	219	4.10%	-7,019
1401-2459 Woman's Officer Honoraria	-4,938	-5,028	90	1.79%	-6,709
1401-2864 Events Discretionary	-230	-930	700	75.27%	-1,630
1401-2865 PGC shared Campaigns and Events Discretionary	-10,828	-10,829	1	0.01%	-10,829
1401-2866 Research Officer Honoraria	-6,633	-6,666	33	0.50%	-8,906
1401-2873 Equity Officer Honoraria	-4,744	-4,834	90	1.86%	-6,515
1401-2875 Coursework Officer Honoraria	-5,313	-5,403	90	1.67%	-7,084
1401-2877 PGC Vice President Honoraria	-6,580	-6,701	121	1.81%	-8,941
1401-2114 Conferences	0	0	0	0.00%	-600
1401-2116 Photocopier Consumables	0	-83	83	100.00%	-208
1401-2152 Stationary	0	0	0	0.00%	-200
Total Administration	-63,385	-66,215	2,830	4.27%	-81,894
Total PGC Expenses Contribution	-63,385	-66,215	2,830	4.27%	-81,894

Note: The Financial Report is correct as of Sep 30, 2021. To view the full 2021 financial report, please contact the Postgraduate Council.



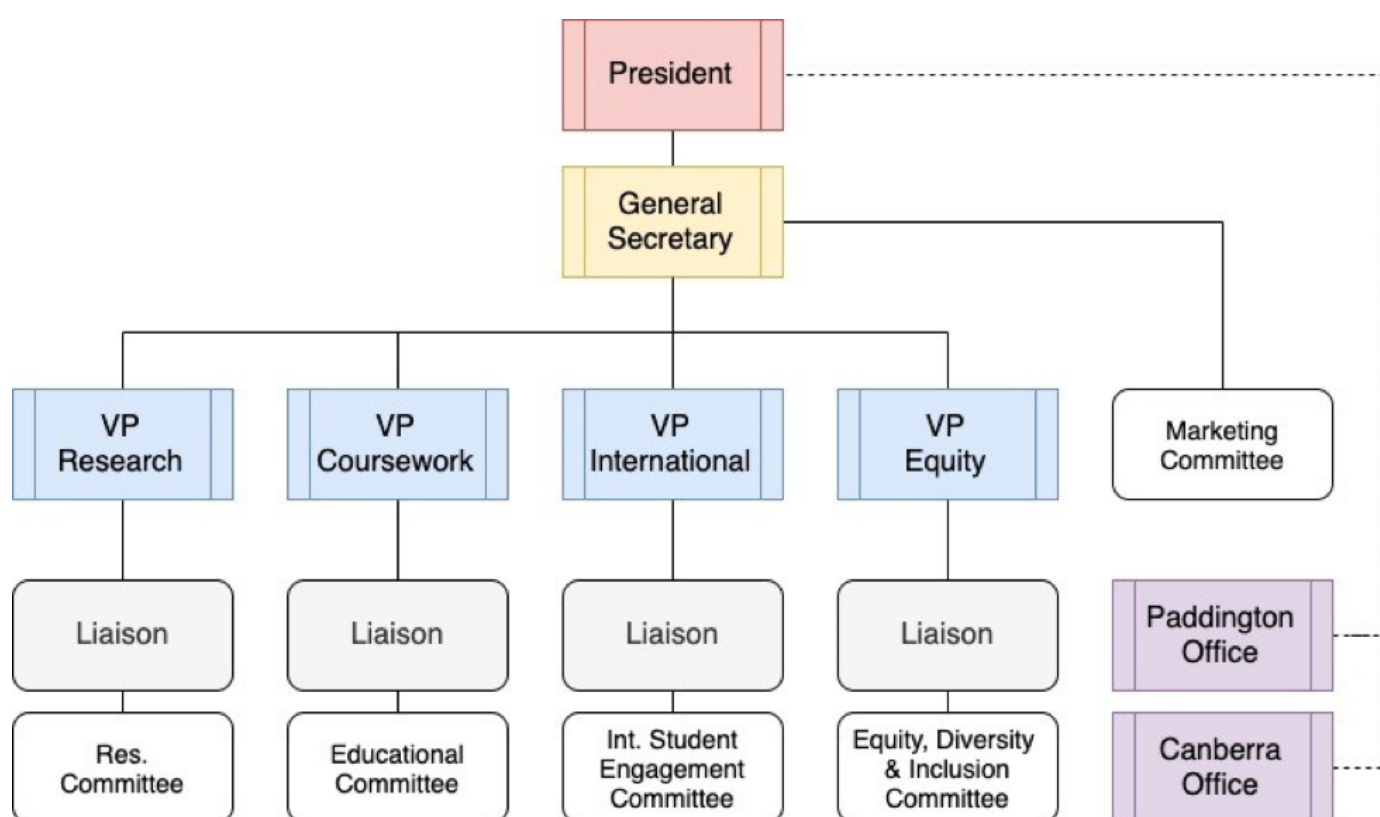
Future Outlook

New PGC Structure

This year, the PGC completely revamped its office structure, with the aims of:

1. Increasing the diversity of representation on the Council to reflect the community more accurately
2. Increasing accountability and responsibility of each officer, and reduce potential role overlap
3. Increase grassroot connections to the postgraduate cohort by improving participation rates amongst the community

During this process, extensive consultation with current PGC members, Arc officials, and the wider postgraduate community was undertaken to ensure that the new structure would reflect a high-performing team structure that could work effectively with UNSW to deliver positive outcomes for the postgraduate community.



Final remarks from PGC President

Opportunities for PGC

Every page of the PGC's inaugural Annual Reports illustrates the great contributions of postgraduate students and the initiatives that they have brought to the university in improving the postgraduate experience. From the Tell Me Your Story conference to the PGC restructure, PGC 2021 was proud to serve and amplify your voice to the broader community.

Equally, we, as elected PGC Council members, along with PGC committee members, UNSW Academic Board representatives, and UNSW Council members have been privileged by the opportunity to put students first.

Looking back over our monthly Office reports, it's clear that we're still a vibrant, ever-changing Council that are constantly looking for better ways to serve the interests of UNSW postgraduates. It is also clear to see how our representation has grown in both quality and quantity, well ahead of other Australian postgraduate councils.

As President, I had the privilege of seeing firsthand the dynamic workings of PGC, and I am delighted and honoured to have worked with Diana Zhang and Constantine Tsounis as Vice Presidents. With such a solid track record, the pressure to propel PGC ahead is enormous. However, the prospects of having

ongoing and new strategic initiatives in 2022 are extremely exciting. The Arc PGC Ambassador and Course Coordinator Awards, Postgraduate Week, Postgraduate Pub, Tell Me Your Story conference, and numerous collaborations at various university levels are all noteworthy.

Whilst PGC 2021 has set the benchmark against which all future PGC initiatives and events will be measured, we must continue to place students at the centre of all processes. Above all, there is a need to ensure that postgraduate representation is maintained at all levels of the university.

I have complete faith in the new Executive Council and their ability to carry forward the PGC mission and firmly cement PGC's role in improving the postgraduate student experience at UNSW. As policy objectives for postgraduate students seem to diverge at a quicker pace at UNSW, PGC will continue to interact with the university administration at all levels, providing quality representation and progress reports to increase awareness of its operations and guarantee accountability.



