

2020 SSAF Priorities, Grants & Benefits to Students

Victoria University (VU) takes a formula approach to the allocation of SSAF funds and grants each year, which embodies flexible funding arrangements to ensure some fixed funds as well as the ability to access short-term funds to pilot initiatives and/or meet a short-term need. This approach accommodates both need and demand whilst allowing for greater flexibility in the delivery of SSAF funded student services and activities.

In 2020 this model was centrally governed, managed and administered by Student Services on behalf of VU and included the following:

- Base allocation funding for all services currently approved for SSAF; the amount related to activity /service based costings (the allocation and funding are reviewed annually via Funding Applications and in line with University budget forecasts and business planning)
- An allocation for initiative grants
- Capital allowance for the improvement of student amenities by Student Services and VU Sport
- Funding to support student representative organisations; and
- Contingency for unexpected growth in usage and/or emerging needs allocation for services not currently funded by SSAF.

The review of applications for funding and grants each year takes into consideration feedback from students provided through data collection, engagement and consultation, as well as feedback from the University community, to ascertain the needs and demands for allocation priorities each year.

VU used the following principles for the allocation of SSAF funds in 2020:

1. Comply with the Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines;
2. Be informed by students (data driven) and deliver funds where priorities are identified by students;
3. Continuously improve service provision to students in the areas specified by the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*;
4. Ensure internal financial controls, management accounting, efficiency and effectiveness; and
5. Fund allocation and expenditure alignment with VU's strategic plan and allowable funding categories.

In 2020, total SSAF revenue of \$6,112,341 was forecast at 1 January with the full schedule of priorities estimated to be funded at a significantly higher amount (to be operationally funded by VU). Actual revenue at 31 December 2020 was reported as \$5,841,628 with the lesser amount reported due to the impacts of COVID-19 on VU's mid-year International student intake. As of 31 December 2020, actual spend in SSAF priorities and grants of \$5,782,452.

2020 SSAF Distribution & Expenditure Report

	Budget 2020	Actual 2020
Anticipated and Actual SSAF Revenue	\$6,112,341	\$5,841,628
Base Allocation Funding Areas (including Student Representation)	Allocation 2020	Actual 2020
Student Life, Leadership, Volunteering, Clubs & Societies	\$1,628,283	\$1,330,570
Victoria University Student Union	\$454,285	\$311,208
Victoria University Postgraduate Association	\$70,000	\$52,500
Student Counselling	\$1,271,306	\$1,012,947
Student Advocacy	\$195,208	\$192,985
Student Welfare	\$379,578	\$379,426
Student Sport & Health Services	\$331,000	\$331,000
Student Success & Support Programs	\$767,970	\$878,421
Student Media & Communications	\$23,248	\$251,553
Careers & Employability	\$523,600	\$167,203
Ancillary Costs (internal depreciation)	\$6,203	\$3,410
Initiative Grant Funding		
Student Experience Initiative Grants	\$40,000	\$62,665
Capital Allowance		
Student Facility/Amenity Upgrades	\$100,000	\$61,114
VU Student Representative Organisations Support	\$490,079	\$490,079
	\$6,05	\$5,782,452
Revenue	<u>\$6,112,341</u>	<u>\$5,841,628</u>
Revenue Less Expenditure	<u>\$54,384</u>	<u>\$59,176</u>

2020 Programs, Activities and Services Delivered to Students from SSAF

2020 saw a number of SSAF funded initiatives and areas quickly pivot to support students learning remotely during Victoria's restrictions and lockdowns during the pandemic. The quality and breadth of services to students was sustained, albeit with changes to the delivery mode with some areas seeing increased engagement and reach as we delivered on campus events remotely, making them more accessible than ever before.

Student Life, Leadership, VU Vollies, Clubs & Societies

- The Student Life and Leadership Team (SL&L) enhances the vibrancy of life on campus for international and domestic students through events, clubs and societies, student leadership programs and volunteering opportunities. Partnering with students to encourage student-led initiatives, SL&L assists VUSU and supports students with Student Life Grants. The team partners with university stakeholders to oversee orientation and transition programs that ensure commencing students enjoy a successful start to their studies.
- Support the annual calendar of Student Welcome activities (multi-campus, dual sector) including: O-Fest, Block Party, Family Information Day, Big Beach Day Out, Incredible Race and orientation sessions specifically designed for international students. These were all delivered digitally and remotely from March 2020
- Provides opportunities for VU students to volunteer and build skills, both on and off campus, through: promotion, recruitment, intensive training program, advertising opportunities, running social networking events and major events such as the hugely successful and remotely delivered V4U Day, providing a system of reward and recognition for active volunteer service and linking students into the leadership program.
- Student as Staff employment opportunities offered to 6 current VU students.
- Partnered with students to encourage student-led initiatives, assisting VUSU, Clubs and Societies.
- Annual Student Leadership Conference, Student Leadership Awards, Student Leadership Council, LEAD program including a new Leading Remote Teams workshops developed and delivered in response to student feedback and requests to offer assistance for students who work and study remotely.
- Events for International Students; International Orientation sessions; Pre-arrival communications including Airport reception services; Big Beach Day Out; Late-Arrival support; International Hosts program. Myki pass funded from this account and managed by Enrolments in Student Administration.
- Fund and support club-run events, Clubs-Fest, training for club executives (e.g. Finance training for Treasurers, First-Aid, Food Handling, RSA), networking and skill sharing sessions with fellow students and link to VU Colleges/departments., provide advice, support and approval for affiliation/reaffiliation process.
- Provides opportunities for VU students to volunteer and build skills, both on and off campus, through: promotion, recruitment, intensive training program, advertising opportunities, running social networking events and major events such as the hugely successful V4U Day, providing a system of reward and recognition for active volunteer service and linking students into the leadership program.
- Student Life Grants form an important part of the funding ecology for student led initiatives, providing small grants (<\$500) for clubs and individuals who have a short-turnaround small initiative. This complements the in-kind support Student Life provides for student-led initiatives (equipment hire, advice, bookings, promotion, etc.) making Student Life a "one-stop-shop" for student-led engagement.

Student Media Initiatives

- Provided print resources for students, provided design and print services for Clubs and Societies and managed the Student Life facebook presence with videos.
- Provision of pre-recorded information to help students in advance of their online orientation program and to provide support tools for the commencement of their studies. The Getting Connected videos are produced with

Student Mentors and Student Advisors and have been a key feature of our student welcome activities.

- Produced the MyVU and MyVU International guides for students
- Developed student-led content for the MyVU platform and worked with students on the concept, design and implementation of this new digital channel to improve information and engagement.
- Developed and designed a range of digital content for the promotion of student events, programs and activities that promote student participation and engagement
- Increased social media content and student engagement through digital channels including social channels (facebook and Instagram).

VU Employ and Careers Services

- Qualified Career's Counsellors provided specialised services, programs and advice to all cohorts of students
- Provision of qualified and specialist advice and information on career planning, preparation for job interviews, personal branding, job search, resumes, industry trends and career development. Staff allocated to this funding provided 1-1 appointments, group workshops
- Developed and implemented work for the "Career Directory" allowing students to engage with a range of graduate employment and internship opportunities.
- Scale-up of 1:1, group and drop-in services for students from qualified Career Counsellors to provide specialist programs and advice on career planning, employment and student placement (WIL)

Student Welfare & Advocacy Services

- Supported students with a team of specialist advisors to guide them through welfare, finance and housing support matters.
- Case management for welfare and life skills support and development.
- Case management and wellbeing checks to students impacted by the pandemic.
- Services included support for:
 - cultural support
 - consumer affairs
 - drug and alcohol issues
 - women's support services
 - tax help
 - material aid
 - legal issues
 - financial counselling
- Delivered student workshops to all cohorts - transition, money management, housing
- Delivered tax help program - free tax assessment preparation service
- Produced a range of print and digital content available to provide information on services to students.
- Safety campus pop-up stands
- Provided the Housing database service.
- Produced the 2020 Housing Guide.
- International students wellbeing and welfare workshops
- Delivered Advocacy Services to support students with University matters and access to information and advice on their rights.

Student Counselling

- Provided professional Counselling services designed to assist students in their personal and social development including overcoming obstacles such as transition, uncertainty about the future, personal and family matters, study problems and psychological issues that may hinder their participation or performance in educational activities. Sessions were delivered face-to-face at the beginning of the year and then transitioned to telephone and video appointments
- Provided one on one confidential counselling to students in all cohorts
- Delivered a series of webinars for students that promoted positive mental health and wellbeing and normalised

- help seeking behaviour
- Delivered counselling workshops for students to enhance skills and workshops requested by Colleges and Student Services.
- Delivered Mental Health First Aid training programs
- Provided assistance to staff and students in managing critical mental health incidents involving students across VU campuses.

VU Student Unions

VUSU and VUPA are externally funded organisation by SSAF, reporting the following benefits to students for the 2020 year:

- Orientation activities promote awareness of VUSU to new students. VUSU was represented at every campus in 2020 Welcome week and attended digital welcomes throughout the year.
- College Societies organise events and workshops, and provide representation and advocacy.
- International Students Association (ISA) organise and participate in events including International student orientation sessions;
- Leadership opportunities for student representatives and innovative student-led programs and activities.
- VU Postgraduate Association (VUPA) organize events for postgraduate students including industry and social networking events.
- Both VUSU and VUPA ensured that students remained connected and engaged through a series of online and virtual events
- HYDE magazine features articles and artwork created by Victoria University students. It aims to create a sense of community between campuses. HYDE is published online and distributed between eight campuses throughout Melbourne; it is also distributed at many places near these campuses that are frequented by students and locals. Hyde promotes opportunities for students, upcoming events as well as career pathways. Hyde also explores fringe careers and personalities, as VU has a varied race and background demographic.
- Welcome events benefit students by providing safe social events to introduce new students to each other and the university experience.
- The Union represents all students at VU and supports enhancing the student experience at the University via social events and activities, campaigns, up-skilling and student advocacy on both local University and Government contexts, on matters raised by students and identified by elected student representatives.
- The Union provides leadership opportunities for student representatives and encourages innovative student-led programs and activities.
- Representation for all students at VU and enhancement of the student experience at the University via social events and activities, campaigns, up-skilling and student advocacy on both local University and Government contexts, on matters raised by students and identified by elected student representatives.
- Fund and support events & campaigns, including the VU/VUSU Student Forum, VUSU Hangs on every campus, De-Stress Festival and Carnival, mid-semester party, Liptember Festival, Exam reviver stations, and subsidised First Aid training. Associations & College Societies provide opportunities for students to network and gain skills.

Student Sport and Health Services

- Supporting representative, club and campus sport programs to enhance the student experience. Continued regular VU eSports student group engaging students in regular friendly games.
- Development, promotion and implementon of Virtual Team Training (TT-Group exercise) Live streamed sessions 3 times per day with 800+ registrations and up to 400 weekly participants. VU Polytechnic now incorporated TT into massage delivery remote sessions, undertaking as participants by modifying student breaks and then relate the muscles worked in sessions to their Anatomy and massage techniques delivery. Expanded to include Group Exercise, Boxing, Yoga, Zumba, SMR Facial, Virtual Group Exercise

- Engaged Western Futures (Certificate 1) disabled student on line with zoom fun social sessions with 15 student participants each week in delivered sessions.
- Sport club growth and support: start up, affiliation and exec support and student opportunities for competition and training.
- Delivery of the active living program online that supported students getting and keeping active whilst in lockdown and promoted positive mental health and wellbeing
- Delivery of the Outfield program with a focus on health and social inclusion
- Sport club presence at campus Orientation Festival events and series of come and try events.
- Provision of access to VU sport fitness facilities at subsidised rates. Free access to multi-sport courts at times outside of bookings with equipment loan.
- Continued regular VU eSports student group engaging 35 regular members participants with regular friendly games.
- Planning and equipment for set up of gaming room to support and drive club activity.
- Support and advocacy provided for students to navigate short course/qualifications ie: completion of ASCTA Swim Teaching Qual, Provide First Aid, PLG
- Training and support for volunteer student sport team managers and coaches including incident management training and workshops, mentoring and networking events
- Elite Athlete Program (EAP). Supported with individual consultations with eligible students and support re course enquires, liaison with Admissions, academic advice, enrolment and advocacy including flexible assessment around competition to balance sport and study
- Health, fitness and initiatives within THRIVE: VU Active Living Program.
- Partnering with De-Stress Festival and Multi cultural Week providing sport and health activations
- Short course programs in a range of health, first aid and sport and recreation areas.

Student Success & Support Programs

- Student advisory services to advise on Institutional matters and in particular, provide personalised support and one-to-one consultation for VU's Academic Progress Planning program.
- Provided ongoing support to students through COVID-19 and the ongoing pandemic through the assessment and administration of the VU COVID-19 Student Support Fund and the International Student Emergency Relief Fund
- Provision of pre-recorded information to help students in advance of their online orientation program and to provide support tools for the commencement of their studies. The Getting Connected videos were produced with Student Mentors and Student Advisors and became a key feature of our student welcome activities.
- Helped students with accommodation matters and their financial affairs
- advising on matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described);
- Supported students to develop skills for study and set themselves up for study success via the Success Planning advisory program and online services.
- Supported students through the transition in to their second year of study via the second Year Advising Program
- Supported students with their orientation to VU and the VU Polytechnic.
- Supported students with advice on careers and employment opportunities at VU for student as staff.

Student facility / amenity upgrades

- New equipment for VU Sport

2020 SSAF Student Experience Initiative Grants

Since 2013, SSAF Student Experience Initiatives funding has helped students and staff provide student amenities, services and activities that contribute to a positive student experience of a non-academic nature.

The below table illustrates the range of projects allocated funding by the SSAF Consultative Committee in 2020 and the benefits delivered to students (often by students).

Project Title	Project Description	Allocation
STEM Student group formation at VU	<p>The Australian Government regards high-quality science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education as critically important for our current and future productivity, as well as for informed personal decision making and effective community, national and global citizenships.</p> <p>With this strong focus from the Government, it is important that Victoria University supports a student STEM group to help facilitate the student experience in the area and support students' progress through their studies. One way to do this in addition to the classroom experience is to form a social group for STEM students to network, explore, support and socialise with each other. Since STEM is a wide ranging area, covering numerous courses from various colleges, a student group that will bring like-minded individuals together to support each other and help grow their interest and careers in STEM is an ideal opportunity whose time has come.</p> <p>The Club delivered on the below outcomes in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • created a sustainable student STEM group at VU, led by the students themselves after the first few meetings • helped develop STEM students 21st century skills via teamwork through different activities, presentations, and leadership in running the group • had meetings with 25 or more STEM students attending each month along with 5 or more STEM staff • helped build links with Industry, government and community organizations. • helped students with preparation for being job ready, assist with CV preparation, practice job interviews, etc • built a better network of contacts from students to staff to industry partners • expanded their view on STEM outside of their chosen area due to interacting with students from different degrees. 	\$500.00
VU Law Podcast	<p>This podcast series has provided an opportunity for VU law students to engage in their learning outside their structured study and ask questions to various law lecturers, academics and legal professionals about how the law has been impacted by COVID-19, and also how their future may be impacted as future legal professionals.</p> <p>The podcast series included discussions on the following topics:</p>	\$2,000.00



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episode 1: Corporations Law will this be the death of Australian companies? What obligation does the government have in saving Australian companies? • Episode 2: Constitutional Law Federal v State and emergency powers. Ruby princess and who is responsible? • Episode 3: Criminal Law Arrests, court, convictions and bail how have these been impacted by COVID-19? • Episode 4: Human Rights Law - How are our human rights impacted by COVID-19? • Episode 5: Employment Law - How has industrial relations law changed due to COVID-19? • Episode 6: Administrative Law - Accountable government in a time of national emergency. Will Australian citizens be told all the truth, or will the government hide behind national security? • Episode 7: Privacy and the Law - how do we protect our privacy when we are working / studying online? Government COVID-19 App - how safe is our data? • Episode 8: International Law - What international law obligations does Australia have in a global pandemic. • Episode 9: Students and the Law - how do we do placements? How do we graduate and get admitted? • Episode 10: Future of Law in Australia - where are the best areas of law to practise in? How might legal practise change? 	
TEDxVictoriaUniversity	The project aims to develop a community of students who actively seek a deeper understanding of the world. Due to social distancing laws in place, the event was delivered remotely via Zoom. This one day event educated students on a wide range of topics such as emotional health, personal finance, productivity, science, and most importantly the foundation of TED and TEDx.	\$7,750.00
Victoria University Motorsport 2020	This project facilitated student's development with regards to engineering skills, identity, networking and also business administration in the design and development and production of a Formula Society Automotive Engineers (FSAE) car. The students take control of the entire process starting with engineering design, project planning, fundraising and finally manufacture. Once the cars are complete, they can be entered into a variety of competitions, including FSAE. These events allow the students to operate the cars in controlled situations which helps them to develop advanced driving skills which are also applicable in their day to day lives. Operating the vehicles also enhances their understanding of engineering principles as they make minor adjustments and maintenance of the car to ensure that they are functioning at their highest potential. These skills significantly benefit students, and this is recognised by employers, some of which specify participation in the Formula SAE program as a requirement for employment.	\$6,405.00



<p>Student Employability Conference</p>	<p>Originally planned as a face to face conference, the event was held online via Zoom from 12 – 15 October 2020, with approximately 500 students attending various sessions throughout the week. We have finalised the schedule and topics and have contacted guest speakers to attend the event. Currently working on finalising a guest speaker for Wednesday and doing presentation preparations. We have advertised the conference on VUs student life and social media pages.</p> <p>The conference enabled students to gain knowledge on what companies and organisations require from their job applicants and what they can do to maximise their chances of getting selected. It also built upon their industry knowledge and supported them in preparing them for the job search process. The conference also provided valuable networking opportunities to students to expand their professional network by meeting and interacting with academics and industry professionals.</p>	<p>\$1,200.00</p>
<p>Peace-Meal Peacebuilding with International Students</p>	<p>This event provided a shared social space where international students can come together virtually to share a meal helped create a sense of community during the pandemic. This was especially powerful for those who just arrived in Melbourne and hadn't yet had a chance to come to know other international students socially this way. These students who are yet to build place-based connection with the university, had a glimpse of what being part of the VU community would look like. A number of them also made new friends from the event and had the opportunity to meet a Victoria University Postgraduate Association (VUPA) representative also joined as a participant. The event included larger group featured story tellers and opportunities for small group discussions where volunteer facilitators helped create deeper connections amongst students.2. During this period where food brings about fond memories of home, these students appreciated being able to enjoy a three-course Malaysian meal (first time for many) as opposed to the regular meals they can afford to cook and/or have access to. Students who weren't able to join the Zoom session also responded to the survey to express their gratitude for the meal. Quote from a non-attendee survey response "Yes it was sensational -I have never experience(d) Malaysian food before and it was so exciting because they delivered to Sunbury all the way from Melbourne." Most importantly sharing a meal and stories created connection, at a time where many students are struggling with isolation and loneliness. As one participant said, "food tasted better when it's shared".</p>	<p>\$2,000.00</p>
<p>Enterprise Skills Development Program</p>	<p>The Enterprise Skills Development (ESD) program is a multi-part offering that delivers experiential learning programs for university students, building on work-ready skills and experiences. The ESD program will focus on developing necessary transferable skills for students to enhance their employability during and post studies. There are multiple elements involved in the ESD program, which seeks to not only provide valuable information about the skills themselves but techniques and approaches to improve and apply these skills such as communication, team work and problem solving in an authentic work context. In addition to collaborating with Practera, the program will also partner with the Global Victoria Intellect Program (GVIP), a government initiative that connects</p>	<p>\$5,000.00</p>



	<p>student teams with Victorian exporters to undertake a real world market intelligence project. This approach will provide students with the opportunity to not only develop enterprise skills but to learn how to apply them in a professional context. The GVIP involves students working in teams with students from other universities, meeting their clients virtually and understanding their needs. The teams then produce a project report over the next two weeks. It is designed to develop enterprise skills and build networks for the students with employers and other student groups from a wide range of disciplines.</p>	
VU Student Desk Ergonomics and Exercise Video Series	<p>The grant enabled a video exercise series delivered where any VU student, using the electronic device that they may use to complete their university studies, could access the information. During the COVID-19 lockdown, students needed to continue to complete their studies from the safety of their home. For most students this could mean working from the kitchen bench or table or even from their bed if they did not have a desk in their home. The video series facilitated by an Exercise Physiologist provided students with appropriate information on how to set up their workstation at home, as well as promote physical activity during the isolation period. The program provided a range of mobility and strengthening exercises that could be completed at a student's desk or other workspace with little or no equipment, with any equipment used being easily accessible in the home. i.e. chairs, towels, items such as cans of food that can be used as weights. The program promoted the physical and mental health benefits of taking a break from study to exercise and stretch, as well as the important role that strengthening and mobility exercises have in preventing injuries associated with poor posture and inactivity.</p>	\$4,063.00
Victoria University Motorsport Team Infrastructure Development	<p>This project facilitates student's development with regards to engineering skills, identity, networking and also businessadministration. The program operates essentially as a small company producing and operating FSAE cars. The students take control of the entire process starting with engineering design, project planning, fundraising and finally manufacture. Once the cars are complete, they can be entered into a variety of competitions, including Formula SAE. These events allow the students to operate the cars in controlled \$6405.00 situations which helps them to develop advanced driving skills which are also applicable in their day to day lives. Operating the vehicles also enhances their understanding of engineering principles as they make minor adjustments and maintenance of the car to ensure that they are functioning at their highest potential. These skills significantly benefit students, and this is recognised by employers, some of which specify participation in the Formula SAE program as a requirement for employment. The enjoyment and life building experienced by members of VUM is evidenced by its past members who continually return to the group to offer their support. It would be a great pity if current and future students are denied this opportunity</p>	\$6,519.00
VU Women Get Active Workshop Series	<p>The four-week virtual program commenced on Monday 5 October with weekly sessions 1-2pm and includes a mini workshop component (20 minutes) followed by a physical activity component (40 minutes). The fitness activity component was determined based on participant</p>	\$4,500.00

	interests provided in the registration process. To give participants the opportunity to try a different activity each week we selected the four most popular activities.	
VU Student Desk Ergonomics and Exercise Video Series	<p>The key outcomes for the Desk Ergonomics and exercise video series was to improve the students' ergonomic knowledge to set up their study space during isolation and to enhance knowledge and encourage movement to help increase both physical and mental health.</p> <p>Improving the students' ergonomic knowledge, has enhanced the student experience by providing tips on ways to set up their workstations whilst at home; working or studying from their kitchen tables or bedrooms. Increasing their knowledge on the ideal ergonomic position, will help with working more efficiently, as well as limit / reduce musculoskeletal injuries from being in an incorrect posture for long periods of time.</p> <p>Increasing the health literacy and encouraging movement amongst the students in the program provides a positive student experience as they are provided with the benefits of exercise. They were informed about the guidelines for daily exercise and encouraged to take regular breaks from their computer screens to rest their eyes and exercise from the workstation. Regular breaks and exercise increases both mental and physical health and wellbeing, as well as study / work productiveness.</p>	\$4,063.00
	ALLOCATION TOTAL	\$39,937.00

