

THE 2021-23

STRATEGIC PLAN



AUSTRALIAN
MEDICAL STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

Australian Medical Students' Association
42 Macquarie St, Barton ACT, 2600

www.amsa.org.au
[@yourAMSA](https://twitter.com/yourAMSA)

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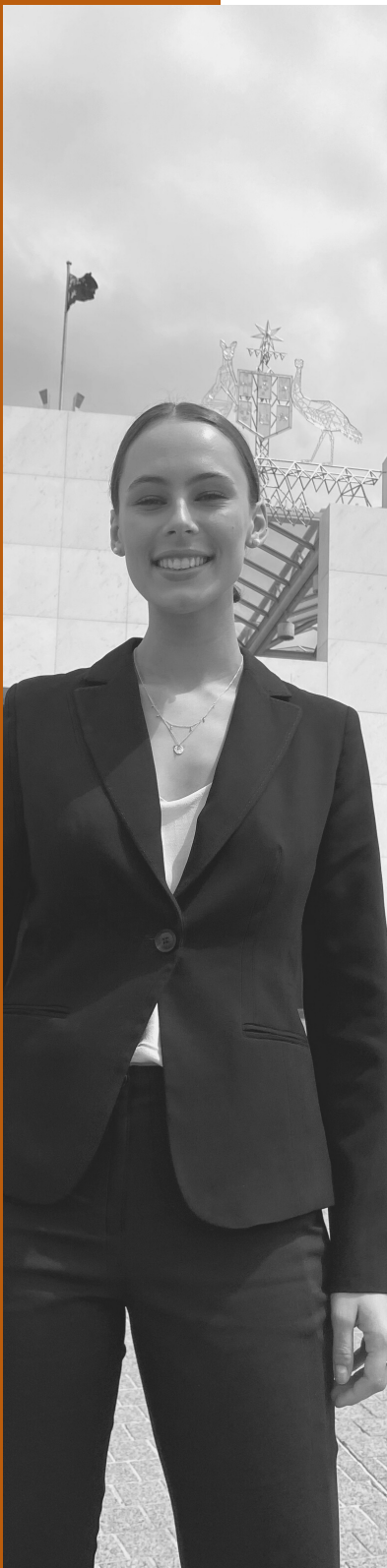
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sophie Keen

President 2021



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AMSA is truly an extraordinary organisation. It is a product of the passion, drive and boldness of Australia's medical students, and stands as a testament to the strength and solidarity of our community since 1960. AMSA has grown and evolved significantly in its sixty year history, always stepping up to the challenge of connecting, informing, and representing Australia's medical students. Thus, it is with great pleasure that we look to the next three years with excitement for what is to come.

This Strategic Plan aims to synthesise our forward planning as an organisation, for the benefit of both our leaders and our members. We are committed to making the Australian medical student experience the best in the world, and delivery of the strategic objectives contained here will ensure that we are continually serving both this generation and future generations of medical students.

Over the next three years, we will continue to advocate for your interests, deliver value to our members, and support the growth and development of our invaluable volunteers.

As you read through this plan, I hope that you share in our excitement for the future of the Australian Medical Students' Association.

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A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

AMSA is not an organisation to shy away from a challenge, and 2020 certainly provided that. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to adapt and evolve to a socially-distanced world, and placed public health advocacy in a global spotlight. Over the course of a few weeks, AMSA's operations changed dramatically, and our leadership and Board of Directors were forced to rethink and recreate our traditional business operations.

However, AMSA did not simply survive 2020, but flourished. National advocacy ensured the protection of medical students in the clinical environment, and the optimisation of medical education amidst quarantine and social distancing. AMSA events and campaigns shifted online, and the AMSA community remained sturdy.

The challenges, wins and losses of 2020 have laid the perfect grounds on which to critically analyse and re-evaluate our strategic direction moving forward. Whilst the landscape is ever changing, so is AMSA, and the strength, dedication and resilience of Australia's medical students make us as confident as ever in the future of this organisation.

MISSION:

To connect, inform, and represent all medical students in Australia.



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VISION:

An organisation that fiercely advocates on behalf of students on issues that medical students are passionate about.

An organisation that delivers accessible opportunities that are unique for medical students to extend, grow and develop themselves both professionally and personally.

An organisation that delivers enriching experiences, and connects medical students with their peers across Australia.

An organisation that will endure for the long term, and has an ethos of creating a better future for those who come after us.

PILLAR ONE

GROWING MEMBER ENGAGEMENT, AND INCREASING MEMBERSHIP VALUE

Membership engagement is critical to ensuring AMSA is representative and is supportive of all medical students throughout the entirety of their medical journey.

As the number of professional organisations and special interest groups increases, AMSA needs to stay relevant to medical students through all of our activities, events and initiatives. To ensure that AMSA remains an attractive option for all medical students when they want to extend themselves, learn new skills or connect with their peers nationally; AMSA needs to adopt a refreshed engagement strategy that widens the variety of engagement offerings, decreases barriers to engagement and differentiates itself with its national reach.

In addition to new professional organisations and special interest groups, a changing demographic of medical students that is characterised by students graduating later in their lives and graduating into a more competitive job market, signals an important opportunity for AMSA to pivot into this important realm of engagement.

With the strategic objectives and goals highlighted in this pillar, it is our vision to see AMSA become a companion of all medical students in Australia throughout the entirety of their medical journey, that AMSA will be able to positively influence and provide value to all medical students.



PILLAR ONE

KEY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Improve the promotion of AMSA as a brand and its position as a representative professional association for all medical students.
- Increase the accessibility, and remove the barriers to member engagement with AMSA opportunities, including financial barriers.
- Offer a diverse variety of volunteer opportunities, especially non-event opportunities.
- Facilitate connection and meaningful interactions between medical students and medical societies around the country, both professional and collegial.
- Provide value add membership packages to support medical students throughout their entire medical school journey.
- Develop opportunities for career support and development through AMSA events and initiatives.
- Provide nationally recognised and respected events and opportunities.
- Inform members of issues relevant to medicine and medical students, and provide platforms for students to engage with these issues.

PILLAR TWO

SECURING THE FINANCIAL FUTURE OF AMSA

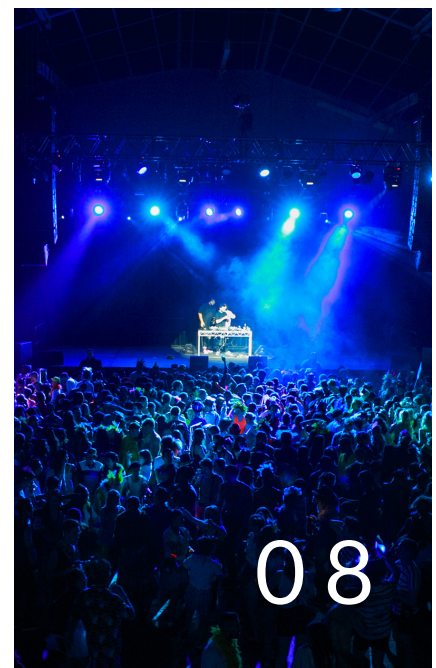
As a student-run not-for-profit organisation, AMSA has performed extremely well over its 60 year history, including during the recent economic turmoil resultant of the COVID-19 pandemic. To build upon and strengthen this financial stability, AMSA will need to continue to adapt to the changing external environment.

Whilst AMSA as a representative of 17,000+ future medical professionals still remains a highly attractive investment opportunity, this advantage is one that needs to be capitalised further in order to engage new partners and sponsors. The landscape for sponsorship is shifting, with more sponsors looking towards co-building value for members. The strategic goals in this pillar will position AMSA to capitalise on our brand to engage sponsors with a view for longer term partnerships and mutual value creation.

Beyond sponsorship and partnerships, AMSA will move to look at taking up new initiatives that deliver value to members and the organisation. Working in synergy with Pillar One, the objectives and goals highlighted mean AMSA will strategically evaluate events and initiatives to ensure that all current and new offerings can be adjusted or redirected to tap into areas of growing student demand.

In addition to increasing revenue to match increasing expenditure as the organisation grows, efficient and effective management of income is essential. In conjunction with pillar three, modernisation of financial systems will enable greater agility in managing organisational finances.

One of the key demands on our membership included the desire to invest positively into ethical and green banks, initiatives and funds. This is something that has been delivered in 2020, however is built upon further as a strategic goal to consider as part of AMSA's growing sphere of influence and financial capacity.



PILLAR TWO

KEY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Undertake financial management in a professional manner, in line with industry standards.
- Uphold budgets to manage expenses in alignment with company requirements and members priorities.
- Develop diversity of sustainable revenue streams, with a focus on reviewing event growth and undertaking new initiatives with high return on investment.
- Develop long term sustainable sponsorship partnerships with a focus on joint value growth.
- Maintain a financial divestment ethos with a focus on ethical and environmentally sustainable investments.

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PILLAR THREE

ACHIEVING ROBUST GOVERNANCE THROUGH MODERNISING SYSTEMS, AND IMPROVING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

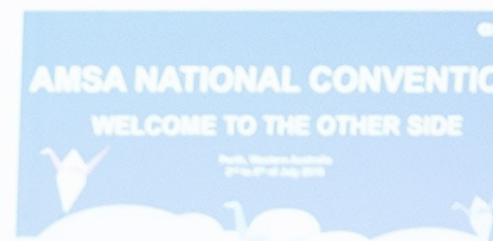
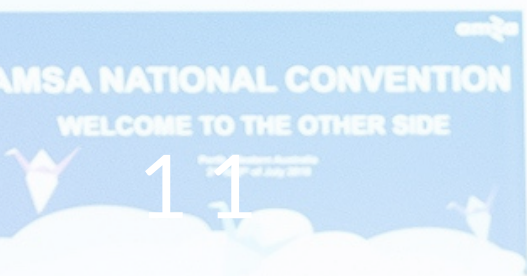
The long term success of an organisation is often predicated on robust and sound governance that adequately steers the organisation strategically, identifies risks and mitigates them appropriately. A backbone of robust governance is a high level of transparency when it comes to organisational operations and one of the biggest assets in support of this is modern back end systems that can provide information and diagnostics immediately.

AMSA has traditionally had antiquated and disparate back end systems, whether it is for accounting and finance or IT and membership, and is an area for continuous improvement. Modernised back end systems not only reduce administrative burden and streamline systems for economic efficiency, but they also contribute to increased institutional competency and provide organisational stability. Thus why, as part of this strategic plan, the modernisation of AMSA's financial, administrative, IT, membership and accounting systems has become a priority area.

In addition to modernised back end systems, is the need for robust organisational policy, both at an executive level as well as board level. In order for AMSA to grow swiftly and avoid growth pains, standardised and well understood organisational policy is required. These policies also need to be updated and reviewed regularly in light of the yearly churn of volunteers, as well as distributed widely each year to ensure all volunteers have a baseline understanding of the operation of the organisation.



Ultimately, investment in modern back end systems and instituting board and internal policies that are distributed widely through the organisation will play an important role in augmenting the experience of volunteers and members and is an investment for the long term.

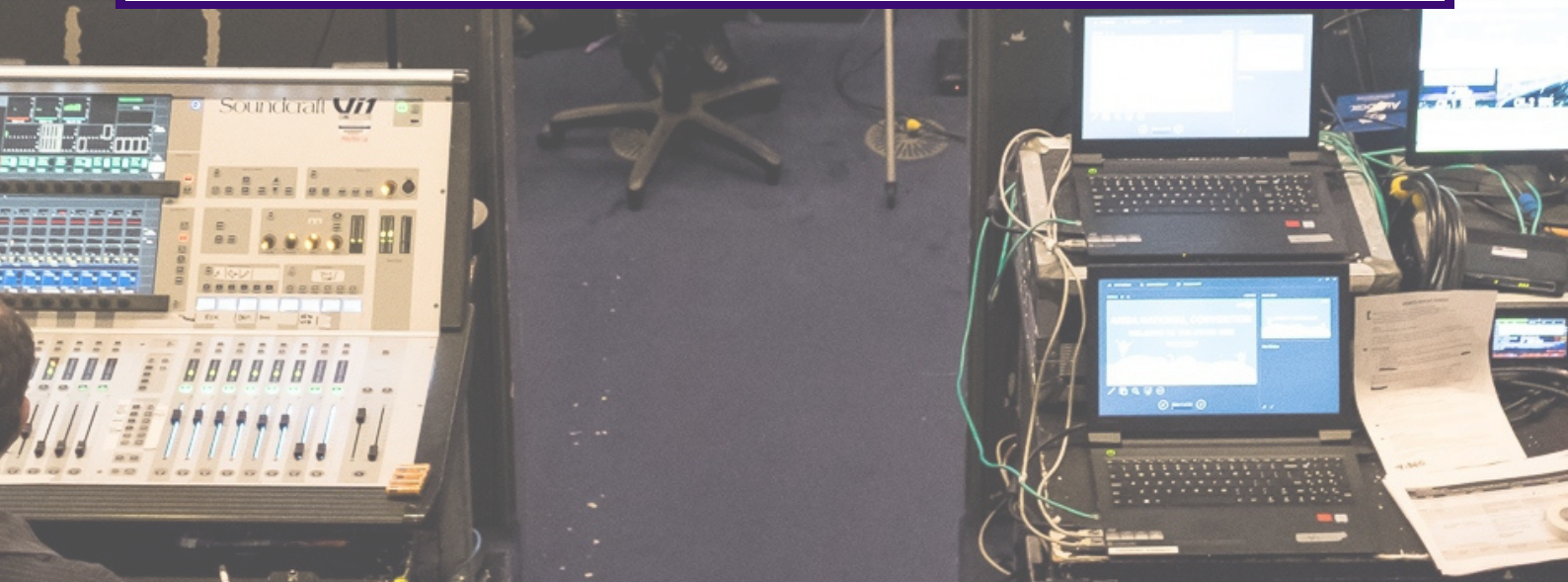


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PILLAR THREE

KEY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Invest in the modernisation of accounting, financial, IT, membership and event management systems allowing for increased efficiency, transparency, and effective governance.
- Add to the development, awareness, adherence and implementation of internal organisation policies.
- Strengthening the whole of organisation institutional memory, particularly in induction and handover processes.
- Proactively identify and mitigate risks in the organisation's operations.
- Embedding systematic agility into the functions and activities of AMSA from both governance to operations.



PILLAR FOUR

DEVELOPING AMSA CULTURE, AND SUPPORTING AMSA VOLUNTEER WELFARE, RETENTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Ever since 1960, AMSA has been an organisation that has in essence been governed and run by medical students for medical students. For a yearly turnover of 200-250 medical student volunteers to run a 1.5-2M turnover company that holds large scale events, provides international opportunities to students and advocates for students on the highest levels of government, is an impressive feat. This is by no means an easy achievement and is one to treasure. It is truly a testament to the grit and determination demonstrated by each volunteer throughout the years of AMSA's existence.

Simply put, without the numerous volunteers that give up their precious time and energy AMSA would not be the organisation it is today; and the achievements of all the volunteers in 2020, serve as an example of how far AMSA and it's volunteers can go despite the adversity or challenges that may face them. Thus, critical to any strategic plan of growth or development is a focus on ensuring AMSA engenders a positive culture of inclusivity and supports the growth of all volunteers. These volunteers are full time medical students who often don't arrive with the skills and experience for their high-level roles which range from national advocacy to financial management. For the effective management of AMSA as a company and a society, a learning and teaching culture is imperative. It is vital that AMSA enables the development and growth of volunteers to elevate their impact, but also to ensure that all of their efforts and achievements are adequately recognised and appreciated.

This strategic plan highlights specific goals that focus on volunteer culture, wellbeing, upskilling opportunities and building a sense of belonging. It is vital that AMSA is able to attract talent into the organisation as well as retain and grow that talent. This plan also highlights the need for internal unity and cohesiveness within the organisation. This unity also exemplifies the understanding that each individual functional aspect of the organisation needs to work within the greater confines of the company's resources in order to achieve AMSA's ultimate goal.

PILLAR FOUR

KEY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Foster a positive and inclusive culture within all teams that is welcoming to all who engage with AMSA.
- Implement strategies to support and empower groups traditionally marginalised or underrepresented within AMSA.
- Ensure volunteers feel valued, recognised and appreciated for their contribution to AMSA.
- Ensure volunteers are enabled to excel in their roles, and are provided with appropriate up-skilling opportunities.
- Maintain the health and wellbeing of volunteers throughout their term.
- Increase the unity and cohesiveness across all branches of the organisation.
- Ensure adequate feedback opportunities are provided to volunteers, and processes are established to support continuous improvement.
- Implement robust escalation pathways for volunteer, member, and delegate concerns.

PILLAR FIVE

STRENGTHENING THE STUDENT VOICE, AND ADVANCING AMSA'S ADVOCACY AGENDA

AMSA has a compelling external reputation, one that has grown in leaps and bounds over the past decade. AMSA has established itself as a well respected voice within society and medicine, on issues relating to mental health, medical internships, medical workforce, bullying and harassment and many others.

AMSA's frequent engagement with external stakeholders such as the AMA, Department of Health, Australian Medical Council etc., as well as inclusion on stakeholder groups, working committees and reference groups have only solidified AMSA's position as a prominent and valued voice among the medical profession.

Spearheaded by the numerous passionate medical student advocates that have represented AMSA, the respected voice of medical students within the profession is one to nurture and treasure.

This strategic plan focuses on growing and amplifying this medical student voice in all forums, through collaborative joint partnerships and improved robustness in policy development and advocacy processes.

This plan also includes a focus on positive forward planning on AMSA's advocacy agenda; looking at aligning AMSA's National Advocacy Priorities with political cycles, capitalising on national Commonwealth strategic plans and exploiting advocacy opportunities through strategic partnerships.



PILLAR FIVE

KEY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Conduct representative and effective advocacy of medical students' interests to stakeholders.
- Increase our public presence as a respected and relevant voice on medical student, public health, and medical workforce issues.
- Close-the-loop with communication to members on AMSA's advocacy achievements and progress.
- Maintain and build on an up-to-date, evidence based policy base that reflects the positions of our members.
- Improve upon the quantity and quality of student engagement in AMSA's policy process and advocacy process.
- Conduct strategic planning between and within each year on AMSA's long term advocacy issues.
- Establish and grow professional partnerships with relevant organisations.

2021-23

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