

Sydney University Dramatic Society Constitution

September 2023

PREAMBLE

The Sydney University Dramatic Society was founded in 1889, and has existed continuously, under various names, since then. On the 18th October 1955, Sydney University Dramatic Society combined with the Sydney University Players and the Theatre Council to form the current Sydney University Dramatic Society and adopted as its Constitution the following

1. NAME

1.1 The name of the society shall be the Sydney University Dramatic Society, hereinafter referred to as 'the Society'.

1.2 The letters SUDS are the recognised contraction of the society.

1.3 The Society shall be registered annually with the University of Sydney Union.

2. AIMS

2.1 "The Society" is not-for-profit; meaning: the assets and income of the society shall be applied solely in furtherance of the aims of the society and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the society except as bona fide compensation expenses incurred on behalf of the society.

2.2 The aims of the Society shall be:

- a. To engage in cultural activities of a theatrical nature.
- b. To provide members with the opportunity to experience all aspects of performance and production.
- c. To provide theatre for the University community.
- d. To provide an accessible alternative to professional theatre.
- e. To provide a safe space for its membership free from discrimination, abuse and harassment.

2.3 The Society will undertake the following activities to achieve its aims:

- a. To determine the productions mounted by the society by way of democratic elections by the society membership.

b. To engage the society membership through a program of educational initiatives.

2.4 In line with these aims, the priorities of the Society are diversity, accessibility, and inclusivity.

a. Annually, the Society must undertake three specified activities, separate to those in 2.3, targeted towards advancing the above mentioned priorities.

b. The Executive must allocate between 1- 3% of the total amount in the SUDS bank account, as of the 1st of March, to these activities each year.

c. To ensure sustained and ongoing commitment to these activities:

i. At the second General Meeting of the year, the Executive must announce these activities to the members of the Society.

ii. During the Annual General Meeting, the President will be required to report back on these activities in their Annual Report and provide recommendations to the incoming Executive.

d. Under this section “activities” can include, but are not limited to, performances, festivals, workshops, panels, classes, forums, grants, mentoring, reading groups.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 The classes of annual membership shall be:

i. Ordinary Membership

1. All members of The University of Sydney Union shall be eligible for Ordinary Membership of the society. Any Ordinary Member shall hold one vote at all meetings and elections of the Society at which they are present except as stipulated in Section 3.i.2.

2. In order to vote in any Meeting of the Society as outlined in Section 3.i.1, a member must have joined the Society by the previous Executive Meeting at the latest; i.e. a minimum of one week before the first meeting in which they can exercise their voting rights. The Executive shall make reasonable efforts to be available before Executive Meetings to join new members.

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3. The only exception to the foregoing section 3.i.2 is voting rights for the first General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the year, to be held in Week One of Semester One

4. The Executive shall allow new members to join at and vote in that meeting in order to cater for any persons who were unable to join during O-Week.

ii. Gold Membership

1. All members of The University of Sydney Union shall be eligible for Gold Membership of the society. Any Gold Member shall hold one vote at all meetings and elections of the Society at which they are present except as stipulated in Section 3.i.2.

2. A Gold Membership must meet the same requirements as clauses 3.i.2-4 of the Ordinary Membership.

3. The Gold Membership will afford the Member with a free ticket to each slot of the calendar year. This does not include the Major production or any festivals or workshops.

iii. Honorary Membership

1. Honorary Membership can be granted to any person by a two-thirds majority vote at a General Meeting. Honorary Membership may be terminated by a two-thirds majority vote at a General Meeting. Honorary Members are only eligible to hold Executive positions, vote in elections or vote at meetings of the Society if they qualify for Ordinary Membership of the Society.

3.2 Upon payment of a subscription fee, a person shall be deemed an Ordinary Member or a Gold Member of the Society and henceforth be bound by this Constitution and the regulations document.

3.3 The subscription fee for membership shall be:

i. Ordinary membership \$5

ii. Gold membership \$25

4. THE EXECUTIVE

4.1 The Society shall have an Executive consisting of

i. A President

ii. A Vice President

iii. A Secretary

iv. A Treasurer

v. Three (3) Cellar Officers

vi. Two (2) Social Secretaries

vii. Three (3) Publicity Officers

viii. An Archivist

ix. A Festivals Officer

4.2 The Executive shall have power to manage the Society in accordance with this Constitution.

4.4 Attendance of Executive Members at Ordinary and General Meetings is obligatory. Any Executive Member who does not attend three consecutive meetings without leave can be

dismissed from the Executive by a two-thirds majority vote of those Ordinary Members and Honorary Members who would otherwise be eligible for Ordinary Membership in attendance at an Ordinary Meeting.

5. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

5.1 The President shall:

- i. Plan the Society's activities in consultation with the Executive. This includes determining the number of slots annually, the date of the major production and any festivals throughout semesters one and two.
- ii. Liaise with the Executive and any Committees formed by the Society.
- iii. Ensure an adequate handover, including any documents and materials, to the following Executive.
- iv. Chair any and all meetings of the Society save when there is a conflict of interest or attendance is impossible in which case the Vice-President shall take the chair.
- v. In conjunction with the Secretary and Social Secretaries organise the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and all necessary Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMS) in accordance with the Constitution and co-ordinate the transferral of responsibilities to the incoming Committee.
- vi) Liaise with the USU and the Cellar Officers about the safety and proper management of the Cellar Theatre space.
- vii) Alongside the Vice-President, conduct meeting(s) with showrunners/slot holders to familiarise them with production processes and protocol within the Society

5.2 The Vice-President shall:

- i. Deputise for the President
- ii. Coordinate the Wellbeing Program and allocate an Executive Member to be a Wellbeing Officer for each slot of the year.
- iii. Ensure that the Executive team complete all necessary training for their roles.
- iv. Manage the society's membership sign-up, including sending out welcome emails, Gold Membership codes and answering questions alongside the Secretary in the Society's email inbox.
- v. Alongside the President, conduct meeting(s) with showrunners/slot holders to familiarise them with production processes and protocol within the Society.

5.3 The Treasurer shall:

- i. Maintain the Society's finances in accordance with the C&S handbook for Treasurers produced by the Clubs and Societies Office of the University of Sydney Union.
- ii. Present to the Annual General Meeting of the Society a report detailing the financial activity and status of the Society.
- iii. Ensure an adequate handover, including any documents and materials, to the following Executive.
- iv. Apply for semester grants and discretionary funding on behalf of the Executive and Society.
- v. Maintain contact with Slot Holders about their financial status and coordinate reimbursements in a timely fashion.

5.4 The Secretary shall:

- i. Conduct the correspondence of the Society.
- ii. Book meeting rooms for the Society.
- iii. Keep minutes of the proceedings of all Society meetings
- iv. Maintain the records and document of the Society.
- v. Maintain a list of current Members, in accordance with the University of Sydney Guidelines.
- vi. Maintain the Society's registration with The University of Sydney Union.
- vii. Note the numbers present at each meeting in order to establish quoracy. This includes registering all events with the USU, and sending relevant post-meeting documents.
- viii. Be responsible for bringing the Constitution and Regulations to meetings of the Society and, in conjunction with the chairperson, ensure they are followed.
- ix. Distribute and collect the signed slot-holder agreements for the showrunners of each slot annually.
- x. Manage the inbox of the SUDS email and allocate to relevant Executive members.

5.5 The three (3) Cellar Officers shall:

- i. Maintain the Cellar in a clean and usable state.
- ii. Maintain and purchase, if necessary, such tools and equipment as are deemed necessary by the Executive.

- iii. Encourage and ensure an adequate supply of members trained in technical matters.
- iv. Supervise bump-in and bump-out periods of all Cellar productions.
- v. Provide technical advice and/or assistance to a production if requested.
- vi. Report to the Executive any violations of the Slot-Holder Agreement by productions.
- vii. Change the Cellar key lockbox code after each production and communicate these changes to slot holders and the Executive.

5.6 The two (2) Social Secretaries shall:

- i. Organise social events at the discretion of the Executive. These can include but are not limited to:
 - a. Rough Cuts
 - b. Play with Your Food
 - c. Coffee-Catchups (before Ordinary/General Meetings fortnightly)
 - d. SUDS Attends
- ii. Coordinate the Mentor-Mentee program throughout the year.

5.7 The three (3) Publicity Officers shall:

- i. Publicise the time and venue of all performances, meetings, auditions and events.
- ii. Forward publicity material from all productions, when required, to Honi Soit, PULP, the Sydney University Newsletter and any relevant publications.
- iii. Update regularly social media pages with information on current callouts and upcoming events.
- iv. Submit information on the Society to be published in the Welcome Week (Semester One) Handbook.
- v. Respond to any inquiries on all SUDS social media platforms.
- vi. Create the Humanitix site and link for all SUDS events and respond to any inquiries from ticketholders.
- vii. Print and coordinate the archiving of Slot posters throughout the year.

5.8 The Archivist shall:

- i. Be responsible for the collection and storage of archival material from each production.

- ii. To arrange such archival evidence in such a manner that it can be both displayed in the Cellar foyer and retained as historical evidence.
- iii. Manage and update the society website to reflect any events or callouts within 24 hours of their going live on Facebook.
- iv. Distribute Feedback Forms at the close of each Semester to the Membership.
- v. Organise a census and collect responses from the Membership during Weeks 1-4 of Semester 2.

5.9 The Festivals Officer shall:

- i. Be responsible for SUDS' involvement in any USU-organised events.
- ii. Be responsible for SUDS' involvement in any external arts festivals.
- iii. Act to support other members of the executive where needed.
- iii. Organise events at their discretion and in consultation with the executive. These could include but are not limited to Workshops, a Film Festival, or other special events.

6. ORDINARY MEETINGS

6.1. The Society shall hold an Ordinary Meeting as required.

6.2. Ordinary Meetings shall be called by the President, Secretary or Vice-President, or by the Secretary forthwith upon receipt of the written application of at least twenty percent (20%) of the Ordinary Members of the Society.

6.3. At least three (3) clear days' notice of the time and place of an Ordinary Meeting shall be given in one of the recognised publications of The University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society notice board and, if possible, by a mail out to all Members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

6.4. The President shall chair Ordinary Meetings. in the absence of the President, another Executive Member shall chair the Meeting.

6.5. Quorum at Ordinary Meetings shall be five (5) Ordinary Members if the Society's current membership is no greater than seventy (70) Ordinary Members, or ten (10) Ordinary Members if the Society's membership is greater than seventy (70) Ordinary Members. Quorum must include not less than three (3) Executive Members.

6.6. The agenda for an Ordinary Meeting shall include:

- 1. Apologies and leaves of absence
- 2. Minutes of the previous meeting
- 3. Correspondence

4. Reports of Executive Members

5. General Business

6.7. An Ordinary Meeting of the Society has power to carry motions relating to the affairs of the Society by a simple majority vote of those members present and voting, including:

a. Giving direction to the Executive

b. Determining the use of the finances and other assets of the Society

c. Instituting Committees for any purpose of the Society and co-opting Society members onto any Committee

d. Dismissing Executive Members under 4.3 of the Constitution

7. GENERAL MEETINGS

7.1 The Society shall hold General Meetings as required.

7.2 The Secretary may, at any time, for any worthy purpose, call a General Meeting, and shall do so forthwith upon receipt of the written application of twenty percent (20%) of Ordinary Members of the Society stating the purposes for which the meeting is called. The business debated at a General Meeting shall be confined to the purposes named in the notice.

7.3 Except as provided in Clause 9, the Secretary shall give at least seven (7) clear days notice of the time and place of a General Meeting through one of the recognised publications of The University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by email.)

7.4 Quorum at General Meetings shall be the lesser of one-third of Ordinary Members or fifteen (15) Ordinary Members. If within thirty minutes from the time appointed for the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be dissolved.

7.5 The procedure at all meetings shall follow the normal rules of debate.

7.6 The agenda for a General Meeting shall include:

1. Opening and welcome

2. Apologies and leaves of absence

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

4. Business arising from the minutes

5. Correspondence

6. Motions on notice

7. Reports of Executive Members

8. Other reports

9. General business

10. Date of the next meeting

7.7 A General Meeting of the Society has the same powers as an Ordinary Meeting, and may also carry the following motions on notice relating to the affairs of the Society by a two thirds majority vote of those members present and voting:

i. Granting Honorary Membership

ii. Filling vacancies on the Executive

iii. Repealing motions and the effect of motions carried at an Ordinary Meeting

iv. Amending the Constitution

v. Dismissing Executive Members for failure to adequately perform their executive duties, provided that the Executive Member is given reasonable right of reply

vi. Dissolving the Society

vii. Determining the use of Society finances

8. SHOW PROPOSALS

8.1 All shows must be proposed to fill a slot or performance time in the Cellar or a Major Production slot.

8.2 All slots must be initially offered for election at least five academic weeks before the performance.

8.3 Proposals for a Cellar slot shall include the title of the show being proposed, the author, the proposed creative team, reasons for wanting to perform the play.

8.4 Nominations for a Major slot shall include the title of the show being proposed, the author, the proposed Director, the proposed Producer and a formal written budget. Both the proposed Director and the proposed Producer must be ordinary members of the Society. Nominations shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee.

8.5 The Director and Producer of each proposal may speak for up to three minutes in support of their proposal. The Society may then ask questions of either the Director or the Producer or both.

8.6 Voting on each slot shall be by the Single Transferable Vote system, with a choice between each of the Proposals offered or Re-Open Nominations. Should no proposal be offered or Re-Open Nominations be elected, the slot may at the discretion of the Committee be offered for re-election at the next Society meeting or it may be left empty.

8.7 A proposal is to provide opportunities for members to be involved and further shall disclose and justify any specific limitations on opportunities.

8.8 One proposer has the potential for a predetermined role in the production. The proposer shall be responsible for auditioning acting positions and appointing non-performance role

8.9 Any proposal made for the third slot of second semester (“Slot 9”) must be either an original work, or a work which is out of copyright. Any novels, films, or any other media which are to be adapted for a proposal must similarly be out of copyright.

9. THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

9.1 The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting annually in the month of October and before the end of the teaching period of second semester.

9.2 The Annual General Meeting shall be convened for the following purposes:

- i. To receive a report and statement of accounts for the preceding financial period
- ii. To elect an Executive for the ensuing term
- iii. To transact any other business, notice of which shall be duly submitted to the Secretary

9.3 The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) clear days notice of the time and place of the Annual General Meeting in one of the recognised publications of The University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society notice board and, if possible, by a mail out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

9.4 The Annual General Meeting shall be held between 9am and 9pm at a place on a campus of The University of Sydney and/or via video conference. The Annual General Meeting shall be chaired by the President or an Executive Member not standing for election to any position.

9.5 Quorum at the Annual General Meeting shall be the lesser of one-third of the Ordinary Members or fifteen (15) Ordinary Members.

9.6 The agenda for the Annual General Meeting shall include:

1. Opening and welcome
2. Apologies and leaves of absence
3. Minutes of the previous meeting
4. Business arising from the minutes
5. Correspondence
6. Motions on notice
7. Annual Reports

7.1 President

7.2 Treasurer

7.3 Secretary

7.4 Other Executive Members

8. Election of the Executive

9. General business

9.7 Society meetings may not be held during the University closure period surrounding the Christmas and New Year Public Holidays, and notice must be called outside of this period.

10. ELECTIONS

10.1 The Executive shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting / Annual Elections in the month of October each year.

10.2 Only Ordinary Members, and Honorary Members who would otherwise be eligible for Ordinary Membership, shall be eligible to be candidates for election or to vote in the election.

10.3 The term of the Executive shall commence immediately following the close of the Annual Election Meeting and conclude at the close of the Annual Election Meeting in the following year.

10.4 The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) clear days notice of the time and place of the annual elections in one of the recognised publications of The University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all Members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.). The notice shall state:

i. the day on which nominations open, which day shall be at least fourteen (14) clear days before the day of the elections;

ii. the day and time on which nominations close, which shall be no later than the time of the meeting at which the elections are to occur;

iii. the time, date and venue of the election;

iv. that only Ordinary Members, and Honorary Members who would otherwise be eligible for Ordinary Membership, shall be eligible to be candidates for election or to vote.

10.5 In order to stand for election, nominees must accept nomination.

10.6 Before an election the Executive shall nominate a suitable person, not being a candidate for election, to act as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be charged with the conduct of the election, and may appoint suitable persons, not being candidates for election, as Deputy Returning Officers.

10.7 The Clubs & Societies Manager shall serve as Electoral Arbiter and shall receive any appeals against the decisions of the Returning Officer.

10.8 Voting shall be by secret ballot, and shall be Single Transferable Vote.

10.9 The General Body of the Society may, in a General Meeting, elect any Ordinary Member of the Society to fill any casual vacancy that may occur in the Executive. (A casual vacancy occurs when an Executive Member is dismissed from the Executive or resigns before the term of office has expired.)

11. ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION

11.1 This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of those Ordinary Members and Honorary Members who would otherwise be eligible for Ordinary Membership in attendance at any General Meeting, provided that:

i. Written notice of proposed changes has been given to the Secretary not less than seven (7) clear days notice before such a meeting,

ii. The said changes do not contravene University of Sydney or University of Sydney Union guidelines,

iii. The Secretary has given at least fourteen (14) clear days notice of those proposed changes to all members through one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members (A mail-out is understood to include communication by email),

iv. A copy of the amended constitution, and minutes of the meeting at which the amendments were made, are presented to the Clubs and Societies Manager of the University of Sydney Union within fourteen (14) clear days of the meeting,

v. The amendments are approved by the Clubs and Societies Committee and ratified by the Board of the University of Sydney Union

11.2 Constitutional amendments do not become effective until approved by the Clubs and Societies Committee and ratified by the Board of the University of Sydney Union.

12. PROPERTY AND FINANCES

12.1 All property of the Society shall be vested in the Executive, and shall be dealt with in such manner as directed by the Society in an Ordinary Meeting.

12.2 The Society shall maintain a bank account.

12.3 All payments of the Society shall be by cheque, signed by at least two members of the Executive, one of whom must be the Treasurer.

12.4 The finances of the Society shall be maintained in accordance with the C&S Handbook for Treasurers produced by the Clubs & Societies Office of The University of the Sydney Union and submitted for audit by the Clubs Societies Auditor immediately following the Financial Year End of the Society in the month of July each year.

12.5 Notwithstanding anything contained in this Constitution, all assets and funds of the Society shall be used solely to further the Objects of the Society, and no portion of those funds shall be paid or

distributed to members of the Society except as compensation for out of-pocket expenses.

12.6 The financial year of the Society shall run from the 1st August to the 31st July following.

13. DISSOLUTION

13.1 The Society may be dissolved by resolution of a two-thirds majority vote of those members present and voting at a General Meeting. If on the dissolution there remain any monies or property, they shall, with the consent of the Clubs and Societies Office, be transferred to a cultural, charitable or educational organisation as the Society in a General Meeting may resolve.

13.2 The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) clear days notice of the time and place of such a General Meeting through one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society notice board and, if possible, by a mail out to all members. (A mail out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

14. INACTIVITY

14.1 The Society shall be deemed inactive after any continuous six month period in which the Society does not hold any events or engage in financial activity. If upon inactivity there remains any more monies or properties, the Clubs Societies Auditor and the Clubs & Societies Manager shall become signatories of the Society account and the Clubs & Societies Office shall control such properties and held in trust. After a further six month period, all money will be deposited into a USU administered trust account, and will be returned to the Club should it reform. After a total of eighteen months inactivity, all Society funds will be transferred to the USU general account.

15. RECOGNITION

15.1 The Society shall comply with all requirements of the University of Sydney and the University of Sydney Union for recognition as a registered society of the University of Sydney Union.

This Constitution was adopted on the **13th day of September, 2023.**

President's Signature

Secretary's Signature