

U3A STONNINGTON Inc.

ABN 23 378 204 740 REG No. A0020583

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Monday 10 May 2021

As President, and on behalf of the Committee of Management, I am required to present to the Annual General Meeting an overview of U3A Stonnington Incorporated and its activities, for the period from May 2019 to July 2020. This presentation complies with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC).

OUR ORGANISATION

U3A Stonnington aims to provide stimulating courses and activities to retirees and semi-retired people for enjoyment of this phase of life. Engagement with our programme reduces the considerable risks of loneliness and isolation. Our mode of operation is undergoing continual change in response to requirements imposed by Covid-19. Initially our programme and opportunities for social interaction were modified to be offered remotely via various IT options, especially Zoom. In addition, we updated our membership data management system to UMAS for Members, so that all aspects of enrolment and communication about courses are online, thus minimising risks due to Covid-19. Once mastered, UMAS has benefits for volunteer administrators and members.

In semester 2 large lecture groups at Valetta Street will continue to be held by Zoom, to comply with continuing Covid-19 requirements. Small groups are now pleased to be returning to Valetta Street to meet in person, but frequently with the use of Zoom for those who cannot, or choose not, to do so. This hybrid mode of meeting is currently being upgraded for the enjoyment of all taking part. This is meeting a need recognised for some years now regarding continued participation for members unable to meet in person.

These changes have required many hours of voluntary work to implement successfully. Unfortunately our membership has declined to just over half that prior to Covid-19 – similar to most other U3As in our region. We anticipate that membership will increase as attendance in person resumes.

OUR BUILDING

We have been well supplied with Covid-19 posters and hygiene stations by the City of Stonnington. The meeting rooms can safely accommodate the return of small groups to Valetta Street. Unfortunately the maximum number that is permitted in Room 1 is 18.

FINANCE

Our financial position remains strong. Refer to the Treasurer's report that has been provided. Access to all financial statements will be available once Valetta St reopens. Our annual fees for 2021 are \$30 per person. This reduction in fee was in recognition of the changes due to the pandemic. We are fortunate to be able to survive Covid-19 currently. We are striving now to encourage renewals and new members.

CURRICULUM

To reiterate: our program continues, now with some sessions in person, and others continuing remotely. We are grateful to the number of lecturers who are willing to deliver their presentations by video conferencing (Zoom). Many of our regular session leaders continue with their innovative ways of keeping in touch with their groups and continue their stimulating activities. We anticipate the return in Semester 2 of some courses were cancelled due to Covid-19.

The program is a significant part of the core of any U3A, making each U3A unique. Current activities are chess, wide ranging discussions on books, films, poetry, science, religion and current affairs; workshops for writing, drawing and painting; music appreciation; and French and German languages. Lectures are presented on a wide variety of topics, some as a series, and some as single presentations. We hope to offer Scrabble, Tai Chi, Mahjong again in semester 2.

ADMINISTRATION

Our administrative volunteers have worked very hard to implement UMAS and assist members to learn how to use this. Denise Nadebaum and Margaret Hay have mastered this new system, and have looked after our members' interests with dedication and grace, especially during the times of our difficult lockdown. We are indebted indeed to them. We hope that the promise that UMAS will reduce the hours of office work required for smooth running of our organisation will actually materialise!

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Peter Ward continues to manage our educational technology, including Zoom licences and how to use these. As mentioned previously, is developing hybrid systems so that members can meet in person at Valetta Street, while engaging with members remotely by Zoom. We are very grateful for the effort and expertise that he offers.

Others who have contributed to this work are Margaret Hay, Denise Nadebaum, Gordon Baker, Knut Mandeltort, Peter Aarons and myself.

WEBSITE

Netta Heine has undertaken to set up our new Website. This provides information about current operations at U3A Stonnington and is user-friendly and interesting not only to our members, but to others who might be thinking about joining a U3A. Thank you Netta.

U3A NETWORK VICTORIA

We are grateful to Dr Peter Ward for his leadership recommending that we change to UMAS and its linked Website, and make use of the ongoing support offered by U3A Network for their implementation and continued management. Network's support is excellent.

KEY MONITORS and RECEPTION

It is time to plan how to manage our return to Valetta Street. When our building is in operation, we rely on teams of member volunteers who work as Key Monitors and Reception staff to ensure that daily running of U3A is smooth, and to provide a welcome to presenters and newcomers. Re-engagement of these activities will be necessary.

CATERING

Covid-19 restrictions currently mean that sharing of refreshments at Valetta Street is not possible.

LIBRARY

Ros Winspear is our librarian. We hope to re-open the library in Semester 2. Thank you Ros.

HOURS OF VOLUNTARY WORK

We will be calculating the number of hours of voluntary work done to run our U3A as part of our annual report to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) and U3A Network Victoria. Despite some decrease due to closedown much of the volunteer work continues and is likely to exceed 5,000 hours.

I am grateful to all of our Course Leaders. The quality of our programme is due to your work. A great deal of time and effort goes into preparation and running of courses. Thank you.

In particular, I wish to acknowledge with gratitude, the support and guidance I receive from members of the Committee of Management, and Office bearers, There are many things that many members do that I have not mentioned – time does not allow it. However, I appreciate all the work that has been done by others to keep U3A running as we want it. Thank you all!

CITY of STONNINGTON COUNCIL

U3A Stonnington Inc. is very grateful for the continued, generous support we receive from Stonnington City Council. Julie Fry is our main contact with Council and continues to be especially helpful managing our many and varied day-to-day problems, current and past. We appreciate the support associated with Covid-19.

We are very conscious of the problems of social isolation, especially for those in our age demographic, and continue to work to minimise this for our members, in addition to providing activities to join for interest and enjoyment, even if remotely.

We believe that U3A Stonnington Inc. contributes to attainment of goals that the City Stonnington has for positive ageing.

I commend this report to the meeting, for consideration, including confirmation of the fees for the 2021 year.