

The University of Melbourne  
Sporting Club Funding Review  
Discussion Paper  
August 2015

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**Sport Potential Consultancy Group**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Introduction

The University of Melbourne's Board of Sport (the Board) determined in May 2014 to undertake a review of the current club funding model. The review was to aid the development of a more considered and transparent criteria for the future distribution of funds in line with the club performance and participation objectives, as outlined in the University of Melbourne Sport Strategic Plan 2010 - 2015.

The project objectives for the review included:

- a) Consider the current club funding model and systems at other Universities and sports funding bodies
- b) Consider issues for competitive, instructional and recreational clubs
- c) Develop a transparent and equitable Club Support Model
- d) Align current and future funding with the University's Sport Strategic Plan.

Sport Potential Consultancy Group (SPCG) was engaged to conduct the review in consultation with Melbourne University Sport (MU Sport).

### Background

Students have participated in informal and organised sporting and physical recreation activity since the formation of the University in 1853. Students quickly came together to form clubs and teams to compete in weekly or regular community competitions. Other clubs were formed over time with further diversification of the sport and recreation options continuing to the present day. Some of the University's sporting clubs are amongst the oldest in Australia. Membership expanded beyond students-only during the 1980s and 1990s to include alumni and community members.

A critical point for sporting clubs at the University was the introduction of Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) in 2005 which significantly reduced funding from student fees to sport.

Sport's governance structure at the University also changed in 2010 with the establishment of the Board of Sport. The University's first Sport Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015 was also developed at this time with a vision that the University of Melbourne will be the leading Australian university for sporting performance, level of participation and the quality of facilities.

The University currently has 41 affiliated clubs providing over 6,500 members with around 138,000 competitive, recreational and instructional opportunities each year.

As the Go8 university with the greatest number of student participation opportunities in 2013 (2013 Go8 benchmarking survey), the University is achieving its vision of being the leading Australian university for the level of participation.

### Current Club Funding and Support

Affiliated clubs are supported by Melbourne University Sport (MU Sport). The provision of in-kind (free-of-charge) on-campus facility access is the main focus of support. MU Sport in-kind facility access was valued at approximately \$1.15M in 2014. This in-kind facility access enables clubs to allocate resources towards other operational costs and/or charge reduced fees as compared with other community clubs.

Approximately \$580,000 of funding was distributed to clubs prior to the introduction of Voluntary Student Unionism legislation in 2006. This funding was reduced to \$160,000 following VSU's implementation in 2007. Financial support has increased incrementally to approximately \$306,000 in 2014 following the introduction of the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) in 2012.

Funding provided by MU Sport is a minor component of the total income required to meet the costs of delivering club activities. MU Sport's funding is generally allocated to the cost of external facility hire, major equipment purchases, coaching and administration and/or management.

Clubs can also opt-in to various shared services including e-commerce, discounted fitness memberships, event management, finance and human resources, fundraising and giving, insurance, marketing and OHS.

Research into other universities and how they support affiliated clubs has shown that funding and in-kind support varies greatly. While funding may have been more prevalent in a pre-VSU environment, today's support at other universities is likely to be in-kind (namely in the form of facility access). Where funding is more substantial, such as at the University of Sydney, it is allocated towards high performance club endeavours.

### **Issues Facing Sporting Clubs**

Affiliated sporting clubs at the University operate in a unique environment with a diverse range of activities, opportunities and challenges.

While MU Sport's in-kind facility access support is substantial, and critical to club operations, it is also an issue for some clubs with regards to availability, quality and location (Club Member Survey 2013) – especially for those that are required to conduct training and/or play fixture games off-campus predominantly through the hire of Melbourne City Council facilities. Similarly, the activities of instructional clubs are restricted due to the lack of a fit-for-purpose martial arts space on campus and the competition for space between this club cohort and MU Sport's group fitness program.

Equipment is paramount for the majority of recreational clubs where their activities take place in the great outdoors and often require specialized safety items. Future support for major equipment purchases are an important factor in maintaining participation levels.

Facility access and major equipment provision are key contributing factors to the University's strong growth and participation in recent years.

Total club membership has grown to 6,759 in 2013 from 4,303 in 2010. While this growth is encouraging, the 10% drop in University of Melbourne student members (as a percentage of total members) during this timeframe may be cause for concern.

Performance is also an issue for many clubs in that on-field success is often a major driver of recruitment. Clubs will often be competing with school and/or family ties when it comes to a new student making a choice to join the University club or not. The level of competition that a University club competes in will also be a factor in student recruitment.

While VSU did impact all clubs, the fact that no club 'went under' due to its implementation shows that facility access, and not operational funding, is perhaps the more important support mechanism provided by the University. A strong volunteer culture inherent amongst the University clubs was also paramount to survival in the years following VSU, and continues to be the case today.

Clubs are in most cases incorporated entities, affiliated via MU Sport to the University but able to determine their own strategic priorities and directions. However, it is likely that most would consider alignment with the University and MU Sport a meaningful and beneficial objective.

### ***Funding and Support Principles***

VSU saw MU Sport funding to clubs effectively drop by 72% (\$580k in 2006 to \$160k in 2007). Funding levels have climbed back to 52% of pre-VSU levels in 2014 despite the University's allocation of SSAF funding to MU Sport being significantly less than in pre-VSU years. As such, it is even more imperative that funding and support needs to be targeted to best achieve the objectives of the University's Sport Strategic Plan.

Facility access, where available on campus, has provided clubs with a base from which to deliver activities in a cost-effective environment. This support is critical for maintaining participation levels and achieving performance success.

A replacement schedule for major equipment could be developed for equipment-reliant clubs, to budget for ongoing purchases.

Volunteerism and strong leadership have enabled clubs to continue to prosper. Support for volunteers could be further developed in conjunction with clubs.

Some clubs have recently opted in to shared services provided by MU Sport to lessen the workload on volunteers. Support for membership and other sales via e-commerce, coach/instructor recruitment and payroll, equipment purchasing and management, event marketing, general finance, promotion of trips and tours as well as volunteer training could be expanded and developed for the benefit of all clubs.

Future funding and support principles for sporting clubs at the University should include:

- University of Melbourne student recruitment should be the focus for all clubs
- Participation and performance opportunities should be provided both genders
- Facility access should be the base level of support for all clubs
- Support services are available to clubs on an opt-in basis
- Participation-focussed clubs should be funded for major equipment where such equipment is paramount to delivering activities
- Performance-focussed clubs should be funded for external facility hire (where required), senior coaching support and administrative/management support commensurate to their level of competition
- Funding and support should be allocated towards agreed key performance indicators between clubs and MU Sport in alignment with the Sport Strategic Plan.

Further to the Sport and Clubs Select (SACS) Committee Report in 2012, funding and support for clubs could be formalized through a service agreement with MU Sport detailing annual support and shared obligations.

Performance success at key Group of Eight (Go8) universities indicates that a range of strategies are needed to achieve success from both a participatory and performance perspective. These strategies include access to quality facilities, quality coaching and professional management.

### ***Conclusion and Recommendations***

MU Sport, as the delivery agent for sport at the University, must implement the tasks and work to achieve the objectives established by the Board in the Sport Strategic Plan.

The following recommendations provide a framework for clubs and MU Sport to continue to work in collaboration to achieve both participation and performance outcomes beneficial to all University stakeholders.

Recommendations:

1. Facility access is the base-level of support for all clubs
2. Major equipment purchasing schedules be established to support the recurrent purchase of boats and other significant recreational equipment
3. Coaching, administration and management support is available to assist achieved and/or aspirational performance outcomes
4. Funding and support is aligned with the recruitment of University of Melbourne student members
5. Support services are provided to clubs as opt-in opportunities to match their needs as required.

### ***Feedback and Comments***

Sporting clubs are invited to provide feedback or make comment on this discussion paper as follows:

- Written submissions should be directed to Sport Potential Consultancy Group via [mark.jones@musport.org](mailto:mark.jones@musport.org)
- Submissions should be provided no later than Wednesday 14 October 2015

## REVIEW OF CURRENT CLUB FUNDING AND SUPPORT

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### Introduction

Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) has had a significant impact on the funding of clubs at the University. The hard work of a dedicated volunteer network across all clubs has ensured that this impact has been mitigated as best possible. In reality, some clubs have done more with less whilst others have managed to maintain activity levels.

### Background

Funding is derived from a combination of Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF) and MU Sport, via commercial activities, primarily from the sale of fitness memberships and venue hire. Funding of clubs decreased from \$579,000 in 2006 to \$160,000 in 2007 post VSU implementation. MU Sport was allocated approximately 20% of the Compulsory Student Fee of \$375 in 2006.

This amount has increased incrementally from 2008 such that the 2014 funding of clubs totals \$306,000. MU Sport now receives 19% of the SSAF (which was \$281 in 2014). This small percentage decrease from pre-VSU years also equates to substantially less University funding due to the lower legislated cap on the SSAF.

Support for access to University sporting facilities has largely remained unchanged, equating to approximately \$1.15m in 2014 (Appendix: 2).

Some clubs have elected to opt-in to utilise one or more of the support services offered by MU Sport as a means of supporting various club administrative and/or operational functions.

### Funding Rationale and Distribution

The Club Operational Funding Guideline was developed to manage the impact of VSU in 2007 which saw a reduction in funding of \$419,000. MU Sport determined at this time, to allocate the majority of funds to clubs on the basis of external venue hire requirements and to support the engagement of coaches.

In 2007, clubs were classified as competitive, instructional or recreational.

Competitive		Instructional		Recreational	
Athletics	Lacrosse	Aikido		Inline Skating	
Badminton	Netball	Dance Sport		Mountaineering	
Baseball	Rugby Union	Karate		Ski	
Basketball	Soccer	Kendo		Snowboarding	
Boat	Softball	Taekwondo		Surf Riders	
<i>Cheerleading</i>	Squash	Tai Chi & Wushu		Underwater	
Cricket	<i>Swimming</i>	Weightlifting &		Waterski &	
Cycling	Table Tennis	Powerlifting		Wakeboard	
Fencing	Tennis				
Football (Men)	Touch				
Football (Women)	Ultimate Frisbee				
Futsal	Volleyball				

Gridiron	Water Polo	
Hockey		

Competitive clubs were defined as teams training for, and competing in, regular, seasonal, fixtured community competitions. Instructional clubs largely developed individually graded skill sets and where they compete, they do so in less frequent championship style events. Recreational clubs also provide for the development of new skill sets for individuals, generally undertaken in small group cohorts in the natural environment. Some clubs, due to the nature of their activities, did not easily fit in one category. Three clubs – Cheerleading, Gridiron and Swimming – were affiliated after the creation of these categories and the Club Operational Funding Guideline.

Some instructional and recreational clubs offer a competitive element from time-to-time. Some martial arts clubs and the Weightlifting & Powerlifting Club train some members for competition in state and/or national championships while recreational clubs sometimes compete in alpine skiing, canoe polo, rock-climbing and underwater hockey. Most competitive clubs also offer beginner programs where the focus is on skill acquisition and game play as opposed to results.

The rationale for funding being restricted to competitive sporting clubs was that such clubs generally incurred greater expenditure in providing regular, seasonal opportunities where performance success is an objective. Operational funding was usually allocated against specific club expenses such as external facility hire and coaching.

Competitive clubs also currently represent 70% of total club membership, while instructional clubs represent 6% and recreational clubs 24%. While many competitive clubs do have the opportunity to train and/or play on campus, the majority are also required to hire off-campus external facilities due to their membership size and number of teams. Most of these facilities are hired through Melbourne City Council and the combined annual hire and operating fees for Baseball, Boat, Cricket, Football (Men), Football (Women), Gridiron, Hockey, Lacrosse, Netball, Rugby, Soccer, Softball, Touch and Water Polo exceeds \$100,000 annually.

Qualified and experienced coaches are also widely regarded as being critical to the on-field success of competitive teams. While competitive clubs operate with varying coaching structures, one could conservatively suggest that MU Sport's competitive clubs are engaging between 75 – 100 coaches per season. Most coaches provide their services as they 'love the game' and are remunerated primarily with a stipend to cover telephone and petrol costs, while some are paid a small seasonal fee. The Boat Club is the only club that effectively engages professional, full-time and/or part-time coaches.

At the request of four clubs, MU Sport has recently supported the engagement of an administrator or manager. Soccer currently engages a part-time administrator (0.2 Effective Full-time), Netball engages a part-time high performance coordinator (0.4) while Cricket and Rugby engage full-time general managers. These staff work closely with the MU Sport staff in the Sport Development office and have key club objectives to achieve that are also closely aligned with the University's Sport Strategic Plan. Besides removing some administrative and compliance tasks from committee members to allow them to plan more strategically, these staff are also generally focussed on performance support, stakeholder and alumni relations and developing additional non-traditional club revenue streams. MU Sport funding towards these positions is capped at 50% of the respective salaries, with each club contributing the other 50%.

MU Sport also provides annual funding opportunities via the Club Project Fund (CPF). The CPF aims to assist clubs with developing and improving their operational activities. Some clubs also receive funding towards major equipment purchases (generally greater than \$10,000) on a matching dollar for dollar co-contribution basis. Such funding allows for the purchase of boats for various recreational



opportunities such as canoeing, scuba-diving and water-skiing – activities that would likely be impossible to deliver without access to such equipment.

A small amount of funding is also allocated annually to all-of-club activities and costs such as Orientation.

<b>Table 2:</b>	External	Coaching	Management	Club Project	Major	General	Total
<b>2014</b>	Venue Hire			Fund	Equipment		
<b>Funding</b>	\$52,500	\$114,000	\$45,000	\$38,800	\$35,000	\$20,500	\$306,167

### Facility Support

The Club Facilities Access Guidelines provides MU Sport’s rationale for the allocation of on-campus facilities. This guideline was also created as a result of VSU but was revised with the introduction of SSAF. Facility access provided to clubs was valued at \$1.15M in 2014.

<b>Table 3:</b>	Competitive	Instructional	Recreational	Total
<b>2014</b>				
<b>Facility Access</b>	\$971,268	\$114,480	\$63,360	\$1,149,108

Facilities and club activities go hand-in-hand with many on-campus facilities originally constructed primarily to support a small number of traditional clubs. Today’s facilities aim to support the activities of 41 affiliated clubs and their 6,500 members. These same facilities must also support fitness, casual, campus, college and community sport programs, as well as inter-university sport programs.

Facilities are provided for the purposes of agreed training and competition in support of a club competing in regional, state and/or national competitions; for instructional classes; and/or storage of equipment where available.

Some competitive clubs do not have access to facilities on-campus. While some of these clubs will usually access some on-campus facilities for pre-season fitness training, their regular season training and competition is held off-campus. For example, the Gridiron, Rugby and Soccer clubs train and play in Royal and Princes Parks respectively; the Lacrosse Club plays in Royal Park (they do however train on campus); and the Water Polo Club train at Melbourne High and play at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre.

The synthetic playing field, used by the Hockey Club for their winter competitions, is a popular and over-subscribed facility when other outdoor spaces are closed due to inclement weather.

Instructional clubs are generally provided access to flat-floor space in either the Lazer Room or Mind Body Studio, or the East or West stadiums. Activities are generally compromised due to capacity, a lack of safety matting specific to the activity, storage and/or availability. Instructional clubs are generally allocated two peak training sessions per week while some clubs have also been allocated additional early morning training sessions upon request.

The nature of the recreational club activities generally takes place off-campus in the ranges and rivers, mountains and oceans throughout the state, the country and sometimes overseas. Recreational clubs are provided with storage and/or garage space on campus to house equipment such as boats and trailers. The Mountaineering Club has access to the ground floor of a University building on campus, but not in the Sports Precinct.

Competitive and instructional clubs are also provided with storage where they regularly train and/or compete on campus (where space is available). The University also has facilities off-site on the Yarra River (the Melbourne University Boathouse) and at Mt Buller (the Melbourne University Ski Lodge).

Club bookings are generally allocated on a seasonal basis, and automatically roll over annually. MU Sport must also balance an operating imperative to use facility space efficiently and effectively so as to ensure maximum participation opportunities and performance outcomes for clubs, as well as its other non-club programs such as casual facility hire, fitness membership, Campus, College, Community and University Sport programs.

### **Support Services**

Support services provided by MU Sport (and/or other departments of the University via MU Sport) can include:

- Administration (advice, review and best practice operating procedures)
- Alumni Engagement (event support, database development, appeal support, mail outs)
- Discounted fitness memberships for eligible clubs
- Donations and Giving (support in conjunction with Advancement Office)
- Equipment hire and maintenance (club-specific, sound system, chairs, tables etc.)
- Events (promotional materials, infrastructure, ticketing, attendance)
- Facility development and maintenance (cleaning, overheads)
- Finance (e-Cart, pre-payments, short term loans, fiscal planning)
- Human Resources (PD provision, recruitment and support)
- Insurance (personal accident, public liability, office bearer protection)
- Marketing (access to MU Sport website, brand association, logo use, communication, PR)
- Meeting room provision
- OH&S (assessments, review, compliance)
- Orientation week club promotion
- Preferred-supplier relationships (uniforms, equipment, trophies)
- Scholarship support and Young Achiever Awards
- Stakeholder relations (City of Melbourne, State and National Sport Organisations)
- Website (development, maintenance, support).

### **Funding and Support at Other Universities**

The University of Sydney is generally acknowledged in the University Sport industry as the leader in performance. It supports some 41 sports across 47 clubs, with some sports having separate men's and women's clubs. With multiple ovals, sport centres and fitness centres (courtesy of the University once being home to a separate men's and women's sports union), Sydney's clubs are well supported with access to on campus facilities. Sydney Uni Sport & Fitness (SUSF) also engage some 16 club managers/administrators and 15 coaches on behalf of their clubs. SUSF also support their clubs with various other administrative support including an internal finance system that pays all invoices and wages on behalf of clubs. SUSF also manages an elite athlete program that is understood to be separately funded to the tune of \$1M annually.

The two other Go8 universities researched for this paper, the University of Queensland (UQ) and the University of Western Australia (UWA) are also facility-rich with large parcels of land supporting sports facilities on and off campus, respectively. UQ Sport supports 39 clubs across its two main campuses. It also supports the engagement of club coaches and supports clubs with various forms of 'back-of-house' support via its Club Administration Centre. UQ has also recently increased its level of support for its elite athlete program with the employment of a student advisor to support its sport scholarship and sports science services.

UWA has 32 affiliated clubs which are required to pay an annual affiliation fee, determined on the number of non-UWA student members from the previous year. This fee ranges from \$275 (< 25 non-

UWA student members) to \$1,850 (> 251). Affiliation provides clubs to discounted facility hire and the opportunity to apply for small annual grants that support the purchase of uniforms and equipment. Support for UWA clubs is mainly facility-focussed, with limited funding directed to performance-related clubs and their coaching expenses.

### Introduction

Sporting clubs operate in a unique environment with a diverse range of activities, opportunities and challenges. Their existence has come about through interest and commitment of the student cohort. Many have evolved to provide opportunities for members who are not students, and some are now led by alumni. Regardless of membership or volunteerism, clubs provide opportunities to participate and/or perform. The focus of a club - participation or performance - may dictate the type of issues it faces.

### Background

Clubs provide feedback directly to MU Sport. Feedback is provided by email, telephone or via scheduled or sometimes unscheduled meetings with staff. Feedback is almost always club-specific and an issue for one club, may not be an issue for another.

MU Sport also conducts two annual club forums as a means of communicating its strategic and key operational issues with clubs. A club member survey was conducted for the first time in 2013 (understood to be the first of its kind at an Australian university), which also provided the opportunity for club member feedback with a focus on facility satisfaction, club member servicing and motivations for membership. A bi-monthly Club Operations Memo is also emailed to key club committee members, with the aim of communicating key messages in a single communique rather than multiple emails.

### Facility Access

Support for facility access to clubs is substantial (valued at \$1.15M in 2014) and its importance has been addressed earlier in this paper. However, a lack of fit-for-purpose spaces on campus as well as an over-subscription for existing spaces remains an issue.

Facilities are in constant demand, both from sporting clubs, fitness members and casual users. Could clubs plan for some activities to be delivered outside of traditional months, days or time-slots?

Some martial arts programs are now appearing on group fitness schedules at leisure centres and other universities. Could club operating efficiencies be gained through incorporating some instructional programs onto MU Sport's Group Fitness schedule?

Facility issues have been recognised in the Sport Capital Infrastructure Plan 2013-2023 (SCIP) which is a collaborative approach between MU Sport and Infrastructure Services (formerly Property and Campus Services). The plan aims to address the University's sport and recreation facility needs for the future by identifying current facility conditions, gaps in provision and resources required to be allocated for facility development.

In particular the SCIP recognises:

- to increase the opportunities for the University community to engage in regular physical activities through the provision of quality facilities that are; conveniently located and easy to access with the flexibility and capacity to meet the diverse and constantly changing needs of the University community
- to support high performance sport by providing access for the University sporting clubs, teams and athletes to the best quality training and competition venues available, many of which will be located off campus.

The SCIP also addresses the Sport Strategic Plan’s emphasis on the quality of facilities, guiding developments for the Parkville campus (including south of Grattan Street) and also identifies facility development requirements in relation to external facilities, such as those managed by Melbourne City Council.

The adoption and implementation of the SCIP is a major priority for MU Sport.

### Major Equipment

This paper has also previously commented on the importance of support for major equipment purchases for some clubs. Access to motor boats is critical for the activities of the Underwater and Waterski & Wakeboard clubs. Such boats can also cost upwards of \$75,000 each.

Other watercraft, climbing and associated safety equipment is also important for the activities of a number of other recreational clubs. Support for the purchase and/or hire of such equipment will be important to maintaining and/or growing levels of participation.

### Volunteerism or Professional Staff

There has been a proud history of outstanding volunteer administrators that have managed their club effectively with great success over the University’s 150 plus year history. That said, fewer student contact hours on campus, competing demands for leisure time, the rise of national competitions and increasing professionalism has seen many clubs struggle with a high turnover of student volunteers. Volunteers in senior positions are also often burdened by increasing bureaucracy imposed by state sporting bodies. Issues such as the engagement and management of coaches, instructors and officials (both financially compensated and true volunteers), asset maintenance and stock control, stakeholder engagement and conflict management are placing significant demands on all club volunteers, especially those aspiring to compete at the highest level.

MU Sport’s club member survey of 2013 identified that club culture was the largest driver for satisfaction. This is affirmation that a club’s people - its committee, coaches and instructors, trip leaders and general volunteers – are the true lifeblood of a club. While encouraging, this also requires monitoring due to the transient nature of club membership and the possibility of valuable intellectual property being lost with the departure of one or more key club volunteers.

### Membership and Participation

Despite strong membership numbers in excess of 6,500 in 2013, the decline in the percentage of University of Melbourne student members since 2010 is worth noting (Table 2).

<b>Membership Type</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
University of Melbourne Students	2,753 (64%)	2,886 (66%)	3,070 (59%)	3,687 (54%)
Other Members	1,550 (36%)	1,459 (34%)	2,131 (41%)	3,072 (46%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,303</b>	<b>4,345</b>	<b>5,201</b>	<b>6,759</b>

Recreation clubs present the highest percentage of student members (Table 3). Instructional clubs are not far behind, however the total membership for this cohort is relatively small (433 members of 6,759). The lack of a fit-for-purpose martial arts facility may be a contributing factor, and is likely a factor in few performance opportunities being offered by this cohort.

**Table 3: Combined Analysis by Club Membership Category for 2013**

Club Category	Total Members	Student Members	Non-Student Members	Student Percentage	Non-Student Percentage
Competitive	4,709	2,040	2,669	43%	57%
Instructional	433	318	115	73%	27%
Recreational	1,671	1,329	288	82%	18%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6,759</b>	<b>3,687</b>	<b>3,072</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>

Instructional and recreational clubs provide students with opportunities to participate in new activities that they may not have tried prior to university. Both club cohorts have relatively low operational costs due to volunteerism provided by instructors and trip leaders.

Competitive clubs are competing for students who likely have a strong connection to clubs they grew up competing for. The operational costs of competitive clubs are also higher as stipends for suitably qualified and experienced coaches and external venue hire generally make for a higher membership fee. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that alumni are more likely to remain as competitive club members beyond their university days, however greater analysis of club membership data is required to validate this.

Several universities benchmarked for this study specify a set student membership percentage for a club to be affiliated. This figure ranges from 75% at La Trobe University to 30% at UNSW.

Student versus non-student membership data for each of the University's affiliated clubs is provided in Appendix 2 (Competitive), 3 (Instructional) and 4 (Recreational).

MU Sport does not use membership data as an isolated measure, but rather as a factor to measure club participation. Participation opportunities have been calculated in relation to training days, competition fixtures and trips and tour days – opportunities that clubs provide almost on a daily basis. When considering all of the 41 clubs total members comprising some 6,500, the figure for overall participation opportunities across all clubs totalled approximately 138,000 in 2013.

Participation data is an important measure that MU Sport reports to the University each year. This measure helps MU Sport highlight the important role that each club plays in delivering on the Melbourne Experience for the University's students – particularly for those from regional and remote Australian and overseas. Given the importance of this measure to the University (and potentially its funding to MU Sport from the SSAF), club membership and participation data collection and tracking should be a priority for both clubs and MU Sport.

As identified previously in this review, club membership fees are a critical component in generating income to fund club operations. Income generated from club membership fees typically far exceeds the funding provided by MU Sport. A desktop scan of club membership fees indicates that clubs providing competitive sporting opportunities on a seasonal basis and clubs providing recreational trips and tours, are more aligned to community fee-for-service offerings. Membership fees for instructional clubs appear to be below community club rates. The appropriate setting of price points, including for membership fees and other club activities, is a crucial component of club income generation and ensuring ongoing financial sustainability.

It is also important to note that all University of Melbourne students pay a Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) each year. The SSAF is \$286 in 2015. MU Sport receives an annual contribution of the SSAF to fund programs, facilities maintenance and capital projects. MU Sport also currently

receives approximately \$500,000 in annual University funding towards facility building projects that benefit club members. From an equity perspective, should clubs be charging a levy for all non-student club members to compensate for the SSAF contribution of student members?

**Performance and On-field Results**

Performance outcomes listed in recent MU Sport annual reports when compared with the performances other Go8 universities (Appendix 5) would suggest that the University of Melbourne has not achieved its vision of being the leading Australian University for sporting performance based on the applicable performance measures listed in the Sport Strategic Plan:

- Performance of athletes, teams and clubs at community, regional, national and international competition and events
- The number of [University of Melbourne Sport club] student athletes representing state and national teams or participating in professional sport.

While some competitive clubs are competing at the highest level in Victoria (and some at national and international level), further analysis should be undertaken to confirm whether or not these performances are by University of Melbourne students or non-student members.

The establishment of national competitions in some sports has seen University clubs slip further down the talent pathway (although this is not the case at the University of Sydney). Many other state league competitions are also becoming increasingly professional and the amateur ethos of many university clubs has seen them struggle to remain competitive. Community clubs now recruit more aggressively to maintain and attract members, many of whom are students. In some sports like Australian Rules Football, Basketball and Cricket, student-athletes are being offered considered sums of money to play, which has further increased the difficulty for university clubs to attract and retain talent. University clubs must present an enticing value proposition to prospective members (as well as existing members) that counters any offer of financial inducement while also breaking any connectivity to one’s junior club (even if only temporarily while studying at the University).

While the performance of the University’s representative teams at the Australian University Games and stand-alone Championships is not directly related to club performance, the University’s consistently high performances at these events is worthy of discussion.

Based on a review of University of Melbourne’s overall placing at the Australian University Games, results indicate a sustained period of successful performance at this level.

<b>The University of Melbourne Overall Placing at Australian University Games</b>									
2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>

Further analysis of sport-specific results at Games and Championships (Appendix 6) highlights that performances in a number of sports (for which the University has affiliated clubs) over the last decade would suggest that the University is attracting talented high performance student-athletes. However, many of these students appear not to be competing for University of Melbourne clubs. This cohort clearly presents an opportunity for MU Sport and clubs to focus resources and develop a greater value proposition for their recruitment. Access to quality facilities, suitably qualified and experienced coaches and professionally managed clubs (by volunteers and/or administrators/managers) would likely assist in creating this recruitment value proposition.

## FUNDING AND SUPPORT PRINCIPLES

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### Introduction

Sporting clubs at the University have traditionally been supported through provision of on-campus facilities and through operational funding to contribute towards club-specific activity costs. The introduction of VSU in 2007 had an enormous impact on club funding at the University. Funding effectively dropped 72% (\$580k in 2006 to \$160k in 2007) and has only managed to climb back to 52% of pre-VSU levels in 2014.

### Background

Funding appears to have been historically allocated to clubs prior to 2007. While \$120,000 and \$110,000 of the total \$580,000 funding pool was specifically allocated to external facility hire and capital equipment purchased (Appendix 1), the large balance seems to have been allocated for no specific purpose but rather to be expended at a club's discretion.

Considering that MU Sport directly paid for agreed external facility hire and contributed a significant amount of funding towards capital (major) equipment purchases up until 2007, it is difficult to determine why some clubs still received \$10,000 or more to support operational expenses – particularly where they were participating in local sporting competitions or where delivering very low-cost participation opportunities.

The fact that no clubs ceased to operate due to VSU, perhaps suggests that they were able to focus their activities and refine their fee structures to balance budgets while continuing to provide opportunities for the University community?

### Providing a Level Playing Field

This paper has identified both the existing level of support for facility access and the importance that this facility access to all clubs. Facility access is critical for maintaining participation levels and achieving performance success. Facility access also provides clubs with a base from which they can deliver activities in a cost-effective environment.

Facility access should become to be the base-level of support for all clubs.

Future support and/or funding for facility allocation (both on and off campus) might include the following considerations:

- the level of competition in which the club team is competing
- club team composition (University of Melbourne student members compared to other membership categories)
- recent team performance and/or aspirational performance goals
- data recording system for club training attendance.

### Geared Up and Secure

The provision of major equipment items eg. motor boats is paramount to some clubs if they are to successfully deliver participation opportunities to members. MU Sport's existing policy to support the purchase of major equipment items on a 50:50 basis for items over \$10,000 (and after any trade-in value and to a maximum agreed amount per annum) does assist clubs in purchasing new equipment, however agreed schedules between clubs and MU Sport would provide financial surety to both parties.

Major equipment purchasing schedules should be established to support the recurrent purchase of boats and other significant recreational equipment.



Future funding for major equipment provision might include the following considerations:

- agreed participation objectives be established to ensure the relevance of activities for which major equipment is provided
- funding schedules be developed by MU Sport with relevant clubs that identify agreed financial contributions (including a timeframe).

Equipment, including motor boats, other watercraft and other large pieces of machinery, also require adequate storage. This storage is currently provided in the Sports Precinct however could be located elsewhere on campus where greater space and accessibility is available. It is also worth considering the off-campus storage of some major equipment proximal to where it is predominantly used.

### **Quality People for Quality Programs**

The success of performance-focussed clubs will ultimately rest with the ability of its playing group. The ability of the playing group is often significantly influenced by the quality of coaching. Experienced coaching personnel will also likely be a recruiting tool for prospective members, and as such, can play an important role in developing a value proposition for students new to the University.

Volunteerism and strong leadership have served clubs well for more than 150 years. The environment, in which many performance-focussed clubs now operate however, has changed significantly in recent years.

The loss of valuable club intellectual property due to cyclic volunteer turnover could be reduced with support for professional club personnel to ensure a greater level of continuity. The growing complexities of running community sporting clubs who operate in league based competitions, has seen an increase in paid personnel which varies from a few hours each week through to full-time employment. Club administrators (1 – 2 days per week during season) and/or managers (permanent part-time or full-time) could improve the financial performance and reduce the compliance requirements for volunteers so as to enable the club committees to be more strategically focused. Club staff will not replace volunteers, however they can reduce many of the administrative and compliance-related burdens, freeing up committees to be more strategic with their time and commitment.

Coaching, administration and management funding should be available to assist achieved and/or aspirational performance outcomes.

Future funding for the appointment of coaches, administrators and/or managers might include the following considerations:

- funding is commensurate with the level of competition in which the club's senior men's and women's team is competing
- funding for administrators and managers is provided on the basis that clubs have the capacity to co-fund the position
- position descriptions or duty statements, including key performance indicators and contract expiration dates, are developed for all senior coaches and professional personnel
- MU Sport is included in the recruitment and review process where significant funds are allocated.

Support for volunteers – coaches, instructors, trip leaders, committee and other 'helpers' - could also be further developed in conjunction with clubs. All club volunteers would ideally have access to relevant training and personal development opportunities (funded, part-funded or self-funded) to enable them to contribute to their club, and for students, further develop graduate attributes and employability. Support for the recruitment, engagement and retention of quality people could also be supported through clubs opting in to shared services.

## Supporting Future Growth

Support services should be provided for clubs as opt-in opportunities to match their needs, as and when required.

Future funding for the provision of shared services might include the following considerations:

- HR support for recruitment and payroll
- finance support for banking and purchasing
- support for equipment and uniform procurement through a preferred supplier arrangement with MU Sport
- lending and/or maintenance support for recreational equipment

## Funding Principles of the Australian Sports Commission and Other Go8 Universities

Performance outcomes as identified by the ASC's Winning Edge strategy, divides sport investment into three categories: High Performance, Whole of Sport and Participation.

The most significant allocation of funds goes to High Performance with \$110M (or 86% of total funding) while the Participation category is allocated \$18M (and Whole of Sport is allocated \$3.8M). Australia's peak body for sport has determined that both performance and participation outcomes are important to the nation but that greater funding is required to achieve high performance outcomes.

The ASC funding investment principles include:

- National sporting bodies held accountable for the funding they receive and the effectiveness with which they allocate it to achieve agreed performance outcomes
- National sporting bodies required to demonstrate best practice governance and management
- Increased investment in coaches and other high performance personnel that support successful performance
- A documented plan focusing on: strategy, investment, athletes, sport services, research and innovation.

The ASC Winning Edge model provides parallels with the University's Sport Strategic Plan as it relates to both participation and performance outcomes. Its funding principles also provide a nationally recognised framework for supporting high performance outcomes which could be considered when allocating future club funding and support.

Winning Edge also indicates that performance and high performance objectives will generally be afforded greater resources to achieve successful outcomes. Performance success at key Group of Eight (Go8) universities (the universities of Sydney, Queensland and WA) indicates that there is not a single model for success and that a range of strategies need to be integrated around a club culture, including:

- Access to quality facilities for training and competition
- Athlete recruitment including centralise student-athlete support programs, scholarships and strength and conditioning
- Quality coaching and pathway programs
- Strategic connections with state and national bodies
- Connectivity with alumni, and
- Professionally managed clubs with sustainable financial performance

### **Transparency and Commitment**

The Sport and Clubs Select (SACS) Committee Report in 2012 recommended that sporting clubs are formally affiliated with the University through an agreement with MU Sport, stating the obligations and benefits to the University and the sporting club, office bearers and members.

MU Sport has recently undertaken to provide club service agreements to clubs, detailing annual support and shared obligations. Outlining agreed objectives for participation and/or performance would also provide clarity and surety for all stakeholders from a funding and support perspective.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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The fundamentals for participation and performance success for each club may well be different. All clubs are currently providing outstanding participation opportunities, and for some clubs, this will remain their focus.

Other clubs will focus on providing competition opportunities that will provide both participation and performance outcomes. And for some clubs, their focus will be on providing members with the opportunity to perform at the highest level and to achieve success at this level.

Future club funding and support should be allocated for facility access, major equipment purchases, support services, coaching and administration and/or club management. Recommendations are:

1. Facility access becomes to be the base-level of support for all clubs
2. Major equipment purchasing schedules be established to support the recurrent purchase of boats and other significant recreational equipment
3. Coaching, administration and management support is available to assist achieved and/or aspirational performance outcomes
4. Funding and support is aligned with the recruitment of University of Melbourne student members
5. Support services are provided to clubs as opt-in opportunities to match their needs as required.

Targeted funding and support aligned with the University's Sport Strategic Plan will ensure that clubs are successful in continuing to be valuable contributors to the student experience. In turn, this contribution to the student experience will likely help consolidate the University's funding towards sport, and its clubs. The success of one is invariably linked to the other – just as it's been for more than 150 years.

## Appendix 1: 2014 Club Funding Summary and Historical Data

Club Name	2006 Total	2007 Total	2009 Total	2011 Total	2013 Total	2014 Operational Funding	2014 CPF	2014 Funding Total	2014 In-kind Venue	2014 TOTAL
<b>Competitive</b>										
Athletics	18,000	9,000	9,000	5,500	5,000	5,000		5,000	147,840	152,840
Badminton	10,000	1,000	1,000	2,500	2,000	2,000		2,000	22,176	24,176
Baseball	6,000	3,500	3,500	4,000	3,500	3,500		3,500	16,020	19,520
Basketball	12,000	9,000	9,000	12,000	14,000	14,000		14,000	58,080	72,080
Boat	42,750	35,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000		50,000	40,000	90,000
Cricket	13,000	4,000	5,500	6,000	37,640	25,500	5,000	30,500	110,160	140,660
Cycling	1,500	0	1,000	0	7,000	2,000	5,800	7,800	2,640	10,440
Fencing	4,500	0	1,000	2,000	2,000	0		0	9,040	9,040
Football	33,000	7,000	7,000	6,500	6,850	6,000	270	6,270	60,360	66,630
Football (W)	6,000	3,500	3,500	3,000	3,000	3,000		3,000	21,880	24,880
Futsal				1,000	1,000	1,000		1,000	15,600	16,600
Gridiron					1,500	2,000	1,500	3,500	0	3,500
Hockey	15,000	7,000	8,000	8,000	7,000	7,000		7,000	145,680	152,680
Lacrosse	2,500	1,000	1,500	2,500	2,500	2,500		2,500	15,120	17,620
Netball	17,500	8,000	9,000	9,000	8,000	8,000		8,000	28,640	36,640
Rugby Union	11,700	5,000	5,000	5,500	10,360	30,000	600	30,600	0	30,600
Soccer	10,000	8,000	12,000	12,000	11,000	16,000		16,000	0	16,000
Softball	3,500	1,500	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000		1,000	13,200	14,200
Squash	4,000	2,000	1,500	2,000	2,000	2,000		2,000	42,640	44,640
Swimming						0		0		0
Table Tennis	2,000	1000	500	1,000	4,000	4,000		4,000	30,624	34,624
Tennis	3,000	2,000	2,000	2,750	2,500	2,500		2,500	94,656	97,156
Touch	5,321	1000	1,500	2,250	5,000	5,000		5,000	26,736	31,736
Ultimate Frisbee	1,000	1000	500	500	500	500		500	12,480	12,980
Volleyball	25,000	10,000	10,000	12,000	11,000	11,000		11,000	53,856	64,856
Water Polo	5,000	3,000	5,000	7,500	12,175	6,500		6,500	3,840	10,340
<i>Sub Total</i>	252,271	122,500	148,000	158,500	210,525	210,000	13,170	223,170	971,268	1,194,438

Recreational										
Inline	1,190	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0
Mountaineering	15,000	0	0	0	730	0		0	26,400	26,400
Ski	13,000	0	0	0	3,722	0	3,722	3,722	7,920	11,642
Snowboard	3,000	0	0	0	2,000	0		0	7,920	7,920
Surf Riders	2,000	0	0	0	0	0		0	5,280	5,280
Underwater	13,500	0		0	0	0		0	10,560	10,560
Waterski & Wakeboard	2,000	0	0	0	1,287	0		0	5,280	5,280
Sub Total	49,690	-	-	-	7,739	-	3,722	3,722	63,360	67,082
Instructional										
Aikido	3,000	0	0	0	0	0		0	11,088	11,088
Cheerleading					1,500	1,500		1,500	0	1,500
Dancesport	-	0		0	825	0	475	475	12,240	12,715
Karate	5,000	0	0	0	0	0		0	9,600	9,600
Kendo	3,450	0	0	0	0	0		0	25,872	25,872
Kung Fu	3,000					0		0		0
Tai Chi & Wushu	3,000	0	0	0	260	0		0	26,640	26,640
Taekwondo	3,200	0	0	0	335	0		0	9,840	9,840
Weightlifting & Powerlifting	2,000	0	0	0	0	0		0	19,200	19,200
Sub Total	22,650	-	-	-	2,920	1,500	475	1,975	114,480	116,455
General										
External Venue Hire	120,000	0	0	0	0					
Capital Equipment	110,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000			35,000		
MUSA	25,000	3000	NA	NA	3,000			3,000		
Oval Scoreboard	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,280			0		
Orientation Prizes	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,500			3,000		
O'Week Set-up	NA	NA	NA	NA	7,932			12,500		
Club Forums								2,000		
Unallocated CPF	NA	NA	NA	NA	26,758			21,800		
Sub Total	255,000	38,000	35,000	35,000	75,470			77,300		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>579,611</b>	<b>160,500</b>	<b>183,000</b>	<b>193,500</b>	<b>296,654</b>	<b>211,500</b>	<b>17,367</b>	<b>306,167</b>	<b>1,149,108</b>	<b>1,377,975</b>

## Appendix 2: Competitive Club Analysis By Membership Category (2013)

Club	Total Members	Student Members	Non-Student Members	Student Percentage	Non-Student Percentage
Athletics	147	33	114	22%	78%
Badminton	198	167	31	84%	16%
Baseball	120	40	80	33%	67%
Basketball	219	134	85	61%	39%
Boat		32	86	27%	73%
Cheerleading	No data provided by club				
Cricket	104	30	74	29%	71%
Cycling	47	30	17	64%	36%
Fencing	59	35	24	59%	41%
Football (Men)	314	105	209	33%	67%
Football (Women)	90	28	62	31%	69%
Futsal	258	135	123	52%	48%
Gridiron	80	14	66	18%	82%
Hockey	293	94	199	32%	68%
Lacrosse	54	17	37	32%	68%
Netball	225	200	25	89%	11%
Rugby Union	464	11	453	2%	98%
Soccer	230	103	127	45%	55%
Softball	31	22	9	71%	29%
Squash	100	57	43	57%	43%
Table Tennis	59	46	13	78%	22%
Tennis	399	328	71	82%	18%
Touch	725	150	575	21%	79%
Ultimate Frisbee	80	70	10	88%	12%
Volleyball	109	79	30	73%	27%
Water Polo	106	57	49	54%	46%
Weightlifting & Powerlifting	80	23	57	29%	71%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,709</b>	<b>2,040</b>	<b>2,669</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>57%</b>

**Appendix 3: Instructional Club Analysis By Membership Category (2013)**

<b>Club</b>	<b>Total Members</b>	<b>Student Members</b>	<b>Non-Student Members</b>	<b>Student Percentage</b>	<b>Non-Student Percentage</b>
Aikido	30	9	21	30%	70%
Dancesport	208	193	15	93%	7%
Karate	33	32	1	97%	3%
Kendo	91	38	53	42%	58%
Taekwondo	38	23	15	61%	39%
Tai Chi & Wushu	33	23	10	70%	30%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>27%</b>

**Appendix 4: Recreational Club Analysis By Membership Category (2013)**

<b>Club</b>	<b>Total Members</b>	<b>Student Members</b>	<b>Non-Student Members</b>	<b>Student Percentage</b>	<b>Non-Student Percentage</b>
Inline Skating	24	13	11	54%	46%
Mountaineering	498	360	138	72%	28%
Ski	408	393	15	96%	4%
Snowboard	324	297	27	92%	8%
Surf Riders	164	160	4	98%	2%
Underwater	87	43	44	49%	51%
Water-ski & Wakeboard	112	63	49	56%	44%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>18%</b>



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