

VOS XXIII POLICY PLAN

**STUDY ASSOCIATION FOR LINGUISTICS AND SIGN LANGUAGE LINGUISTICS AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM**

2022-2023

October 13th, 2022
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

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1. PREFACE

VOS is the study association for students of the Bachelor and Master programs in and related to Linguistics and Sign Language Linguistics at the University of Amsterdam. The association was established on December 2nd, 1999 and aims to provide social and academic enrichment for members during their studies. All students interested in linguistics are welcome to become members.

As a member of the association, students can expect the organization of both social and academic activities on their behalf in order to further connect them with the field of linguistics and to create a safe, welcoming community within the university. Members have a number of privileges afforded to them. This includes the right to vote on the year's policy plan, budget, and realization of the budget/annual financial report, as well as any motions put forth by the board or members presented at the General Assemblies. At the end of the year, members also have the final say on electing a new board as well as a supervisory board (KasCo).

The board of VOS manages the association and facilitates the organization of events and opportunities for members. Thus, it is their responsibility to update the members on activities, lectures, and other events or opportunities hosted by the association and/or related to the field of Linguistics and Sign Language Linguistics. It is the board's duty to serve the members of the association, ensuring VOS is acting in their best interest and organizing events that benefit them. This includes ensuring student safety, by creating safe environments for events as well as by promoting an inclusive culture within the association itself, and notifying members of resources available to them within the university. As a part of this, it is also important that the board remains honest and transparent with its members, thus allowing them to make informed votes at General Assemblies and making members more aware of the rights afforded to them.

This policy plan outlines the goals, plans, and role of the twenty-third board in the course of the 2022-2023 academic year. It was written by the twenty-third Chair of VOS, Zoe Jensen, and approved by fellow board members: Indi Braun, Secretary; Celeste Tacconi, Treasurer; Gideon van Wijk, the Commissary of Internal Affairs; and Joanna Walker, the Commissary of External Affairs.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 For the People, By the People

The Board of VOS XXIII continues the initiative of VOS XXI to emphasize and encourage the influence of its members and wants them play a larger part in how the association runs. This way VOS can truly represent its members and their best interests, as well as make the association more enjoyable overall. As the managers of the association, the board aims to be a centralized means by which the ideas and needs of VOS members can be elevated and carried out. We will strive to give as many opportunities as possible for members to express their ideas by opening the lines of communication between the board and members. We aim to do this by being present and active at events, hosting an additional General Assembly this year, and encouraging more informal contact through a VOS WhatsApp group chat. Members are also able to email or directly message VOS at any time. It is our duty to create a space in which members are comfortable expressing suggestions and criticisms and that the board is open to adopting both when brought to their attention even when new ideas or suggestions challenge the current systems of the association or the board's perceptions thereof. Moreover, the board will take members into account at all times, ensuring decisions are truly made with them in mind and that any steps taken by the board benefit the members. We want to allow our members to help the association evolve so that it is working at its full potential and is enjoyable and beneficial for all members. Ultimately, we believe that the board should be held accountable to their members at all times.

2.2 Goals

As of October 13th, 2022, we have a total of 98 members. We aim to both retain our current members and attract new members. After many years of uncertainty and online education, we hope to reconnect members with the university and with student life to reinvigorate the community within the linguistics department. We hope this will create a more enriching experience as part of VOS. The association is still feeling the effects of the pandemic, noticing a decrease in engagement when compared to times before online education. Over the past few years events have on average had about 25% member turnout. We aim to increase regular engagement to 40% and encourage members to bring forth ideas to enhance the association, should they feel their needs or interests are not being represented.

To improve the function of the board, the Chair and Commissary of Internal Affairs took part in a board day hosted by the student union ASVA in which they offered a number of seminars and training sessions. We plan to reach out throughout the year for additional training from the ASVA academy as deemed necessary.

To increase engagement and improve members' overall experience with VOS we want to not only increase (as previously mentioned), but also improve lines of communication. We are working to establish a regular newsletter and social media posting schedule. In order to give sufficient notice of our events, members will be notified of every activity at least one week in advance-- though we do strive for more. Finally, emails requiring a response will be answered as soon as possible, ideally within a week. If more time is needed to properly give a response, a message saying so should still be provided within that week's time.

Throughout the year, VOS commits itself to holding events that benefit its members and the linguistic community at large. We host events that will broaden knowledge related to the field of linguistics but also provide a way to connect and meet fellow members, linguists, and students in an inclusive space. We aspire to hold a wide variety of activities to accommodate the diverse interests of members. From an academic perspective, this includes hosting a number of lectures or activities oriented around a variety of disciplines within linguistics, especially those not represented in the course programs at the University of Amsterdam (henceforth, UvA). Socially, we want to create a better balance of events. Historically, the association has focused heavily on events surrounding bars, partying and alcohol. While we will continue to host similar events, namely our fortnightly borrels, we want to ensure that students who do not like these environments or who may not be 18 yet have ample opportunities to still participate in the association and feel like a priority. We also aim to increase our frequency of events, having at least one every week.

Additionally, we aim to ensure that students are not just enjoying their time as VOS members but are also being sufficiently supported and kept safe. We plan to achieve this by facilitating open lines of communication as outlined in Section 2.1, as well as by implementing appropriate health (see Section 7.3) and safety guidelines at all of our events. Furthermore, we will ensure that all board members are knowledgeable about the resources available to students who may be coping with sexual assault, harrasment, or mental health struggles, and make these readily available on our website. For more information about our social safety plans and policies please refer to Section 6.

2.3 Collaboration

We believe that working together with other associations is a great way for our members to connect with people outside of VOS and their individual degree programs. In collaborating, we want our members to experience all that linguistics has to offer and to have opportunities to be introduced to new perspectives and academic fields. In the past, VOS has collaborated often with study associations from other language based programs and related studies. The overlaps in interests make them ideal partners for both large and small events. More information about some of the events mentioned here can be found in Section 4 of this policy plan.

In recent years we have collaborated often with Helios, the association for Dutch Studies, SCIO, the association for Cognition, Language and Communication, and Etcetera, the association for English Language and Culture. The latter, we have already had much contact with in regards to possible events. We aim to continue to nurture these relationships and want to be proactive in reaching out to our fellow associations within the Faculty of Humanities to collaborate. Additionally, we will help organize and participate in events that serve all of the associations within the faculty. Through our overarching association, ALPHA, the Faculty of Humanities at UvA strives to maintain connections between study associations and encourages collaborations. ALPHA provides funds for the activities of its member associations and often organizes large events in cooperation with its member associations, such as the New Year Gala.

Alongside cooperating with other study associations, VOS will also work and collaborate with KAT Blad, the student magazine for linguistics at the UvA. Alongside their normal content, the magazine has also published a number of blogs and articles about VOS and our travels. In addition to aiding in the advertisements of writer calls and promoting the publishing of the magazine, VOS hopes to plan a number of events in collaboration with the magazine to benefit all linguistics students, members and non-members of VOS. After a successful game night collaboration at the beginning of

this academic year we have decided to co-host one monthly, providing space for all to enjoy a fun evening and creating a platform through which the board of KAT Blad can easily reach out to students with updates and insights into the magazine.

VOS is also represented by our Chair in the Alumni circle of linguistics at UvA. The Alumni circle is invested in maintaining a tight knit community of linguists, even after graduation. They organize multiple events throughout the year, on occasion with the help of VOS. Their events — usually lectures or other linguistics-related activities — can be very interesting for VOS members and we will continue to promote them. After the success of the Linguistics Walk last year, we hope to be able to put together more combined events in association with the Alumni circle. Moreover, VOS has been asked to promote the ACLC's (Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication) guest seminars, which we are happy to do.

Outside of UvA, VOS collaborates with a number of associations representing the linguistics programs offered by universities throughout the Netherlands, namely: T.W.I.S.T. from Leiden, TW!ST from Groningen, Babel from Utrecht, and InTenS from Nijmegen. Together with these associations, VOS partakes in, among other events, the yearly Linguistics Career Day and LANGU day. It is our hope that this year we can have more contact between the associations and host more events with them so we can better connect our members to a broader linguistic community.

Aside from events, VOS may collaborate with business or associations that we feel serve our members. Currently we work with SmartBooks to provide textbooks at a discounted price. Smartbooks has improved the savings we can offer members and makes it easy to offer pick up days from us for our members' convenience. They also provide a platform through which students can resell books which we will explore further so our members can help future students. We also plan to have more contact with the student union, ASVA, as they provide a number of services and resources we feel our members may benefit from such as bike sales, legal aid, and housing advice.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARD MEMBERS

In order to achieve the aforementioned goals, each member of the board will take upon themselves a number of tasks and responsibilities in order to ensure that our members' needs are met. These will be detailed in this chapter. The duties outlined here for the board as a whole and for the individual roles are not exhaustive and tasks may be shared or delegated to other board members as deemed necessary.

The 2022-2023 VOS board consists of the following members:

CHAIR - Zoe Jensen

SECRETARY/ VICE CHAIR - Indi Braun

TREASURER - Celeste Tacconi

COMMISSARY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS - Gideon van Wijk

COMMISSARY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS - Joanna Walker

3.1 Communal Tasks

All VOS XXIII board members have the following collective tasks and responsibilities:

- Representing the association
- Being open to new ideas and/or changes from members or other persons involved
- Being available to answer any questions
- Being informed about and upholding the association's statutes
- Making the policy plan for the year
- Managing the VOS archive and keeping scripts up to date
- Ultimate responsibility for the committees, including setting them up and deciding who will chair them
- Presenting and evaluating the progress and goals of the board and committees at General Assemblies
- Organizing VOS/Board related activities and services
- Being present, as often as possible, at all of the events organized by VOS
- Promotion of VOS activities and services
- Maintaining a relationship with the linguistics department
- Recruiting board members for the year 2023-2024
- Making the board transfer as smooth as possible and setting the next board up for success

3.2 Responsibilities of the Chair

The Chair is the head of the board and is charged with keeping an overview of the entire association, ensuring the association runs smoothly. They need to remain consistently informed of the goings on within the association, so as to best serve their fellow board members, the interests of members, and the association at large. The Chair plays a facilitating and supervisory role for the rest of the board, ensuring that their fellow board members are aware of their responsibilities and have everything they need to carry these out.

Within the board, the Chair also presides over board meetings and delegates the weekly tasks to their fellow board members. It is their duty to ensure these tasks are done in a timely manner and to be a point of aid and support should the need arise. The Chair will touch base with the Treasurer regularly to have a firm understanding of the association's financial state. They should also review all scripts and whitebooks, updating them and creating new documents as required. The chair also decides who will write the policy plan. At the start of the year, the chair will sign out the old board at the Chamber of Commerce (KvK) and sign in the new board. Once a candidate board has been selected at the end of the year, the Chair must ensure the new board is properly informed, trained and confident in their new roles.

The Chair represents VOS in a number of capacities. General Assemblies are led by them, during which the chair must present the relevant documents and motions to members. They are also VOS' delegate to the board of the Alumni circle, and must attend all relevant ALPHA meetings. The Chair is also in contact with Smartbooks and organizes the textbook list before each semester.

This year, the Chair is also a chair of the Academics and Career Committee alongside Secretary, Indi Braun.

3.3 Responsibilities of the Secretary

The Secretary aids in the maintenance of an organized and efficient board. As the head of communication, they monitor the VOS email account, ensuring the inbox is up to date and orderly. It is their duty to respond to messages promptly or to notify the appropriate board member needed to respond when necessary. Other board members should be regularly informed about incoming messages regarding events, invitations, important matters, etc. by the Secretary as well.

Moreover, the Secretary is in charge of maintaining and updating the membership list, and keeping track of other member related things (e.g. sign ups for events). Through fortnightly newsletters, and other emails, the Secretary must inform the members about upcoming VOS events, updates within the association, resources, and external events that may be of interest to members.

The Secretary is responsible for taking minutes during board meetings and general assemblies, and making these available to fellow board members and other members of the association respectively. They should also ensure the VOS calendar is up to date and accurate.

This year they are also a chair of the Academics and Career Committee alongside the Chair, Zoe Jensen. In addition to the usual responsibilities, this year the Secretary also will act as Vice Chair of the association. The Vice Chair will assume the responsibilities of the Chair in the event the chair is not present or able to carry out one of their duties.

3.4 Responsibilities of the Treasurer

The Treasurer is in charge of all the money that comes in and out of VOS. They must monitor the VOS bank account and keep a detailed account of everything, giving an explanation as to why money has been made or been spent. They are also in charge of making sure the rest of the board, and all committees, are aware of the current financial state, and that they stick to their individual budgets. As such, all spending must be approved by them.

At the beginning of the academic year, the Treasurer makes a budget and presents it at the General Assembly. This year, an updated budget and provisional realization will be created by the Treasurer and shared mid year during another General Assembly to provide an additional insight as to how the association is utilizing its funds. Finally, at the end of the year, at the final General Assembly, the Treasurer will present the original budget as compared to a final realization and annual financial report. Before each General Assembly the Treasurer must send any budget related documents to the supervisory board (KasCo) for approval and meet with them before they can be presented.

The Treasurer is also tasked with staying up to date on the subsidies available to the association and their deadlines. If the association wishes to utilize one of these subsidies, the Treasurer will be the one to apply for it. As a result, the Treasurer must accompany the Chair to all ALPHA meetings.

This year the Treasurer will work alongside the Commissary of External Affairs, Joanna Walker, on the Study Trip Committee to supervise travel expenses and ensure the trips remain within their allotted budgets.

3.5 Responsibilities of the Commissary of Internal Affairs

The main responsibilities of the Commissary of Internal Affairs include the promotion of VOS activities and events and the maintenance of the association's online presence. This includes regularly updating and/or creating content for our website, Instagram, Facebook, Discord, and LinkedIn. This year the Internal Affairs person has also formed a WhatsApp group exclusively for VOS members so we may more easily share information, give announcements, and interact with members in a more casual way.

The Commissary of Internal Affairs will co-chair the Activity Committee, alongside the Commissary of External Affairs, Joanna Walker.

3.6 Responsibilities of the Commissary of External Affairs

The Commissary of External Affairs is largely tasked with acquisition, in addition to organizing and participating in collaborations with other associations. For more information regarding our collaborations refer to Section 2.3. Among other things, this means keeping contact with the other associations, aiding in the planning of events and/or activities, and relaying information between the board of VOS and the other boards. In regards to acquisitions, the Commissary of External Affairs contacts people and institutions independent of the university for affairs concerning events or activities organized by VOS. They may also seek out other opportunities for the association and its members such as discounts on study related material or searching for external events that may be enriching for members.

At the beginning of the year the Commissary of External Affairs leads the first contact between the association and first year students by searching for emerging group chats across platforms and promoting the association. They will also have a hand in the promotion of events throughout the year, namely those in collaboration with other parties.

Given their focus on outreach, this year the Commissary of External Affairs will co-chair the Activity and Study Trip Committees, alongside Commissary of Internal Affairs, Gideon van Wijk, and Treasurer, Celeste Tacconi respectively. In the event of the Secretary's absence, the Commissary of External Affairs will assume the responsibility of taking minutes during meetings.

4. EVENTS

Throughout the year, VOS commits to holding events to benefit its members and the linguistic community. These include events that will broaden knowledge related to the field of linguistics, but also ones that offer a way to connect and meet fellow members in an inclusive space. Many of the events we hope to host this year are outlined below.

4.1 General Assemblies

Each year the board traditionally hosts at least two General Assemblies. The first one will occur at the beginning of the academic year, during which the board will present their budget, policy plan, and goals for the year. At the end of the year, another General Assembly will be called to reflect on the achievement of the board's goals and policies, share the realization of the budget alongside the annual financial report, and to vote in the next board of VOS. Other General Assemblies may be called throughout the year for a variety of reasons, and we plan to have at least one additional one mid year to give an update on the association's (financial) situation. These summaries of the primary goals of the assemblies outlined above are not exhaustive and members are entitled to a minimum two week notice that includes a full agenda before any General Assembly is convened. Any additional documents pertinent to the assembly will be sent to members no later than one week before.

All members are welcome to join General Assemblies and are entitled to the right to vote on and approve, among other things, the budget, its realization, the policy plan, and any other motions put forth by the board or by other members. If a member wishes to vote but is unable to attend the General Assembly, they can contact the Secretary before the event and authorize another member to vote on their behalf.

4.2 Social Events

VOS strives to create a sense of community among its members, and works towards this goal by planning, organizing, and executing social VOS activities, excursions, and small parties. As an association we want to provide a variety of events that we hope will account for the diverse interests of our members-- with a particular focus this year on creating spaces that don't involve alcohol for our members who may not drink or like bar environments. In addition we hope to be able to show members the wonders of the Netherlands outside of Amsterdam by organizing some activities across the country.

Like many other study associations, VOS has a long tradition of hosting regular borrels where members can meet, get to know each other, and most importantly have fun! This regular contact helps solidify the community within VOS and provides an opportunity for budding linguists of all levels to share ideas and make connections. We will continue this tradition and plan to host a borrel every other week.

This year we will host and collaborate on a number of larger parties. Our first endeavor is the Humanities Halloween party hosted by SCIO, Helios, and Etcetera, in association with ASVA. Towards the beginning of the second semester, we plan to collaborate with ALPHA on their annual New Year's Gala for the humanities as well. Last year VOS XXII introduced a new themed, end of the year party exclusively for members. We hope to host a similar VOS Gala at the end of this academic year as well to celebrate our students' hard work throughout the year.

Besides these events, each year the Activity Committee (see Section 5.3), organizes a few miscellaneous activities, many of which we will likely do again. In the past these have included movie nights, pub quizzes, day trips to cities around the country, museum visits, ice skating, and trips to theme parks to name a few. This year we will also organize the aforementioned monthly game nights with KAT Blad to provide a regular, non-bar related, event for members.

4.3 Academic Events

VOS is, however, also a *study* association and as such we want to aid our members in their studies where possible and provide opportunities to expand their knowledge of linguistics. Before each exam week we will provide a study space for members to get work done in a productive and collaborative environment. Additionally, this year we also hope to plan exam de-stress events during the exam weeks where students can either finish up their work for the week or take part in a calm activity to help ease their minds before the next block.

Language Cafés, in which a student gives a presentation about a language they know or are learning, have become a cornerstone of the association. These presentations allow members to learn about each others' linguistic backgrounds and give insight into a variety of the world's languages, many of which are not touched upon in classes. We believe this form of membership participation is extremely valuable and would like to plan as many language cafés as possible this year.

With the introduction of the Academics and Career Committee by VOS XXII, we have a new body through which more academically focused events can be arranged. The committee will be contacting professors throughout the Netherlands to give guest lectures on a wide range of topics within linguistics. A few information nights hosted by this committee are also in the works, namely one on Masters programs within UvA and some general information about programs around the world. In addition, the Academics and Career Committee may set up routes for students to receive additional help with their studies such as by offering proofreading services, and organizing more general career oriented events, for example CV seminars.

4.4 TWeekend

TWeekend is VOS' annual camping trip meant as an introduction for first year students to get to know each other and other members. The weekend is a bonding experience for linguistics students, full of games and activities, and explores a part of the Netherlands that might not otherwise be visited. This year is particularly exciting as it will be our first TWeekend since 2019! This trip will be planned by the Study Trip Committee (for more information about this committee see Section 5.4).

4.5 Study Trip

Every year, VOS' Study Trip Committee also organizes a study trip abroad. This trip aims to explore a new country and its culture, and to use the opportunity to find unique linguistic opportunities while there. This may include going to a conference related to (sign language) linguistics or visiting the city's university and planning an activity with their language(s) or linguistics department, as has been done in previous years. We anticipate our study trip will take place during the spring break of May 2023. The trip will be filled with academic enrichment and good times to be had. In the past we have gone to Belgium, Sweden, Italy, and even Brazil!

4.6 Linguistics Career Day & LANGU Day

These events are planned and hosted in association with all of the linguistics study associations throughout the Netherlands: T.W.I.S.T. (Leiden), TW!ST (Groningen), Babel (Utrecht), and InTenS (Nijmegen). We look forward to this yearly collaboration and are excited to introduce you to linguists across the country.

LANGU Day is typically a social event in which students from these associations can meet and get to know each other through fun, social activities. Linguistic Career Day, on the other hand, is more academically focused and is made to show students in the linguistics department what it is like after graduation in the field. This usually includes guest speakers from each of the participating universities in addition to career related workshops among other study related activities.

The role for VOS in preparation of the career and LANGU day will be assigned during the first meetings with the other representatives. The VOS board representative this year will be our External Affairs person, Joanna Walker.

5. COMMITTEES

5.1 General Information

VOS forms a number of committees each year to encourage higher levels of member participation within the association as they are able to directly affect the activities of the association. This year our committees are Academics and Career, Activity, and Study Trip.

The board of a committee is structured in the same way as the general board; it must contain a Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. This year two board members will serve as co-chairs of each committee, with one also taking on treasurer duties, in order to establish a good line of communication between the board and committee and to make sure the committee is aware of its financial status. Other members will be general committee members, though each committee may assign additional specific roles should they choose to do so (i.e. acquisition). The board members involved in the committee will take on a supervisory role, taking on an equal workload to that of each committee member, but allowing the non-board members to voice their ideas and have influence over decisions made within the committee. In this way, we intend to create an equal environment in which the association is led by its members.

5.2 Academics and Career Committee

The Academics and Career Committee will plan linguistics and career-focused events; such as Language Cafés, guest lectures, study sessions, and career workshops. Some of the goals of this committee are to look at “Life after Linguistics,” and help students prepare for life in graduate school or the workforce, as well as plan fun linguistics and language related events. This committee will meet weekly. This year, the Academics and Career Committee will be chaired by Chair of the board, Zoe Jensen, and Secretary, Indi Braun. The roles of the members will be determined at the first meeting.

This year’s Academic and Career Committee is made up of the following members:

- Zoe Jensen (Co-chair, Treasurer)
- Indi Braun (Co-chair)
- Hannah Pippin
- Lauren Flemming
- Manya Walavalkar
- Freya Lim
- Kyle Fingerhut

5.3 Activity Committee

The Activity Committee is responsible for planning, organizing, and executing a number of VOS activities and events. Activity Committee members will be encouraged to exercise their creativity and come up with a variety of fun events for our members. They are also charged with organizing the end of the year gala. The committee will meet weekly. This year, the Activity Committee will be chaired by Commissary of Internal Affairs, Gideon van Wijk, and Commissary of External Affairs of the board, Joanna Walker. The roles of the members will be determined at the first meeting.

This year’s Activity Committee is made up of the following members:

- Gideon van Wijk (Co-chair, Treasurer)
- Joanna Walker (Co-chair)
- Manya Walavalkar
- Toral Seth
- Ella Groen
- Brandy Koenig

5.4 Study Trip Committee

The Study Trip Committee organizes our two primary trips during the year. First the committee will focus on planning a weekend getaway to somewhere in the Netherlands which will constitute our orientation weekend, TWeekend. Their duties include, but are not limited to, creating a budget, planning the event and its activities, and making necessary arrangements. Similarly they will also, of course, plan the study trip. Members will work together to plan the location, activities, finances, accommodation, transportation, and more. Finances will be organized in combination with funds raised by VOS directly as well as ALPHA and other parties after proposing the academic activities on the excursion. Both of these events will have a limited attendance, but members of this committee have guaranteed admission to both, if they so choose.

The committee will meet at least once weekly, though this may increase as the trips draw near. This year, the Activity Committee will be chaired by Treasurer, Celeste Tacconi, and Commissary of External Affairs, Joanna Walker. The roles of the members will be determined at the first meeting.

This year's Study Trip Committee is made up of the following members:

- Celeste Tacconi (Co-chair, Treasurer)
- Joanna Walker (Co-chair)
- Bee Humięcka
- Emily de Boer
- Joe Wellington
- Ella Groen

6. SOCIAL SAFETY

6.1 Social Safety Policy

VOS maintains a zero-tolerance policy on sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination of any sort. We strive to nurture safe environments for all of our members at all of our events. We recognise, however, that this is not enough. We aim to make every attempt to raise awareness and support our members who may experience any of these. Our board will all receive training through Our Bodies, Our Voice to learn how we as student leaders can best create an inclusive, safe culture within our association and act as trusted points-of-contact for any member who needs it. In addition, we hope to organize a workshop open to all members regarding harassment in order to ensure members help to create the inclusive and safe culture we desire VOS to embody.

This year we will create a formal procedure outlining how different situations will be dealt with by the association. A precise handling procedure will be established to ensure that if unsafe situations occur, students can be confident they are being handled appropriately. This document will also include relevant resources internal and external to the university. We have already started the process of creating such a social safety policy, but in order to ensure it is accurate, comprehensive, and inclusive we did not want to rush to make it before the first General Assembly. Given the incredible importance of a social safety policy we are doing everything in our power to get it ready for your approval as soon as possible. In the meantime we are consulting the policies of other student and study associations, attending social safety workshops, and having our plans looked over by ALPHA, ASVA, and our own supervisory board. A General Assembly will be convened when the social safety policy is complete to share it with members so it can be voted in and formally enacted.

Until the policy is voted in, students may reach out to the trust persons (see Section 6.2) or any board member if an unsafe situation or unwanted behavior occurs. In the unfortunate case this happens, we will work with you to handle the situation and direct you to appropriate resources.

6.2 Trust Persons

The trust persons are designated points of contact for members who may struggle with an especially difficult experience, and who would like to talk to someone, learn about resources, and be supported as they process the situation. The trust person's role is to offer a listening, non-judgemental ear, provide a comfortable space to help our members with any issues they have, and aid them in getting any support they may need. They will be well-versed in, and always refer members to, any resources available to help them. Any communication with a trust person is absolutely confidential and neither the content of the conversations nor the identity of the person approaching them will be revealed to anyone at any point in time, except in the case of the person having suicidal thoughts, in which case the trust person will put them in contact with a psychologist for their own well-being.

A trust person must also remain aware of the people present in VOS spaces (this includes members, non-member students, and members of the general public), both in public and at the university, and stay alert to presumptuous, persuasive or unusual behavior of the members of that space. They will be available at all times to members, whether in person at events or via the contact information below. Members will be made aware and reminded often of the opportunity to contact the trust persons.

In the year 2022-2023, the trust persons will be Zoe Jensen, Gideon van Wijk, and a member of our supervisory board, Lauren Flemming. Zoe can be reached via phone/WhatsApp (+31 614420915), email (zoejensen113@gmail.com), or social media (Instagram: @Wednesday_113). Gideon can be reached via phone (+31 651909363), WhatsApp (+61 422434487), email (GideonvanWijk@protonmail.ch), or social media (Instagram: @vanwijkgideon). Lauren can be reached via phone/WhatsApp (+31 642186687), email (lajflemming@gmail.com), or social media (Instagram: @lajflemming). The trust persons, and the way they operate, may be updated upon the approval of the aforementioned Social Safety Policy if needed to better fit the new framework.

6.3 Mental Health Support

Mental health support is an issue that has become increasingly important to address. The COVID-19 pandemic has made clearer than ever our members' need for additional mental health support. We recognise that a major barrier to this is accessibility. We believe that for our members to succeed, they need an association that will support them and their mental health. To try to solve this, our trust persons and all board members will be well versed in the resources available to students. They will be accessible to members at all times and capable of providing support, advice, and referring them to the correct resources for any additional support. These resources will also be made readily available on the VOS website.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

7.1 Supervisory Board (KasCo)

The KasCo serves as a supervisory and advisory board to the Board of VOS. We wish to work along them closely to ensure the board is working efficiently and carrying out its goals and policies outlined here. The supervisory Board will supervise the accountancy of the Treasurer at multiple points throughout the year- at minimum before each General Assembly in which a budget or realization is presented. They will meet semi-regularly with the chair individually and the board as a whole.

In the year 2022-2023, this board will consist of Lauren Flemming (Chair, VOS XXII) and Nilansha Dargan (Commissary of External Affairs, VOS XXII).

7.2 Internal Improvements

The board of VOS XXII took the initiative to rebrand the association in order to signal a new post pandemic era and to make many necessary updates to VOS' image and online presence. This year, it is the Chair's goal to work with the rest of VOS XXIII to make a number of internal adjustments and improvements so the inner workings of the associations are updated to match the association's new external image. Many of these improvements will not directly affect members, instead they will focus on the creation of clear and effective scripts and whitebooks for this board and all future boards to follow in order to properly document the activities and duties of the association. Doing so will improve the board transition process for new board members and make transitions, annual events, and board roles clearer which we hope means future members get a more consistent and enjoyable member experience. This also is likely to include changing the platform that hosts the VOS website to create an interface that is easier to update and add additional information to. Improving the ability to easily update the website ensures that members can feel confident that the information present is up to date and accurate for years to come.

Alongside this we want to increase transparency between the board and its members. This includes making the VOS statutes, our policy plan, and our budget readily available on our website. This ensures the board is kept accountable. In addition, in line with our plans to ensure a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment, we will create a member code of conduct which students will have to agree to when signing up to become members. Moreover, the statutes of the association have not been updated since the association was formed in 1999. The current Chair would like to get in touch with a number of previous Chairs to discuss the possibility of amending these to better reflect current traditions and make some general adjustments (i.e. adjusting the currency mentioned from Dutch Guilders to Euros).

The scripts and whitebooks outlining the tasks of each board member and detailing VOS' traditions and activities, are informal and intended for internal organizational purposes. As a result, they will be approved by the current board and supervisory board. However, documents affecting the structure of the organization and its membership will be approved by the membership at a General Assembly.

7.3 COVID-19

While life in the Netherlands has largely returned to normal since the pandemic, we are not yet certain if this will remain the case. This year VOS plans to continue as it did before the pandemic, however should COVID-19 return we have plans in place to ensure as smooth a transition as possible in adjusting events and activities to the possible restrictions. In the event of any restrictions, we will strictly follow the guidelines dictated by the Dutch government and the University of Amsterdam. As a board, we reserve the right to immediately cease all in-person events and revert to a fully online schedule if we deem it unsafe to continue and to impose additional guidelines if we feel they are necessary for the health and safety of our members.