

De Montfort Students' Union

IMPACT REPORT

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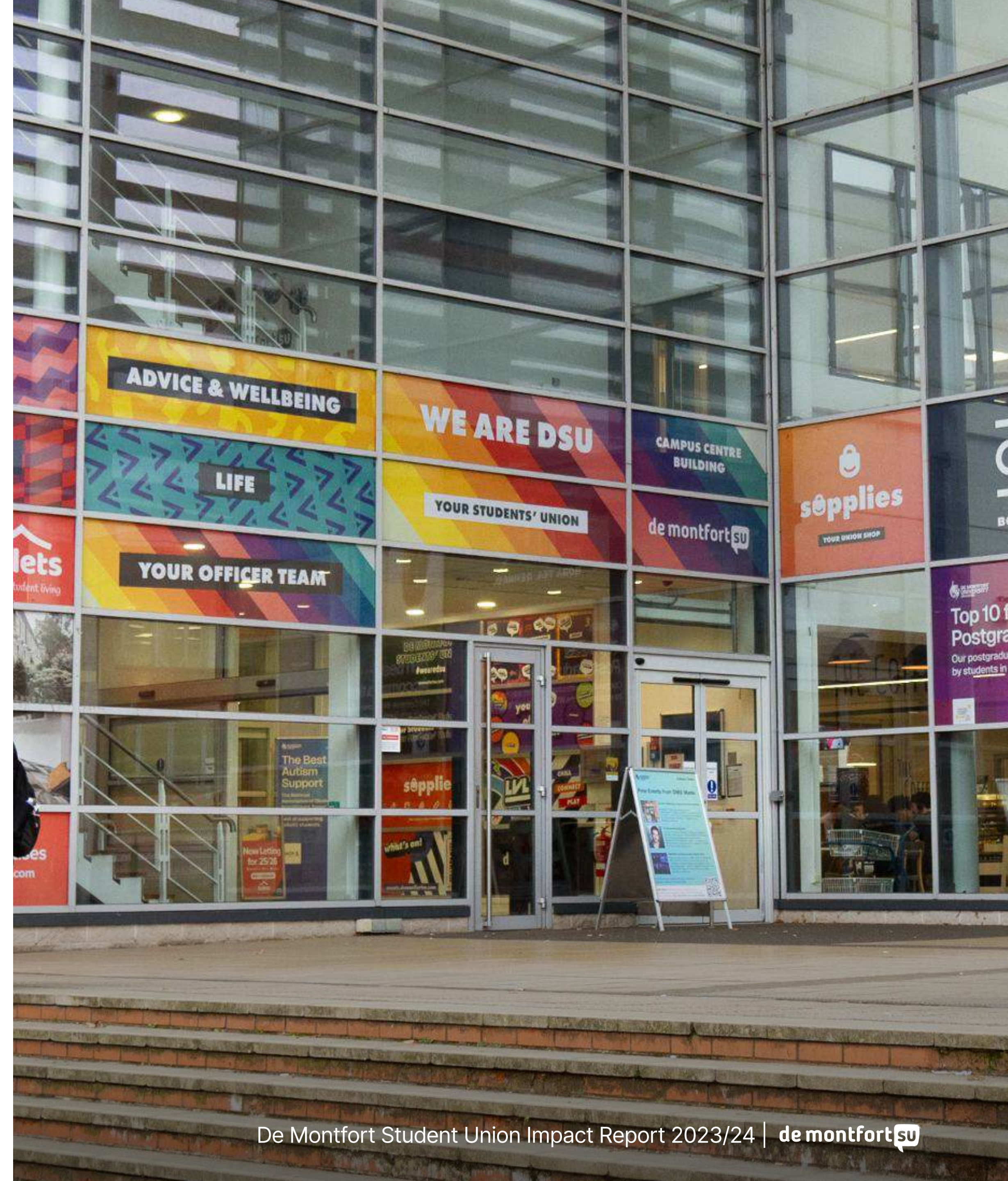
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Introduction

We are De Montfort University Students' Union, DSU for short, a student-led organisation that works for the interests and needs of our student members. While a separate charity and legal entity from DMU, we exist cooperatively and in partnership with the university as its designated student representative body.

Our union's membership is every current student studying at De Montfort, and annually they elect five full-time and seven part-time representatives. Some sit on our Trustee Board and DMU's Board of Governors and many attend key university meetings ensuring the voice of students is heard.

Every student is automatically a member of their Students' Union when they join DMU. You meet us at our Welcome Fairs and can find us in the Campus Centre!





**Sarah
Bradley**
CEO, DSU

As CEO, it's my honour to introduce you to our annual Impact Report which outlines key activities, achievements, challenges and finances for the academic year 23/24. I couldn't be prouder to lead this charity, which over the last few years has flourished into a professional and truly student-focused organisation.

Each and every one of the staff at DSU support students daily through their work and as an employer we proudly take care of our people which includes a growing number of student staff.

Innovative, fun, realistic and focused, this report will demonstrate to you what we do with our funding, time and resources through the year. You will read updates from each of our teams; from our student-facing services to those behind the scenes.



For many students, you meet us first at Welcome Festival, where we capture your attention with our fairs, freebies and events throughout the beginning of your journey at DMU.

When things settle, we meet many students when they access our free and independent advice and support services. You may join a club, society or sports club where you'll meet our Opportunities team, or maybe along the way you became a Course Rep or ran for an elected role, attended Student Council to set our direction and met our Voice team.

Perhaps you ran your own event, meeting our exceptional Commercial and Venues teams, or needed some help with your student group finances and were helped by Central Services.



We collaborate always with DMU and are a proud, integral part of this university community, housed in the Campus Centre building. I hope you enjoy this report and am looking forward to seeing what more we can do for students next academic year!

The background of the slide is a photograph of a group of students sitting on a modern staircase with colorful steps in shades of blue, green, yellow, and red. A rainbow flag is visible on the right side of the stairs. The image is slightly faded to make the text stand out. The text '01' is positioned on the left side of a white rectangular box with rounded corners, which is set against a dark blue background.

01

Student Officers

Executive Officers

Each year, DSU student members elect five full-time Officers to represent them across the University. These Officers also sit on DSU Trustee Board as Trustee and company directors, ensuring that charitable activity and funding is directed towards students. Two of your Officers also sit on DMU Board of Governors, representing student interest at the highest levels across the university.

Executive Officers, sometimes called Sabbatical Officers in other universities, are how members can be reassured that their union is run democratically and with the needs of students at the heart of what we do.

Our officers are supported by the DSU staff team throughout the academic year to achieve projects, consider feedback at student council and talk with the university about key matters that affect students.

The 2023/24 academic year saw multiple projects and campaigns delivered by your Executive Officers., discussed further in the report.

You can become a paid full-time Officer by running in our annual elections!



Destiny Mazaiwana

Academic Executive Officer



Priya Karasala

Student Opportunities and Engagement Exec Officer



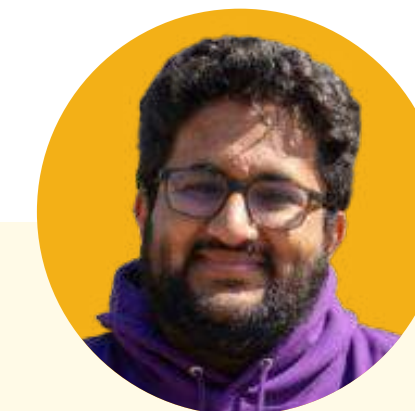
Komal Shehzadi

Equality and Diversity Executive Officer



Fluffy Adewola

Welfare Executive Officer



Amir Iqbal

Union Development Executive Officer

01 GRADUATION COSTS

Through Amir Iqbal's research as the Union Development Executive Officer, the Students' Union has taken significant steps to address the costs associated with graduations at DMU, including gowns, guest tickets, and more. This initiative garnered remarkable support, with 300 students participating in Amir's Go Out and Talk activity, leading to a motion that passed with a majority at the final Student Council meeting of the 2023/2024 academic year. Following a strong mandate from the Student Council, our new Union Development Officer will continue these crucial conversations with the university to push for improved graduation costs.

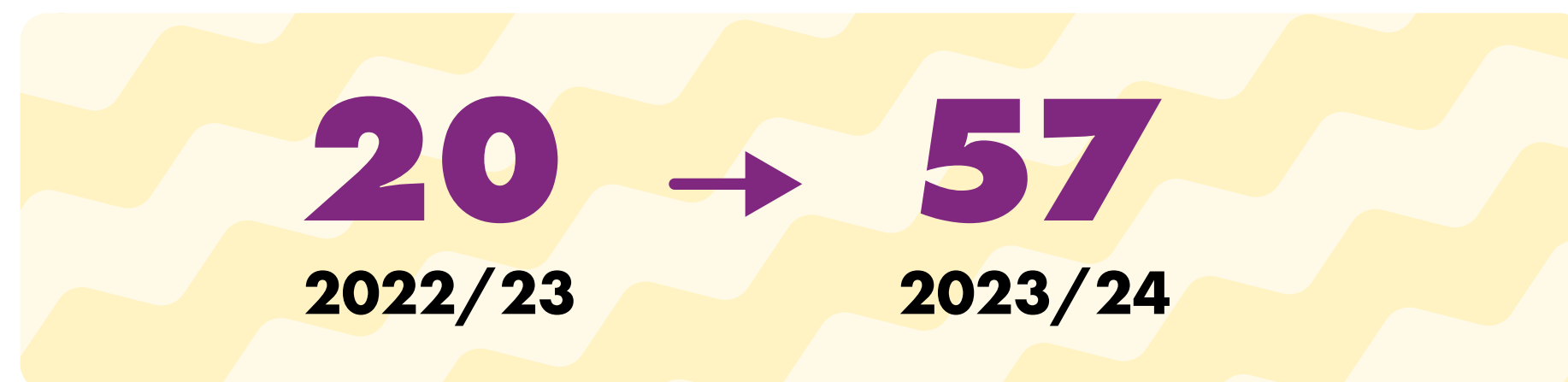
02 THE BREAKFAST PROJECT

Following the successful Free Breakfast scheme lead by the 2022/2023 Executive Officer Team. Fluffy Adewola, our 2023/2024 Welfare Executive Officer, with the support of all officers, has been focused on enhancing student support through the Breakfast Project. Engaging in ongoing discussions with the University, the officer team are committed to ensuring continued accessibility for students amid the cost-of-living crisis. The officers have spoken with 260 students to gather feedback and insights on available options on campus. This proactive outreach will continue and be led on in the 2024/2025 academic year and highlights the Welfare Officers dedication to addressing student needs and making a tangible impact in this challenging financial climate.



03 ROOM BOOKINGS

Booking space when you're in a club or society is essential, so Gurupriya Karasala, your Opportunities & Engagement Officer, in collaboration with the DSU Opportunities team made significant improvements to streamline the room booking process for societies. This enhanced student accessibility and enriched the experience for society committee members. As a result bookings went from 20 to 57 last year in LVL1



04 NON ATTENDANCE

Non-attendance isn't a simple subject, and your Students' Union wanted to be part of the best, most impactful and supportive solution. So, Destiny Mazaiwana, Academic Executive Officer facilitated discussions with the University regarding issues of non-attendance in academic settings and explored strategies for improvement through focus groups with the support of the Liberation Officers.



05 LIGHT THE NIGHT

Nighttime safety is essential in a city-based campus, and moving to a new country or attending university for the first time can be intimidating without support. So, Komal Shahzadi, our Equality and Diversity Officer, supported the annual "Light the Night" joint campaign with DMU, where students participated in a lantern-lit walk through the DMU campus and Leicester City Centre to enhance awareness of safety on campus which saw 40 students attend and show their support.



06 ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK QUALITY

Following feedback from Course Representatives and Student Council Destiny, Academic Executive Officer, presented feedback and represented student voices in the Assessment and Feedback policy review conducted by DMU. Your SU held the university to account on the level of feedback produced in timely manner for students, this was received well with improvements planned for future years.

07 ACCOMMODATION FORUM

Having accommodation that matches their ambition is essential for students and Komal Shahzadi ran an accommodation forum to understand the challenges students face. Bede Hall is an accommodation run by DMU and the 20 students who attended could express their views and felt that they were heard. Komal will be continuing to develop the improvements into the next academic year.

Liberation Officers

Each year, student members vote for **seven part-time Officers** who represent a diverse range of communities, from marginalized groups to specific academic interests.

The Liberation Officer role is a vital position within the university, focused on representing and amplifying the voices of underrepresented communities among the student body. Elected by their peers, these officers collaborate with self-identifying students, other Liberation Officers, and the Equality and Diversity Executive Officer to ensure that diverse perspectives are included in university decision-making processes.

Their work emphasises on enhancing the student experience through equity, diversity, and inclusion, as they gather feedback, organise initiatives, and actively engage in discussions that advocate for the needs of their communities.

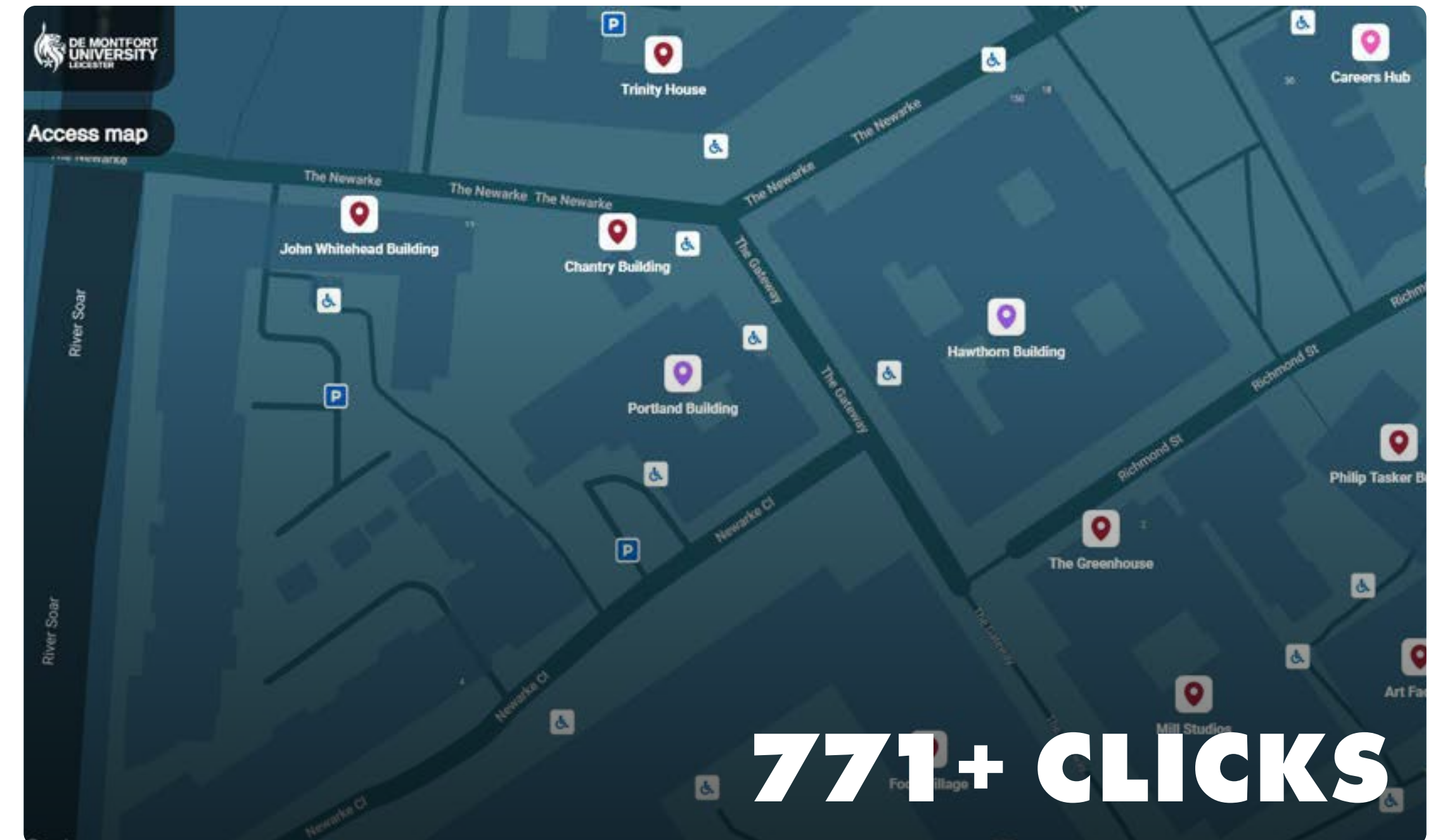
In the 2023/24 academic year, the elected part-time Liberation Officers delivered an impressive six projects and campaigns, making a remarkable 500% increase in outreach compared to the previous year. This surge in activity highlights the critical role these Officers play in advocating for their communities and addressing their unique needs.



01 ACCESSIBLE CAMPUS MAP

Nerissa Doran, the Disabled Students' Liberation Officer, made significant strides promoting inclusivity through her advocacy for an updated, accessible campus map. This map highlights entrances with ramped, accessible, or single-level access and details essential building features like accessible toilets and assistive listening devices.

The map has reached 771 students through clicks on the DSU website and over 300 students through 'Go Out and Talk' activities, demonstrating a clear demand for accessible resources. Users can customise the map to show or hide various locations such as faculties, halls, student support services and transport options, navigating campus more effectively.



02 DE-STRESS RE-FRESH MOVIE NIGHT

Disabled Students' Liberation Office, Nerissa, also organised a sold-out movie night for students during the final exam and assessment season, addressing feedback regarding exam-related stress. Collaborating with the DSU Advice team, the event provided entertainment and essential signposting materials for students to access additional support if needed.

A total of 100 student tickets were sold, highlighting its impact on fostering community and promoting mental well-being during a challenging academic period.



03 GLOBAL PANTRY

BAME Students' Liberation Officer, Muhammad Akbar Khan, conducted research to identify suitable supermarkets and accessible grocery stores that offer a diverse range of inclusive products. This information was compiled into the Global Pantry leaflet, made available to students.

A total of 200 leaflets were distributed, effectively reaching a significant number of students and enhancing their access to culturally relevant and inclusive grocery options. This initiative supports diverse dietary needs and fosters a greater sense of community and belonging among BAME students.



04 STITCH AND B*TCH: WOMEN MEET UPS

Women's Liberation Officer, Aria Dudhia, organised a series of networking craft activities aimed at women-identifying students on campus, fostering a supportive environment and exploration of their university experiences.

65 women actively participated in creating stitch squares for a collective tapestry, which was displayed during DMU's International Women's Day as a showcase. This initiative facilitated community building among participants and highlighted the diverse experiences of women across the globe, underscoring the significant impact of student involvement in promoting solidarity and awareness. You can see this tapestry near the Student Hub of the DSU building.



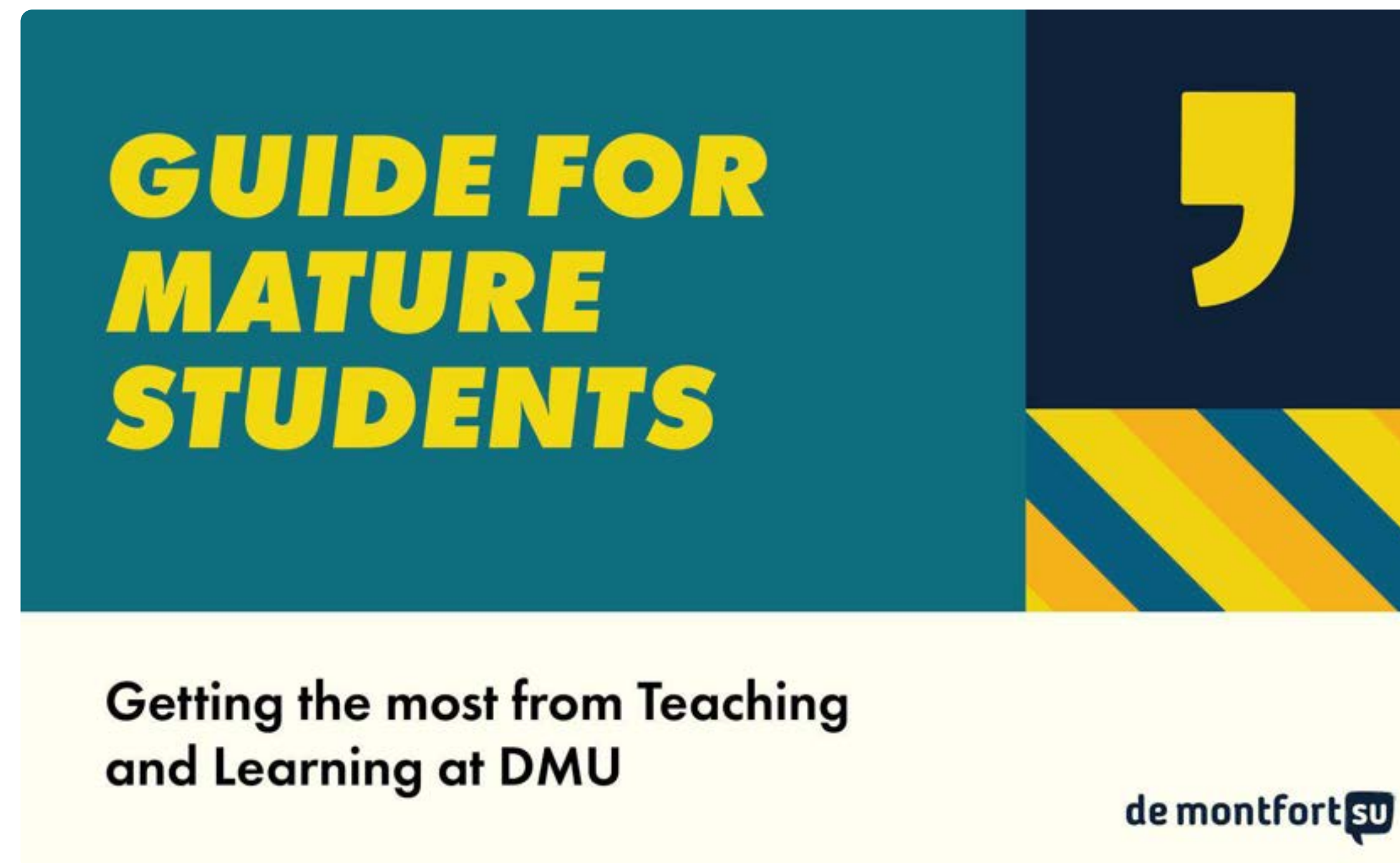
03 MATURE STUDENTS GUIDE

Mature Students' Liberation Officer, Toni Fazaeli, hosted six regular mature student catch ups at DSU and created a space for mature students to communicate and share their views on their university experience. She then collaborated with the DMU Student Learning Teaching Consultants and created a 'Mature Students Guide' for staff and students to showcase the support and activity available for mature students. This was presented at the Student Experience Action Group, a collaborative student and DMU space, in agreement to implement the guide to academics. You can access this via the [DSU Website](#) and is incorporated into Base Camp to support with Mature Students Inductions.

04 POSTGRADUATE 'MONEY TALKS' AND NEW SOCIETY

Postgraduate Students Liberation Officer, Judith Olurankinse, organised an event focused on financial management and career progression for postgraduate students. In collaboration with the DMU Careers and Alumni team, the event provided a valuable networking opportunity to explore the resources and support available at DMU for managing finances and advancing careers.

With 74% of tickets sold, the event successfully engaged a significant number of Postgraduate students. Judith also worked with the DSU Opportunities team to launch the new Postgraduate Society to ensure postgrads have a place to network and socialise at DMU.



The background of the slide is a photograph of a modern staircase with steps in various colors (blue, green, yellow, red). Several young people are sitting on the stairs. In the foreground, the legs and lower bodies of three people are visible: one in light blue jeans, one in a leopard print skirt, and one in grey pants. In the background, the faces of three young women are visible, looking towards the camera. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the number '02'. A white rounded rectangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the word 'Memberships' in a bold, black, stylized font.

02

Memberships

Voice

The Student Voice team within DSU facilitates the democratic academic representation of DMU students.

Student members are encouraged to engage in activities that promote advocacy for change, such as voting, debating, and seeking leadership positions. Initiatives like Course Reps, Student Council, Faculty Lead Representatives, Liberation Officers, and the Student Leadership Elections provide platforms for students to become active leaders.

The Student Voice Team aims to empower all students and emerging student leaders to make meaningful contributions to campus life, benefiting both current students and future generations.

Unions are member-run organisations, and DSU is no different. This means Student Voice is at the heart of all our decisions. Your feedback to the university has changed processes and outcomes for students in your whole year group and beyond.



Key Projects

01

INCREASE IN ELECTIONS

The 2024 Student's Union Elections saw a total of 5,022 individual votes, with 22,897 votes cast in total across all positions.

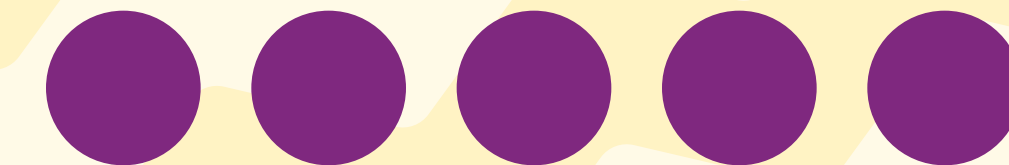
There were 12 positions up for election; 5 full-time Executive Officer roles, and 7 part-time Liberation Officer roles. 36 students stood as candidates across these roles in total.

The number of individual students voting in the 2024 elections has increased by 21% compared to the 2023 turnout of 4,167, and a 60% increase compared to the 2022 voter turnout of 3,131

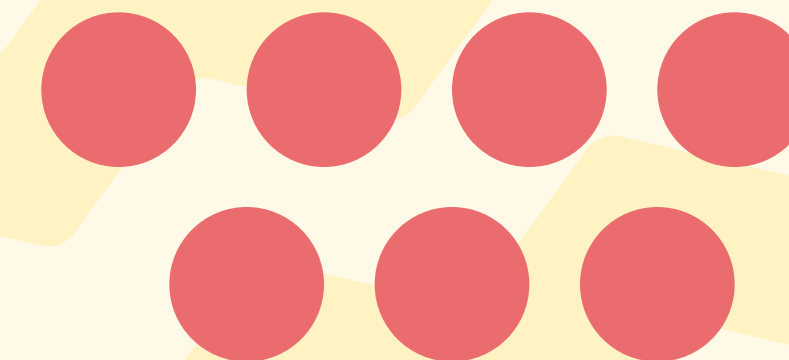
5,022
Individual votes

22,897
votes cast in total
across all positions.

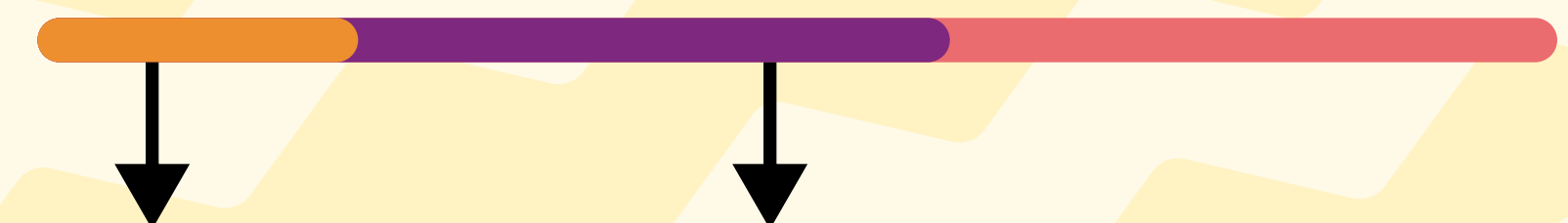
**5 full-time
exec officers**



**7 part-time
liberation officers**



Voters in 2024



**21% more voters
compared to
2023**

**60% more voters
compared to
2022**

03

STUDENT COUNCIL AND SCRUTINY PANEL

The Voice team successfully launched a new structure and layout for Student Council. Scrutiny Panel was also established this year, with 6 members elected during the first Student Council meeting of the academic year. These elected members provided essential direction and clarity to the 12 elected Officers regarding their manifesto projects and objectives and ensure we're truly student-led in our representation activities.

04

NEW FACULTY LEAD REPRESENTATIVES

We introduced the new Faculty Lead Representative positions, elected during the Student Leadership Elections ready to take on their positions as of the next academic year. These roles allow Course Reps a place to feed into and make things easier for the university and DSU to collate feedback and apply student voice to key faculty meetings.



Impact

STUDENT COUNCIL

Following the launch of a new structure and layout for the Student Council it resulted in a remarkable 158% increase in engagement compared to the previous year. Over the course of the academic year, a total of 5 motions were presented, addressing topics such as the Israel-Palestine Conflict, health and safety training for societies, the honorarium payment for Liberation Officers, a reduced timeline for Student Leadership Elections, and a mandate regarding graduation costs.

HAPPIER COURSE REPS:

Increase of 88% in Course Reps rolling over to the 2024/2025 academic year compared to the previous year, as well as a new analysis capturing feedback from the 2023/2024 academic year highlighting a 4.3 out of 5 star average rating of satisfaction of their Course Rep experience.

158%

Increase in engagement

88%

**Increase in Course Reps
Rolling over to 2024/25**



**4.3 out of 5 star average
rating of satisfaction**



Challenges & Strategic Objectives

Progress towards strategic objectives

2024/25

IMPROVEMENTS FOR COURSE REP RECRUITMENT:

With the change in academic framework to Block Teaching and intakes scattered throughout the academic year including October, January, April and May intakes, this caused understandable barriers to course rep recruitment. We purposefully avoid 'tokenistic' Student Voice, where a student is added to a meeting without feeling adequately prepped and ready to feed in, so quality of candidates who understand the role is important, moving forward into the next academic year we're adjusting how we recruit in line with new frameworks.

EVEN MORE STUDENT LED PROJECTS

The increase in student led projects and activities such as Student Council highlights, we are well on the way of achieving strategic objectives by empowering our student leaders to strive for positive change. The positive change from these projects including the DMU Accessible Campus map and the Global pantry highlights the focus of belonging and inclusivity to ensure underrepresented students feel seen within union outputs.

The increase in election activity also provides insight into the strategic objectives of relevant visible, memorable experiences. As well as creating new opportunities such as the new Faculty Lead representative role for students.



Opportunities

The Student Opportunities team at DSU plays a vital role in providing diverse opportunities to enhance the university experience and foster personal development for students.

Student life is not simply academia and support, it's a varied and rich platform in which students take steps to build ever-lasting connections, memories and skills for their next steps. Often, our students commute, have other responsibilities or struggle to make friends – their Students' Union helps them with that.

Through our support of student groups and projects, we aim to offer a variety of opportunities for students to pursue their interests beyond academics. Our team is instrumental in enriching the student experience, promoting personal and professional growth, and cultivating a vibrant and inclusive campus community.

Your university experience isn't just about your coursework. You can make friends for life by joining clubs, societies and one-off activities with people who share similar interests.



Key Projects

01

DSU CELEBRATES 2024

DSU Celebrates was bigger and better this year with 13 awards given out to students, and the reintroduction of an event livestream with Demon Media so family and friends could celebrate from further afield.



02

ACADEMIC SOCIETIES

Getting together and making friends on your course is instrumental in having a great university experience. So, DSU launched a project to have a society to cover every course offered at DMU. This could mean we have a mix of courses under the banner of one large society, or students may want something more bespoke – we will continue to adapt as we go. Phase two of this will expand on this further to ensure each course has a primary, secondary and tertiary society linked to it.

DSU is building good links with academics across the university to highlight the benefits to both staff and students.

03

COLLABORATION

There are so many opportunities and activities happening across campus, it can be difficult to know where to look. This year we have developed relationships with teams such as DMU Careers and DMU Public Engagement. This work has led to an increased involvement in volunteering and careers fairs, as well as an agreement to advertise all volunteering opportunities on the same platform.

This collaborative approach streamlines communication and ensures that students can easily access and benefit from the wealth of opportunities available, fostering a more connected and enriching university experience."

Impact

STUDENTS INVOLVED IN SPORTS CLUBS AND SOCIETIES



10.3% decrease

We think a significant reason for the decrease has been reduced staffing within the team and therefore reduced contact time and support for student groups over the last 18 months.

Challenges & Strategic Objectives

POST-PANDEMIC STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Post-pandemic, engagement in volunteering across university has dropped, and DMU is not immune. Volunteering has so many benefits for the community and the volunteer so, to meet this challenge head on, DSU is reintroducing volunteering opportunities for students through the Volunteer Brokerage platform in the 2024-2025 academic year. Additionally, we seek to highlight the broader advantages of volunteering for students as they prepare for their careers after university. We are also focused on revitalising student-led volunteering opportunities and exploring fundraising projects on campus through RAG

STUDENT GROUP AVAILABILITY

At the start of the academic year, DSU took a good look at the groups and societies it assisted and determined which groups were dormant, and where opportunities were for new ones. Student engagement in extra-curricular activity has struggled since the pandemic so our goal is to increase the number and quality of student groups available. We also plan to enhance the visibility of our department on campus, encouraging students to consider societies, sports clubs, and volunteering opportunities whenever they encounter our branding.

Progress towards strategic objectives 2024/25

PROCESSES, PROCESSES, PROCESSES:

Despite challenges, the DSU opportunities team has been focused on embedding good practices within our processes, which will extend to the student groups we serve. We're optimistic that these efforts will enable the team to quickly realign with our desired goals for the strategic plan. Additionally, we are introducing a revised process for establishing new student groups, aimed at promoting their sustainability.

LOWERING BARRIERS

Our goals are to continue work on increasing student groups, with an emphasis on academic. We're also implementing the "Save a Society/ Sports Club" initiative to lower barriers for students seeking to build and engage with communities at DMU

BOOKABLE SPACES

We're collaborating with the DSU Commercial team to optimise the use of bookable spaces within our building, and we are in ongoing discussions with the DMU timetabling staff to improve access to DMU facilities.

THE STUDENT LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

In partnership with the Voice team, we have begun establishing a leadership framework and training program for all student leaders.

OUTREACH

The Opportunities team will increase our campus presence this year with planned monthly outreach initiatives, and we aim to leverage our additional student staff capacity to enhance the effectiveness of these efforts.

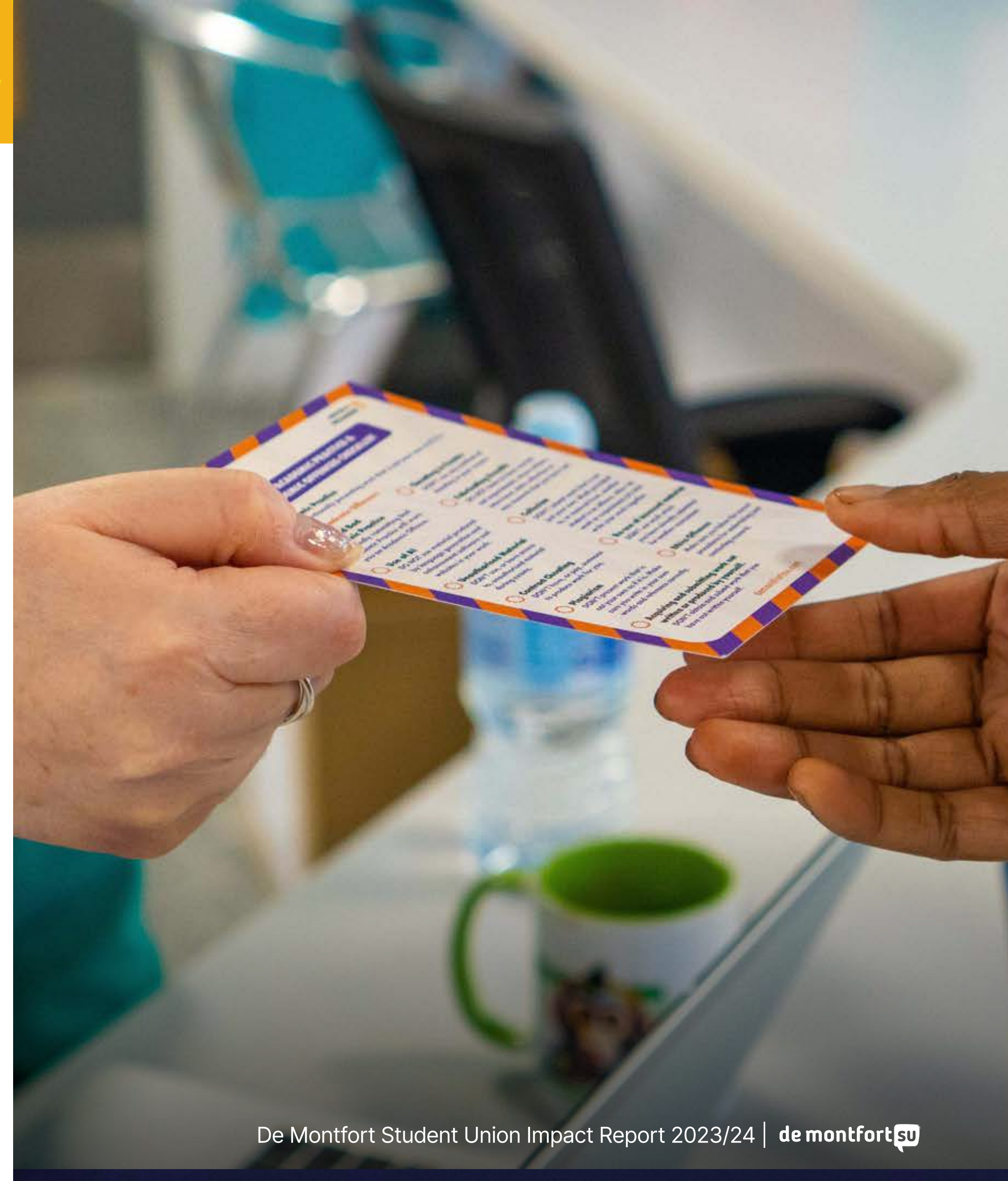
Advice

The Students' Union has an independent advice service which runs entirely for student use. We offer free, impartial advice to students whether you are a member of the SU or not, this includes being one of the only spaces suspended students can access assistance and support.

The DSU Advice team identifies trends to enable the union to target issues students are facing on a regular basis to better improve our outreach work. Through the support we offer we can guide students through the academic offence and disciplinary process, as well as accompany them at meetings and hearings. Where students have more complex needs, we have knowledge of external supporting organisations that we signpost to and who we invite regularly onto campus to meet students who may need them.

Our team is accessible via our website or Student Hub and will empower students to solve problems which alone may feel larger than they are.

Our Advice service is regulated and insured by Advice UK, which means its entirely independent and students can feel safe in the knowledge that any enquiries are expertly managed. We can even assist suspended students!



Key Projects

01

CAMPAIGNS THAT HIGHLIGHT STUDENT'S BIGGEST CHALLENGES.

Throughout the academic year we met with students via our outreach activity to build and idea of trends, issues or concerns they have to assist student leaders, other teams and our own teams in helping them. In the academic year 23/24, 255 students fed back they were most concerned about:

- **Housing** – this led to the introduction of Housemate finder on social media in conjunction with Leicester Students' Union
- **Mental Health** – we ran partnership events during Wellbeing Wednesdays and our Officers ran regular events throughout the year to help
- **Academic practices** – regular communication given to students via our DSU newsletter to assist them pre-emptively
- **Attendance** – Officer project on attendance issues was launched
- **Foodbank referrals** – increased at the start of the 23/24 academic year due to the cost-of-living crisis



02 WELLBEING WEDNESDAY

The DSU Advice team successfully re-launched our Wellbeing Wednesday sessions in 23/24, empowering Fluffy, Welfare Executive Officer in their role and opening the door for students and partners in February this year. We listened to students to establish what events they would like and will engage in via polls and conversations at each event. At the end of the last academic year, we had 382 students attend these sessions, which included craft sessions and Therapy dogs.

03 DROP-IN SESSIONS AT THE LIBRARY

In the 23/24 academic year the DSU Advice team introduced a weekly drop-in session at the DMU Library. This was a new joint approach with the Library Learning Service to enable students to access an Adviser in the library. We met with hundreds of students, in a space more accessible to them while they were learning.

04 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Through joint working we facilitated an external Mental Health agency to provide cafe style drop-ins for students to access support without the need for an appointment. This has been popular with the service being offered throughout the year. We also facilitated a fortnightly drug and alcohol service through Turning point.

We ran joint wellbeing events with Leicester Students' Union which include walk to talk and Picnic in the Park to alleviate isolation and loneliness





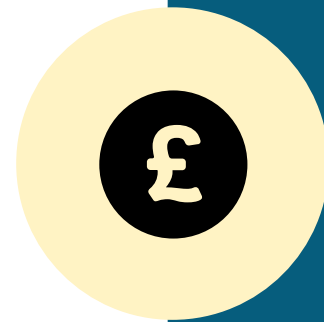
Total students engaged

2244



930

Academic Support



63

Financially support,
including foodbank
referrals and signposting



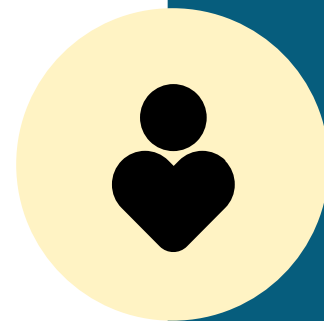
71

Housing related
support



290

Miscellaneous
support



222

Wellbeing
Wednesday



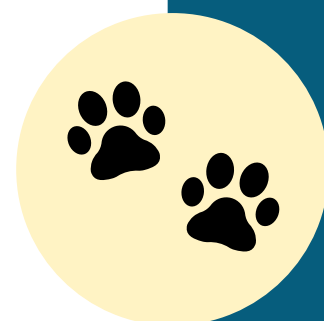
485

Campaign
attendance



23

Drop In



120

RAD Dog Therapy
sessions



40

Destress/refresh
sessions

Challenges & Strategic Objectives

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT TO IN-PERSON EVENTS

Across the board in the academic year 23/24, in-person events saw low engagement as students struggled to find the time or confidence to attend. We increased our outreach activity as a result to gently go to students where they were to build awareness more organically.

STUDENT CASE COMPLEXITY IS INCREASING

Student's complex cases that need more time and specialised knowledge where signposting has been unsuccessful, this seems to be sector-wide our working theory is that this is attributed to a number of societal factors that are unique to this generation. These range from access to AI tools, increased education in areas such as mental health and neurodivergence, social skills, language barriers and low knowledge in areas such as sex education. While case complexity increases, we will continue work with the university and our colleagues in other SUs to improve knowledge as we go.

IMPACT OF BLOCK TEACHING

Change within University policies and procedures, particularly block teaching and the impact that has on the students which increases the volume of cases at each time. This is an interesting peripheral impact from the change to Block which we fully support, but a challenge nonetheless.



Progress towards strategic objectives 2024/25

STUDENT-LED EVENTS

The increase in student led events and activities such as Wellbeing Wednesday highlights that DSU is on its way to achieve the Advice Team strategic objectives by empowering our student to strive throughout their studies. The positive change from our campaigns and events highlights the focus of belonging and inclusivity to ensure students feel they can access our service without fear of being judge.

OUTREACH

The increase in our outreach campaigns provides insight into the strategic objectives of visibility, as this helps students know and understand the service we provide as well as creating new opportunities to promote our Wellbeing events.



The background image shows a group of students sitting on a modern staircase with colorful steps (yellow, teal, purple). The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text overlay to be clearly visible. The text is contained within a white rounded rectangle with a dark blue shadow.

03

Internal Operations

Marketing and Communications

Role and purpose of marcomms in the union. The Marketing and Communications department operate two functions within DSU. Outwardly the team manages all the physical, digital and web communications that our students have access to. The team also provide support and assets to other departments within their own projects.



Statistics & Impact



Newsletter following increased from 29,567 to 31,567



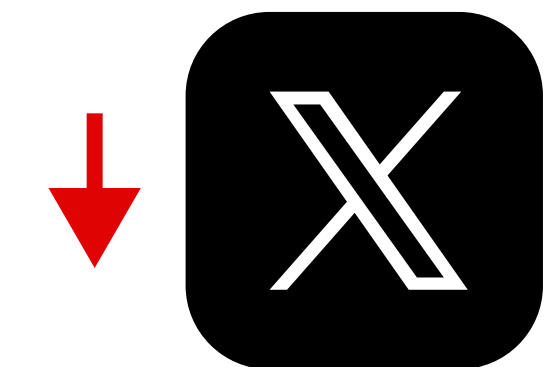
Footfall into the Campus Centre increased from an average of 1011 to 1189 per day.



Instagram following increased from 6,927 to 7,618



Facebook following decreased from 14,567 to 14011



Twitter following decreased from 14,466 to 13,890

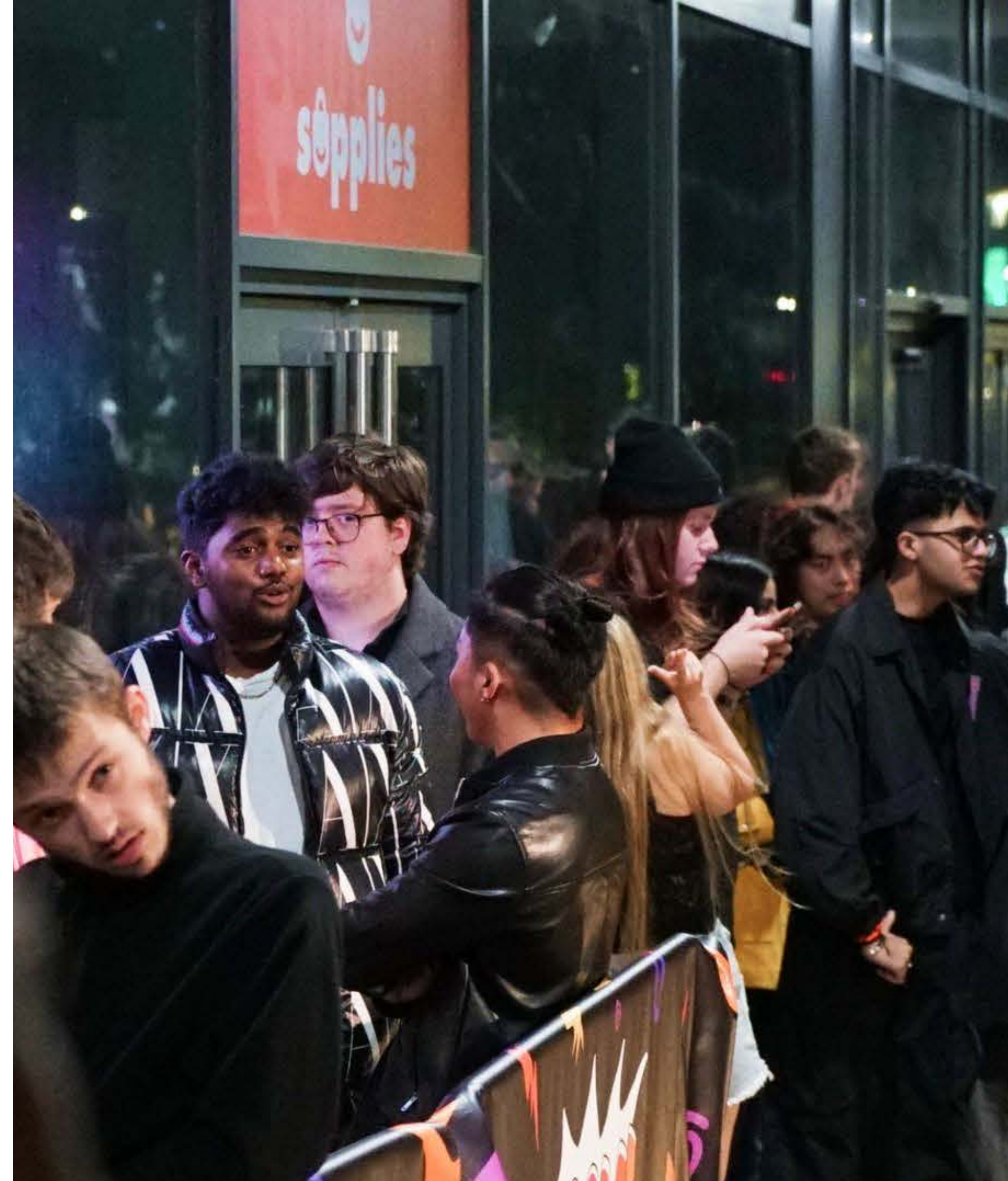
Challenges & Strategic Objectives

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED

How students communicate with each other has changed. As a team we need to keep ourselves current with the new platforms like Discord and Snapchat. Keeping the team updated and finding the most effective way to engage the audience is a continuous moving target.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Students have instant reviews of events in their hands. Keeping events engaging and cost effective throughout will be a challenge, that as a team we are ready to meet.



Progress towards strategic objectives

2024/25

INCREASED VISIBILITY

Continue to support the improvement of our physical spaces and ensuring we provide an effective marketing plan that students will want to engage with. Investment in our digital screens has allowed DSU to advertise to a wider audience.

PEOPLE, PEOPLE, PEOPLE.

A full review of the team is underway, and this opportunity allows DSU to change to meet the future need. Processes are also under review and a marketing playbook which will allow teams to follow a process when planning projects. As this will take several months contractors outside of DSU and student staff have been working on improving the website and supporting projects from Membership and Commercial.



Impact

The Marketing and Communication team drives the brand visibility, insights, marketing, web development, social media, and content creation to support the SU's impact.

In 23/24, they supported over 300 campaigns, events, and initiatives, including flagship activities like Freshers Week and Elections.

Looking ahead, the Marketing and Communications team will be focusing on developing the department to better reflect the current demographic of DMU students. This includes implementing a brand strategy to guide and restructure the team and resources, ensuring the organisation's marketing efforts are both relevant and targeted.



Central Services

The Central Services Team consists of Operations and Finance. Operations provide essential support to all staff members to help them work better together. They lead on all HR services, Health, Safety & Wellbeing, IT services and maintain our external contractual agreements with the University ensuring we remain compliant at all times.

We proudly encompass these Organisational Behaviours into our work and strive to work towards these in all we do:

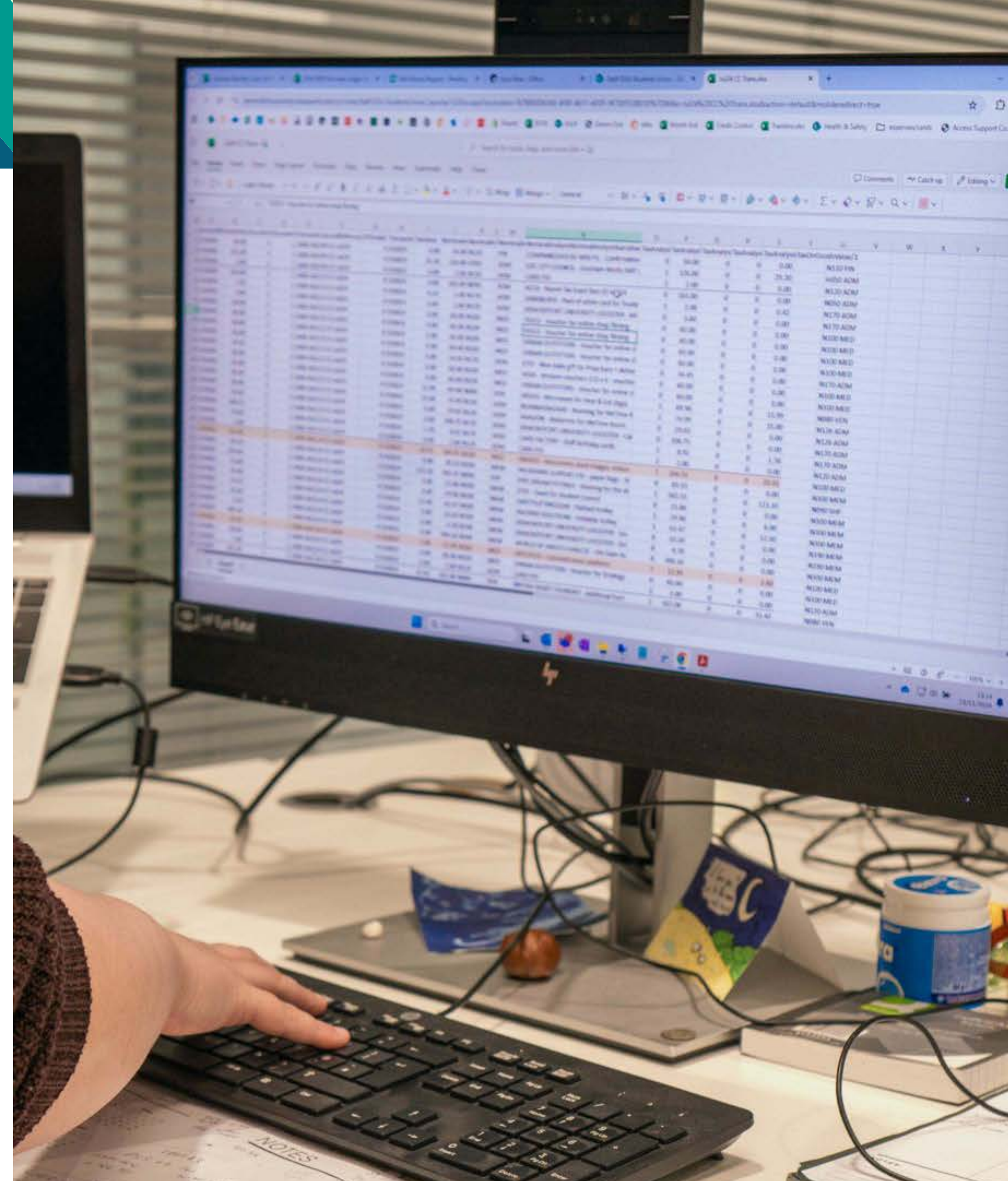
EDI

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

STAFF ENGAGEMENT & MOTIVATION

INSIGHTS & DATA

CHANGE MANAGEMENT



Key Projects

01 HR POLICIES

Over the last 12 months we have reviewed all HR Policies and Procedures and introduced 3 new ones. The review process included feedback from our staff networks and approval from the People and Culture Committee.

02 RECRUITMENT AND ONBOARDING

A working group of 10 staff members from across all levels contributed to a full review of our recruitment and induction procedures. The working group agreed and supported the implementation, rollout and training of a new Application Tracking System (ATS) and new onboarding procedures.

03 REWARD & RECOGNITION

A reward and recognition review has commenced and will be taken to our People & Culture Committee for approval of the various elements. This included pay and non pay considerations and is an ongoing project for 24/25.

04 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The department created an annual calendar of EDI training and have rolled this out via our online platform, Good Course. We also ensured all staff were up to date with their mandatory training and communicated training opportunities through DMU, internal sessions and external providers as required and linked to their development identified in their PDPs. Some of the training completed this year has included EDI in the Workplace, Diversity in the Workplace, Neurodiversity, Conflict Resolution, Empowering and Coaching.

05 STAFF SURVEY

A staff pulse survey was completed by 74% of staff. The data gathered was passed to SMT and a summary of the data and actions to be considered has been presented to Trustees, and our full staff team at the September 24 staff away day.

Commercial

Commercial activities' initial role was to secure income streams for the Students' Union so that this can be used to offset cost of students' activities, led by students and supported by DSU teams.

However Commercial is not just about income but has incorporated values more closely associated with a social enterprise. As a result, Commercial outlets provide students with spaces to socialise with their peers, meet new people, make connections and get inspired.

While this aspect does not carry directly commercial benefits, it plays a crucial part in the social enterprise aspect and contributes to non- academic student experience.



Key Projects

01 PROJECT CLICK

Project click is a large, multi-stakeholder project that aims to meet students' expectations towards commercial spaces and implement various improvements that help students to socialise relax or study, meeting the need of our future students.

02 SPACE BOOKINGS

Student groups and societies need a cost effective and safe place to hold their social events. The Commercial team are working with our Opportunity Team friends to make booking spaces easier and updating the spaces to make them more attractive.

03 PRIVATE HIRE

Money is a continued challenge for students. Using our available spaces for Private Hire we will allow an additional income stream to reduce costs for students.

04 PARTNERSHIPS

Working with our external commercial partners we have been working with them to create a code of conduct, that will allow venues to provide a safe more inclusive space for all students.

05 STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

As part of the Commercial Teams social enterprise values, we have been working with our Unitemp partners to improve the opportunities for employment within DSU operating spaces.

06 ONLINE SHOP

Our student base is always ahead of the changing times and as a result our online shop has been launched which will Students to order products 24 hours, straight to their door.

Impact



Engagement with Lvl1
(former club night) –
increase by over

700%

**GROSS
INCOME**

£4000

2023/24

DEFICIT

2022/23

**SOCIETY LED
EVENTS**

20+

2023/24

5

2022/23

**CODE OF
CONDUCT**

4

interested venues

1

committed to launch
in July 2024

Challenges & Strategic Objectives

COST OF LIVING

Cost of living may no longer be in the news, but it is still affecting our students. This will have a negative impact on potential sales growth and the range of products we can sell through Retail. If sales growth is impacted so will be the chances for employment, we can offer our students

BIG IDEAS NEED BIG PROJECTS

The Commercial team will continue to work on the 23/24 projects into the new year, keeping social enterprise at the heart of the decision-making process. Project Click will continue to develop and having a formal agreement with DMU about how these spaces operate. Providing safe venues for students is paramount, whether it is in our own spaces or external. The work on the code of conduct will be essential in achieving this goal. As sales grow, the Commercial Team will be looking forward to offering more employment opportunities to our students.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Cost of living has been a constant worry for students who are watching their budgets closely. As a result, they have less money to spend on activities and events that traditionally were part and parcel of the university experience. This, combined with lower birth rates globally, changing political policies on Visas for international students and global unrest that affects exchange rates has affected student numbers. This means DSU has had to be more agile than ever, taking a student-voice and data driven approach to events and income-generation so the charity can continue to do more for students each year.



Financial Overview

The DRAFT figures show that DSU made a profit of £45k for the financial year. These figures are currently being reviewed by our auditors Cooper Parry and will be finalised when the annual accounts and auditors report are signed off in November 2024.



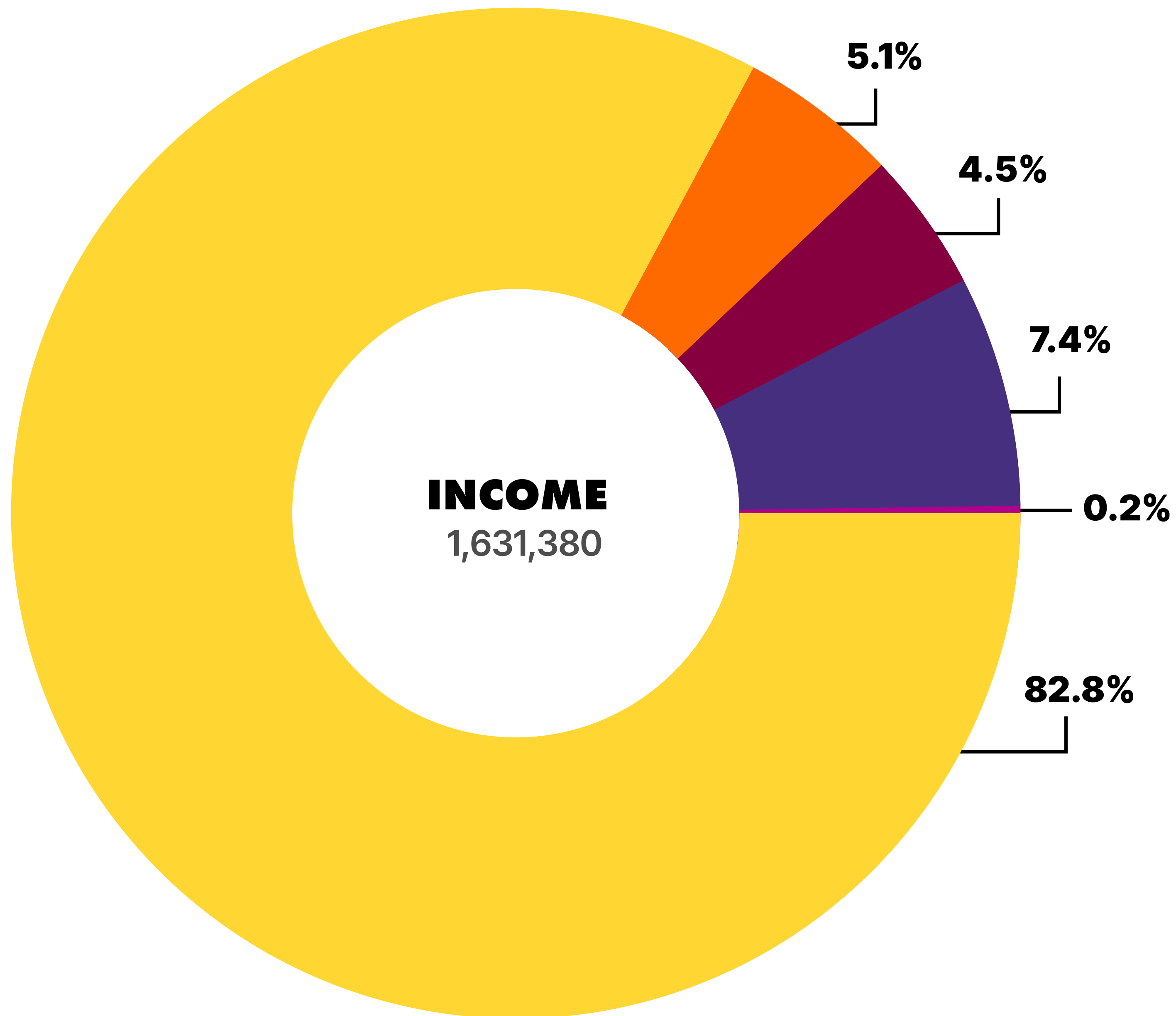
FINANCIAL HEALTH

DSU has a reserves policy which is approved by the Trustee Board on an annual basis. Our reserves are held to provide financial stability to the charity as well as allowing us to take advantage of strategic development opportunities and plan for growth. The profit for the year will enhance our reserves position which is above the target policy level.

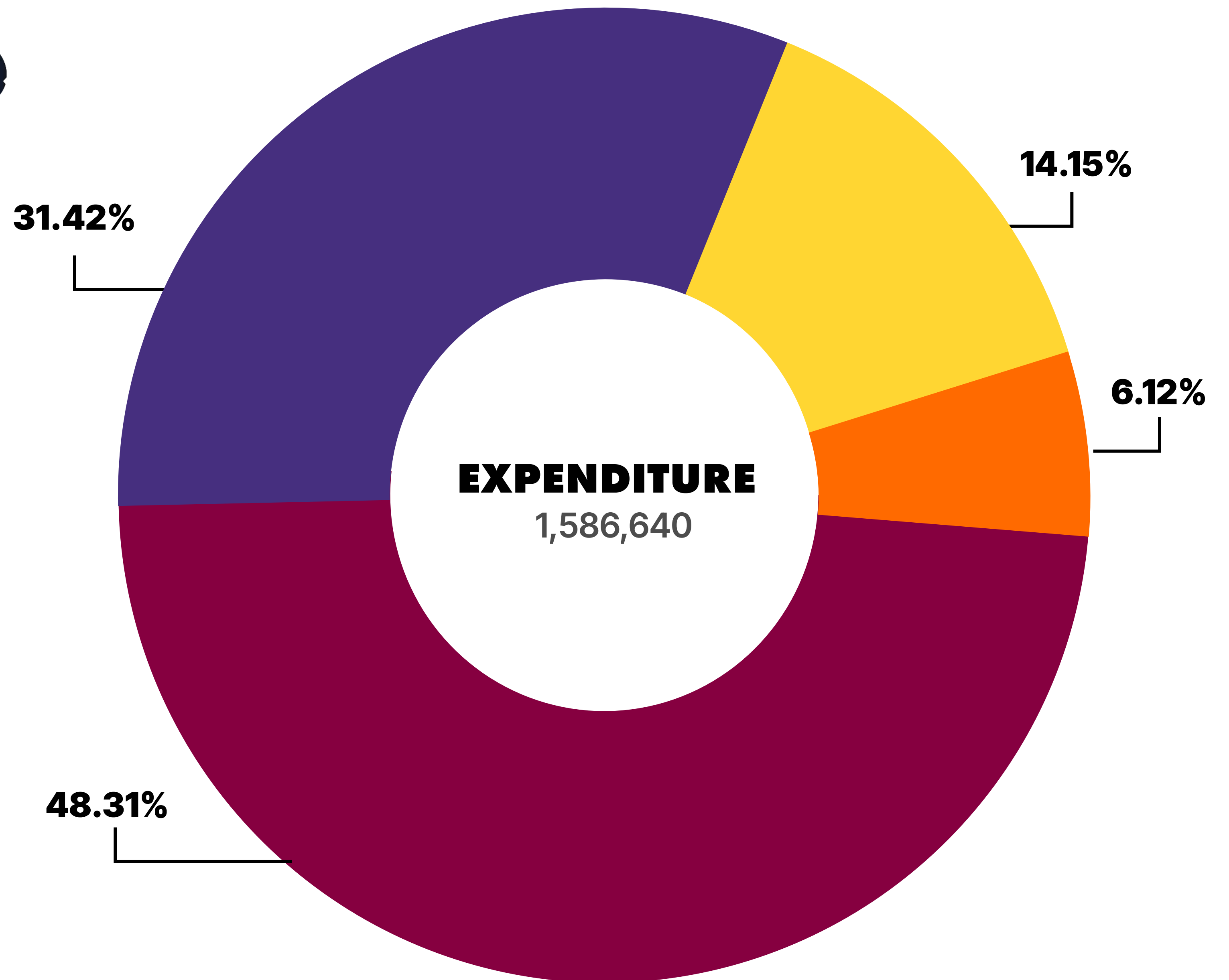
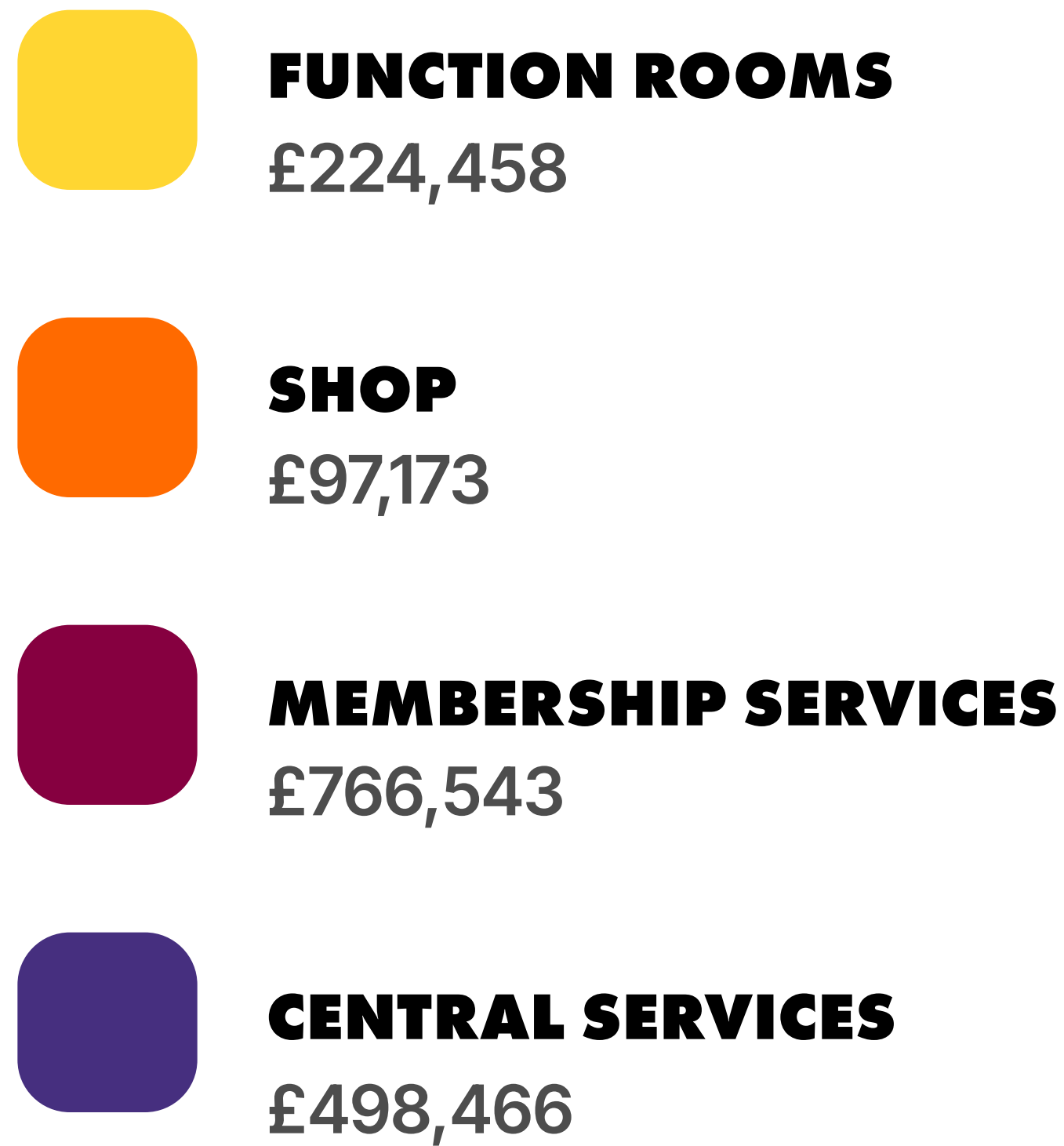
FUTURE FINANCIAL PLANS

Our trustee board approved our 24/25 budget surplus of £14k which includes a budgeted profit from our commercial services of £19k. This includes a £35k increase in our block grant from the University bringing the total grant level from the University to £1.4m.

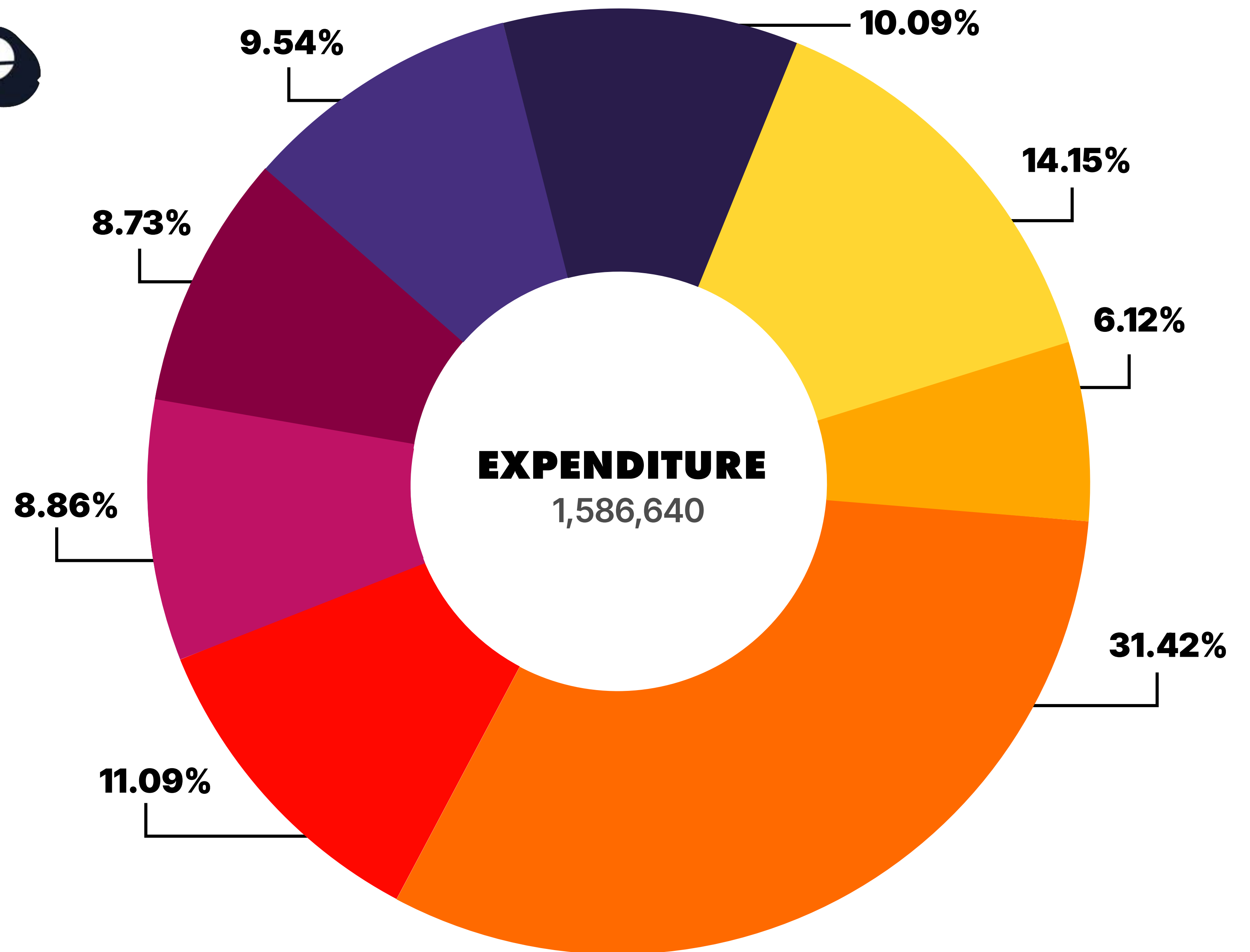
Income



Expenditure



Expenditure



A photograph of four young adults (three women and one man) sitting together on a wide staircase with colorful steps in shades of purple, teal, and yellow. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The man on the left is wearing a dark jacket and light blue jeans. The woman next to him has long blonde hair and is wearing a black top. The woman in the center has long dark hair and is wearing a purple top. The woman on the right has long brown hair and is wearing a light-colored jacket over a patterned shirt. A large, bold, white 'THANK YOU' text is overlaid in the center of the image. The background shows a modern building with glass railings and a rainbow flag hanging on the wall to the right. The image is framed by a colorful geometric border on the left and right sides.

**THANK
YOU**

de montfort 