



University College Student Representatives of the Netherlands

## Second Biannual Financial Report 2017-2018

9 September 2018

Dear Members of the UCSRN,

One of the tasks of the Independent Body (IB) is to audit the accounts of the Executive Body (EB) twice during the UCSRN's year. This letter concerns the second annual audit of the year 2017-2018, and covers a time frame of 6 months, from 1st January 2018 to 30th June 2018. The documents used for the audit were provided by the UCSRN EB Treasurer 2017-2018, Kirsten Kapteijns, and consist of

1. The complete financial account;
2. The complete bank statement for the chosen period of 6 months;
3. The receipts and invoices;

The Independent Body for the year 2018-2019 consists of three members, namely Amber te Winkel, Annemijn Ooms and Natasha Birari. As specified in the Policy Manual of the UCSRN, it is necessary for the Independent Body to have at least three active members, especially in light of the crisis that the IB of 2017-2018 went through, where two out of three members had to suddenly leave. That is why, Annemijn Ooms and Natasha Birari are included in the IB for this 2017-2018 second audit already.

We are pleased to say that we are happy with the results and books of the second half of the year. The events in the administration, bank statements and invoices agree, as do the Payables and Receivables. Proofs for the bank costs and promotional Facebook posts were not furnished, but this is only a minor point, as they are easily accessed through the Net Banking and the UCSRN Facebook account respectively. The Treasurer has maintained an accurate and exhaustive account of all financial proceedings and provided sufficient explanations for the same.

The UCSRN is financially healthy, with currently about €5,000 in reserves due to the fact that €5,000 was budgeted for, but not spent in the last year. At the same time, there are a few points of improvement. These are not meant in any way to discredit the EB, who had a rough year with unexpected circumstances, and still did a wonderful job. However, the following pointers should be kept in mind for the future.

Firstly, a sum of €1500 was budgeted to be received as donations for event sponsoring, which did not happen. The question arises whether this was a realistic amount to budget for, especially since the final number was €0. The EB needs to consider whether they wish to spend their time searching for sponsors, rather than other activities, such as lobbying for Liberal Arts and Sciences education. The budget should reflect this decision.

Secondly, €5,000 of budgeted money was not spent, of which €3,000 consisted of unspent money in the Event Fund. There needs to be more promotion to make students aware of the fund, knowledge about upcoming potentially sponsored events, and better structure and transparency from the UCSRN related to the Event Fund itself.



University College Student Representatives of the Netherlands

Thirdly, it is important for the upcoming Executive Board, and the upcoming Treasurer, to come up with a realistic budget for the next year. Additionally, the budget should be kept in mind throughout the year to avoid underspending and improve the quality of UCSRN activities / administration. In the future, a better balance has to be found for the UCSRN's income and expenses.

Lastly, a recommendation for future UCSRN Executive Boards is to follow up on the promises they make - when they assign money to a purpose and do not end up using it, there should be the option to channel it to another purpose such as an event. This year, this could have been done with the unused budgeted allowance for Executive Board training, and for the Social Committee and the Academic Committee bonding for instance. Of course, this does require the number of sponsored events, and as such the promotion, to increase.

We would like to thank the Executive Board for working so smoothly with us and informing us when necessary, and you, the Members, for being an active and intricate part of our organization. We hereby hope to have informed you well. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best wishes,

The Independent Body 2017-2018

*Amber te Winkel (Chair), Annemijn Ooms and Natasha Birari*

[independentbody@ucsrn.nl](mailto:independentbody@ucsrn.nl)



## First Biannual Financial Report 2017-2018

Dear Members of the UCSRN,

Through the means of this letter, the Independent Body presents its findings of the first audit of the financial year 2017-2018. The year officially started at 1 July 2017, and will end at 30 June 2018. For this report, the books up to and including 31 December 2017 have been taken into consideration.

The Independent Body of the UCSRN has several tasks, as stated in the Statutes. First of all, it acts as an appeal court to settle disputes between the UCSRN Board, Members, Students and/or an external party that cannot be settled between these parties independently. Secondly, it audits the accounts of the UCSRN twice a year, of which the results are reported in the first upcoming General Assembly. It also counts and administers the votes at a UCSRN GA and monitors whether the Board upholds the Statutes and Policy Manual. Lastly, it can give binding advice in case of appeals made by Members, Students or the Board, to be followed by all parties the advice is aimed at, unless its decision is overruled by the GA. This letter mainly concerns the second task, the audit.

We conducted the audit a little different than last year. The end goal is still the same, but we became more knowledgeable and consequently also more critical on our work. As voted on during the previous GA, we received a training at the Training Centre of the LSVb (Landelijke Studentenvakbond), the National Student Union. We appreciated this 'Training op Maat'. It was a very useful, valuable experience, as several of us were unacquainted with the responsibilities of an IB. We gained essential knowledge, practical tips and tricks, and set up a timetable to work with. Besides that, we decided to create a document for upcoming IB's with the tasks of the IB and guidelines that go with them clearly denoted. This will be done in cooperation with the Executive Board in the upcoming period. Another notable change was the real-life meeting of the IB with the Treasurer and Vice-Treasurer to discuss the main concerns and get detailed explanations, compared to the questions that were emailed around last time. The first audit of the year was only small, but it was a good experiment, and will be repeated. It proved to be more effective, as we were able to have a direct and open discussion. Besides, as we were literally in the same room, it allowed us, the IB, to feel more included in the UCSRN as an organization. From our own experience we can conclude that it is essential for the IB to remain connected to the rest of the UCSRN, mainly to the EB, such that the whole remains a cohesive organization.

For this audit we reviewed the documents that can be found online, on [ucsrn.nl/documents](http://ucsrn.nl/documents), and others we requested from the Treasurer. They consist of the following: Statutes and Policy Manual, Long-term vision, Mission 2017-2018, Financial updates of November and January, the Approved budget of 2017-2018, the bank statements, the previous IB letter and other IB reports, financial discussions and conclusions of the previous GA, the administration (invoices, declarations, receipts), the Reimbursement form and the Event proposal template. With these documents, we are able to assess whether the UCSRN is financially healthy. We judged the risks: we performed an age analysis, and checked the debit and credit accounts, to name a few. In the end, we compared the finances (bank statements), the administration and the documentation to come to our conclusions.

Those three, plus the Treasurer's work in general, look well organized and correct. All small points were justified by the Treasurer during our meeting. We want to share with you the details about the most important issues we encountered. First of all, there was an unexpected invoice of €921.60 from the UCSRN Tournament of 2017. Due to unfortunate miscommunication, the Board did not receive this invoice earlier. The IB was approached to advise how to handle the situation. We advised them to pay it, as the UCSRN is legally bound to do so. However, we are definitely not in favor of this happening. We prefer the way that the events are funded this year, as invoices for materials, promotion, etc. are not directly bound to the UCSRN, but funds are, with proof, separately transferred to the organization of the event in question.

Secondly, the Tilburg University transferred €100 to the UCSRN budget by mistake, as they were under the impression the Extra Muros contribution fee was still to be paid. Extra Muros had already done that at that point. In the financial administration, the amount had not been returned yet, but communication with the EB clarified that this has currently been taken care of.

Thirdly, the AUCSA transferred €0.01 too much for an invoice a few months ago. Even though it does not appear in the audited administration yet, this has been transferred back to them to keep the financial books in order. The transfer itself has a price as well, which is why the EB took the situation in special consideration.

So what do we recommend? We did not find any major issues in this audit, or at least no major issues that had not been solved correctly. To keep the administration structured and clear, we recommend the GA to allow the invoice of the Tournament to be placed in the books of last year. To avoid these situations in the future, we advise the EB to keep the event fund as it is, and keep working on its promotion. The €0.01 has been dealt with correctly, but the IB encourages the EB to decide on difficult situations like these quicker. This was only a small amount, but it could in theory happen for larger ones. On a more informal level, we think the EB should keep the IB more informed throughout the year. It is essential that the IB feels connected to the UCSRN and its ongoing work. Besides that, we recommend to keep providing the IB with external trainings, even when there is a document with guidelines, as to ensure that its members can do their job properly, and to motivate them to do so. In communication with the EB, we are also thinking of extending the IB's auditing tasks to include the proposed budget at the beginning of each year. No decision has been made about this yet, but it seems beneficial as the UCSRN as an organization will have an extra check on its financial health in the future.

After thorough review and discussion, it is now to the IB to judge the financial health of the UCSRN. We agree with the budget represented to us and conclude that the UCSRN as of now is indeed a financially healthy organization.

Sincerely,

The Independent Body of the UCSRN 2017-2018

Amber te Winkel (Chair), Koen van der Blij and Charlotte Moss