

# Getting involved in SUPRA's elections

SUPRA is your elected student council and should represent the interests of all postgrad students – including you! The Council is elected each year by postgrad students at Usyd, so if you want to get involved **you can run for council, campaign for a candidate and vote in the elections.**

All currently enrolled postgrads who are SUPRA members can vote in the elections, but you need to still be undertaking your studies to be able to run for election.

If you're not already a SUPRA member, [become a member now](#) – it's free to join!

## Ways that you can be involved in SUPRA elections

- You can run as a candidate in the General Election. These positions are filled by regular HDR and coursework postgrad students like you.
- You can run as a candidate in an Equity Election. If you are eligible to be a member of an equity network, and you're a member of SUPRA, you could become that network's Equity Officer.
- You can nominate another postgrad as a candidate for an election. This is also known as 'seconding' their nomination.
- You can vote in the General Election and Equity Elections (if you're a member of that equity cohort).
- As a SUPRA member, you can campaign for a candidate and encourage others to participate in SUPRA's elections.

The nitty-gritty of exactly how the SUPRA elections work, including all the rules, can be found in our [Electoral Regulations](#).

## Finding out about elections

[Everything you need to know about about SUPRA elections](#) can be found on our website. We also keep postgrads up-to-date with all election news and announcements in our weekly newsletter Grad Post. We announce when nominations open, and keep you notified of all stages of the election, including when you can vote and who the winners are. [Become a member](#)

[to receive Grad Post](#). You can also follow us on social media for election updates: [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

**Pay attention to election dates and deadlines as they are very strict** and differ between elections. The General Election nomination and voting periods are quite long (16 days for each), whereas the Equity Officer elections are quite short and the entire process from start to finish is usually only 7 days.

If you need more information about elections during the election period, you can contact the Returning Officer (the person who runs the election): [returning.officer@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:returning.officer@supra.usyd.edu.au).

At other times of year, if you have any questions about SUPRA elections you can email the SUPRA President: [president@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:president@supra.usyd.edu.au).

## How do SUPRA elections work?

During SUPRA's annual election period we have 8 different elections to fill 34 council positions. 27 of those are the General Council positions filled by the General Election, and the remaining 7 are Equity Officer positions, filled by the 7 Equity Elections. You can participate in any of these elections if you are a member of the corresponding cohort.

### The General Election

The General Election elects 27 Councillors from across the postgraduate cohort. All councillors must be currently enrolled students who are still undertaking their studies at the time of the election.

SUPRA Council has several reserved positions to ensure diversity on council. The positions are as follows (a candidate can identify themselves to be in more than 1 category):

- 12 women-identifying students
- 6 international students
- 6 Higher Degree by Research students
- 6 coursework students
- 3 non-cisgendered students
- 3 students studying at a satellite campus.

## How to nominate for the General Election

When the election is called you will be able access an online nomination form. You will also need 2 other currently enrolled SUPRA members to nominate you (also known as 'seconding' your nomination). Your nominators have their own forms to fill in.

Make sure you read the details on your nomination form carefully and submit your completed form on time.

You can run for election on your own, or with a group (known as a 'ticket'). Each candidate in a ticket still needs to be individually elected. If you're part of a ticket, someone from your group needs to fill out a Ticket Registration Form.

[Read the SUPRA Electoral Regulations](#) for full election rules and details.

## Equity Elections

SUPRA Council has 7 Equity Officers who co-ordinate the SUPRA Equity Networks, and who are elected by those networks. [Find out more about our Equity Networks](#). The Equity Elections are held at election meetings of each of the equity groups.

The 7 Equity Officer positions are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer
- Disabilities Officer
- Higher Degree by Research Student Officer
- International Student Officer
- Queer Officer
- Satellite Campus Officer
- Women's Officer.

To be part of an equity group you just need to identify as a member; for example, you do not need to register with the University's Disability Services to participate in the Disabilities Officer election, as a candidate or a voter. Equity Officer roles involve a considerable time commitment and include a stipend to compensate Equity Officers for some of the work they do.

## Election of council executive positions

SUPRA Council has 6 different executive positions:

- President
- Vice President
- Education Officer

- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Director of Student Publications.

After the General Election and Equity Elections have been completed the incoming group of elected students (the Council-Elect) meet to vote on the executive positions. Each of these roles involves a significant time commitment and includes a stipend to compensate the executive for some of the work they do.

## Requirements to participate in elections

**To participate in the General Election** as a candidate or voter you need to be a postgrad student at The University of Sydney and a [SUPRA member](#). Additionally, election candidates need to be still undertaking study in their degree – they can't have finished their degree and be awaiting graduation.

**To participate in the Equity Elections** you need to be a [SUPRA member](#) and part of that equity cohort. For example, to participate in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander election you must be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person who is also a postgrad student at Usyd.

It's free and easy to become a SUPRA member, and we don't sell or share your details with anyone. [Become a member now](#).

## The Returning Officer

A Returning Officer is a person who oversees and runs an election. The Returning Officer ensures that the election runs according to the regulations, is free, fair and without bias. The Returning Officer announces the winners of the election.

SUPRA's General Election Returning Officer is independent of SUPRA and we have strict rules in our regulations about who can do this work.

The Returning Officer is the person you can contact during the election period if you have any concerns or questions about anything to do with the General Election: [returning.officer@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:returning.officer@supra.usyd.edu.au).

If you have any questions or concerns about SUPRA elections at other times of year (not during the election period) contact the SUPRA President: [president@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:president@supra.usyd.edu.au).

## The election period

The SUPRA election period starts in March and finishes at our Annual General Meeting – which happens in May each year. Nominations normally open in March and the polling days are usually in late April or early May.

The Equity Officer elections are held in April. If an Equity Officer leaves their position during their term, a by-election is held outside the normal election period to fill the position.

## Other ways to be involved with SUPRA Council

- **Become a SUPRA volunteer!** SUPRA works with lots of volunteers to help support postgrads and enhance their student experience. Volunteering opportunities can be in various areas. We have volunteer student representatives, volunteer social media assistants, volunteers helping run SUPRA's Welcome Week activities and students in their equity networks organising events and doing representative work.
- **Attend a SUPRA Council meeting!** All Usyd postgrads are welcome to join us for our monthly SUPRA Council meetings. Find out what your student representatives have been working on, participate in discussions and get to know your representatives.
- **Attend our Annual General Meeting (AGM)!** Each year we hold an AGM where you can participate and vote on big decisions at SUPRA, you can also add items to the agenda to be discussed.
- **You can attend our events!** Our events are there for you! While these events are a great opportunity to socialise and meet other postgrads, they're also an opportunity to speak with SUPRA Councillors about matters that are important to you.
- **Get in touch with us!** The best way for SUPRA to know about your needs is for you to tell us. Email the President: [president@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:president@supra.usyd.edu.au) if there is an issue that's impacting postgrads, or if you want SUPRA's support. If you have a personal or academic issue that SUPRA's [casework](#) or [legal](#) team can help with [contact us](#) for professional and confidential support.