

Goal 1: COVID-19 Safety and Financial Security

Values: Safety, Health and Accommodations

Lucia is committed to ensuring the wellbeing of students, her student staff, and full time staff. She has ensured the proper measures are in place to ensure that people feel safe in their working environment in coordination with the other executives. She has ensured that students do not need to come to campus if they do not feel safe to receive their reimbursements and subsidies.

For Students and Treasurers:

1. A Hybrid Reimbursement System allowed for in-person and online reimbursement
2. Ensured funds owed still get to students regardless of whether the student can come to campus
3. Ensured that subsidies and opt-outs are available this year, and completed them even faster than before to ensure those who need their money can receive it
4. Provided funds for Zoom

For Student - Staff:

1. Provided a safe work environment
2. Provided funds for Zoom and Sanitary Stations
3. Created safe work policies with Management regarding large meetings in partnership with other executives
4. Ensured that finance staff working in our offices don't come into contact with a plethora of students and empower them to speak up if they don't feel safe.

For Staff:

1. Continued funding through Canada's Wage Subsidy Benefit to help offset losses
2. Ensured gloves are worn when handling documents
3. Ensured that the staff working in our offices don't come into contact with a plethora of students and empower them to speak up if they don't feel safe.

Key Performance Indicators:

- 100% of financial work is delivered per normal standards
- Reevaluate reimbursement process each time the Province enters a new phase of the pandemic
- Ensure that 100% of reimbursements and invoices can be submitted and paid remotely by clubs
- Ensure staff feedback regarding health and safety measures is received and applied advised to the Health & Safety Committee for action

Lucia and her team moved all financial processes entirely online during the COVID-19 pandemic through an email reimbursement system, membership/sponsorship deposit email,

and digital subsidy/opt-out/opt-in/exemption forms. Students can request reimbursements, submit payments, submit subsidy/opt-outs/exemption requests, and complete other financial forms digitally without having to go to the AMS Office in person.

The accounting team has been working hard to process payment and deposit requests. Currently, reimbursements can be conducted through eTransfer, wire transfer/EFT, cheque, bulk eTransfer, and cash (if in-person). Clubs and constituencies are encouraged to use the online system, and most have done so- seeing high traffic on the reimbursements email. Deposits for membership fees and sponsorships are collected through the deposit email. The AVP Finance and the accounting team work together to identify transactions and deposit money into the respective club's accounts. Making all financial processes complete-able online has been a significant reduction in in-person interactions between the finance staff and other non-staff individuals. Staff feel safer by interacting with primarily only their colleagues (following COVID-19 safety precautions) instead of with large numbers of people. Communication between Lucia and her finance staff regarding health and safety measures remains strong, and finance staff are currently in a hybrid system of working from home and in-office.

The finance portfolio in 2020-2021 ensured that all AMS financial aid programs were well funded and worked to decrease barriers of access to increase the beneficiary pool. The team worked to ensure that the abundance of AMS funds and grants were well-communicated to the student body and increased accessibility to subsidy programs and opt-outs. Over the past year, the team worked to approve and process \$120,000 in U-Pass subsidies and \$71,000 in AMS subsidies and Sub Renewal Fee subsidies. An additional \$60,000 was allocated to the AMS Food Bank over winter break to address food insecurity and child care supplies demands over at Arcadia Park for graduate students. The office also advocated to the UBC VP Students office and secured more housing funding for WUSC students. WUSC Scholars' housing is now covered for the duration of their entire degree.

Furthermore, \$132,000 was approved and processed for the AMS/GSS Health and Dental Plan subsidy program. To support international students, the finance team worked closely with Studentcare and Pacific Blue Cross to ensure students outside of Canada can conduct a Health and Dental Plan opt-out during the summer. This allows students who were uncertain about whether or not they would come to Canada in September the option to opt-out of this fee.

To improve the Health and Dental Plan further, Lucia being the Chair of the Health and Dental Committee, increased the annual maximum covered by the Health Plan for visits to mental health practitioners from \$500 to \$1,000, retroactive to Sept. 1, 2020. This means that the Student Plan now covers up to 100% of the cost of a licensed psychologist, registered clinical counsellor, or practitioner with a Master's degree in Social Work, to a maximum of \$1,000 per policy year. This decision was made after consultation with students and acting on their concerns and needs. Being proactive in providing travel coverage for students during a pandemic, under Lucia's leadership Pacific Blue Cross has removed the following travel exclusions from their policy:

11) Death or illness as a result of an outbreak of a communicable disease recognized as an epidemic or pandemic by the World Health Organization, or any expense incurred due to a quarantine imposed by any government health organization due to an outbreak of a communicable disease, when the trip is booked after an advisory notice was issued by either the Canadian Government or the World Health Organization.

15) Out-of-province/territory travel to a country, region or city for which the Canadian Government has issued a travel advisory.

This adjustment has allowed students to maintain travel coverage outside of Canada if they travel during the pandemic. Lucia recognized that the AMS could not prevent students from travelling during a pandemic. Still, it is crucial to be proactive and provide a safety net for students in case of an emergency. The policy adjustment did not result in additional monetary expenses for the AMS.

Lucia and her team wanted to inform students of the most up-to-date numbers. At the beginning of the year, they were unsure what enrollment numbers would look like and if there were worries about the government subsidy. Thus, the team published two budgets this year- once in June and another one in September. A January reforecast was also conducted to reflect changing situations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The AMS was successful in all of our government subsidy applications and was able to alleviate the financial burden significantly on our business operation and overhead cost. Lucia has also created a new template for the AMS Budget that has not been updated in 10 years to create more transparency, improved accuracy and better presentation.

Goal 2: Increased credit limit by switching to new credit card provider

Values: Support, Efficiency and Access

Lucia investigated the expansion for more clubs affiliated with the AMS to have a dedicated RBC Commercial Credit Card. As of right now, only large clubs with over \$30K in assets are eligible.

This push towards having commercial credit cards will allow clubs to charge expenses (i.e. venue bookings, flights etc.) to their dedicated credit card. This will eliminate the need for clubs to incur out-of-pocket expenses that must be reimbursed by the AMS Finance Staff. Club treasurers will be able to monitor and track club expenditures more efficiently and will forgo the need to file reimbursement forms and come into the AMS Main Office.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Have all VP Finances of constituencies on the new program by the end of Term 1 Winter
- Ensure that awareness of the larger credit limit is announced to large clubs and constituencies 1 month in advance
- Support clubs and constituencies by doubling (at least) the capacity of the Society's spending limit

Over the past few months, the finance team has been working on moving the AMS credit card system from US Bank to RBC Commercial Credit Cards. With RBC Commercial credit cards, the number of credit cards issued and credit limits will be increased. This allows for increased convenience for constituencies and selects large clubs to make large purchases without going through the reimbursement process. The Certify platform must first be implemented in order to establish RBC credit card management. Further details about Certify are found in Goal 3.

Implementation for Certify- financial management platform that allows us to host RBC Commercial Credit Cards on accurate expense reports and process financial transactions has just finished in April. Clubs and constituencies who have held AMS credit cards in the past had been notified of this new credit card program that we hope to roll out, and interest has been recorded. The finance team will soon order the credit cards and move everyone to the new systems- however; this will likely be an action item for the following 2021-2022 term when the AMS has a better grasp of all the individuals requiring credit cards for the 2021-2022 term. Upon evaluating all of the credit card choices, the RBC Commercial Cash-Back Visa Card is the best option for the AMS of UBC Vancouver's credit card program. Furthermore, corporate Billing would be the best option in terms of managing credit card payments every month. As with Corporate Billing, the accounting department, alongside the Financial Systems Administrator, would consolidate the credit card bills every month and make the respective payments.

Goal 3: The Digitization of Reimbursement Process through a new Financial Management System

Values: Ease, Inclusive, Transparent

Lucia wants to shift to use a third party financial management system, which is cloud-based. The system will allow expenses and reimbursements to be submitted and approved from anywhere.

Lucia plans to take the entire Reimbursement Process online in the largest overhaul of the year - working with an expense reporting company to allow for digital submission of receipts and request for reimbursement. Expect more details to follow throughout the summer.

This shift will reduce paperwork and allow the AMS Finance Staff to see spending more clearly without dealing with a paper-trail. This will, in turn, ensure treasurers receive any relevant financial support more efficiently

Key Performance Indicators:

- Ensure 100% of constituency and executives are using the system by the end of Term 1 winter
- Start the transition to a 100% online reimbursement system
- Reduce overall paper use by at least 50%
- Allow for accounting workload to be more manageable

Lucia and her team had researched multiple types of cloud-based financial management systems over the summer to find one that fits the needs of the AMS and its subsidiaries. The team has moved the entire reimbursement system from its currently obsolete paper trail-based style to a completely digital platform. While the reimbursement/payment system is now 100% offered digitally alongside the office being open in person, the current solution could be further improved for the long term. Out of all programs, the expense management system "Certify" was chosen and approved by the AMS Finance Committee. This system allows treasurers to process reimbursements seamlessly through the Certify mobile app or on desktop. Certify was the most budget-friendly option that was researched while offering all the services that the AMS and its subsidiaries need for expense management.

Certify implementation has finally wrapped up in April 2021, and we hope to merge the projected new RBC credit cards with Certify such that treasurers can allocate and merge credit card purchases on this platform as well. Bringing on new treasurers and individuals to Certify and the new credit card system will occur in the 2021-2022 term when the AMS would have begun orientation with a better grasp on which individuals/clubs require credit cards. There are many custom features that the team has built with Certify to suit the needs of student government and clubs- and ensuring all account codes are linked correctly in the system.

Clubs and constituencies will access their transaction histories easily through the system, check whether their submissions for payment/reimbursements have been processed, and work with the accounting team to fix errors in submissions.

Goal 4: Updated Accounting System

Values: Efficiency, Progressive, Accessibility

Lucia will veer towards the upgrade/replacement of the existing accounting program. Currently, the accounting department of the AMS faces several issues when managing purchases and expenditures on behalf of clubs. Each club has its own format of budgeting and book-keeping, which leads to inconsistencies and mistakes.

This deviation from the traditional accounting and reporting method towards the upcoming Accounting System will streamline all AMS accounting and reduce human error as well as time wastage. The Accounting System will consolidate orders, invoices, and events, which provides comprehensive monitoring and compliance for the AMS Accounting Department.

Lucia will initiate the three systems mentioned above and work towards integrating them with one another to create an automated and digital financial solution to aid in future-proofing AMS Finances.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Allow at least a 25% increase in currently available account codes than while reorganizing the chart of accounts to make it more understandable
- Reduce redundant workload of accounting staff
- Allow the new financial analyst to create reports and budgets directly in the system
- Ensure that if another crisis occurs that forces the Nest to close that we are able to access our accounting system on the cloud
- Ensure that 100% of accounting tasks can be completed remotely via the cloud-based system

Lucia worked with the accounting and senior managers on the upgrade/replacement of the existing accounting program. In recent months, the accounting team, in conjunction with the finance staff, has successfully recycled account codes previously occupied by de-constituted clubs along with dated account codes - freeing up 100+ account codes. This allows more flexibility for new clubs that require accounts in the AMS Financial system. The team also carried out an accounting restructure with several constituencies to ensure that the codes are catering to their needs. All accounting duties can be done entirely online through a remote desktop. The AMS is currently doing a hybrid model; the finance staff still need to sign physical cheques before they are mailed out or picked up.

Upgrading and replacing the accounting system will be carried over to the 2021-2022 term, where implementation would likely occur over the late summer or early fall.

Goal 5: A new ticketing platform contract with lower fees for clubs and AMS Events

Values: Affordability, Progressive, Growth

As the AMS continues to strive for the lowest possible event ticketing fee, Lucia is in the process of negotiating a contract with ticket and event providers to give the students the best deal possible while ensuring it is a system that works.

Lucia and her team will research a minimum of three options including our current events and ticketing software Showpass, a Canadian Start-up, and a large proven events and ticketing company. Lucia is encouraged by the options for students moving forward and hopes to co-brand with the new contract to increase the positive use of the service. Lucia is also hoping to encourage clubs to not use a ticketing platform for membership fees, and encourage this service only for events with higher ticket prices to lead to lower percentage fees.

Lucia is also ensuring that the new contract will have the options to host online events during the COVID-19 Pandemic and that clubs can use this resource to host speakers and make profits throughout the year even if they are not on-campus. Lucia is planning to have the new system ready for use by the start by the start of the academic year.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Communicate new lowered ticketing fees to clubs via email and newsletters
- Ensure that Brand of new ticketing contract is positive through AMS marketing
- Encourage 100% clubs to use our system because of low fees and no-liability due to automatic transfer of funds to their account

Lucia and her team had researched three options, including our current events and ticketing software, Showpass, a Canadian Start-up, and a large proven events and ticketing company. Lucia has successfully worked with Showpass to create a custom launchpad for the AMS- so the clubs have to liaise less with the AMS to create their account. Clubs are able to directly create a Showpass account through a special link without having to go through the Financial Systems Administrator- and the account will automatically be linked to the AMS. The team is also working with Showpass to create a season pass feature to allow clubs to purchase membership through the service. Furthermore, the team has also switched from a monthly deposit schedule to a post-event schedule, where Showpass will deposit event revenue to the AMS right after the event ends, rather than having one large deposit every month.

Lucia also ensured that the new contract can host online events during the COVID-19 Pandemic and that clubs can use this resource to host speakers and make profits throughout the year,

even if they are not on-campus. Lucia has achieved a pricing model that is 33% lower than their regular pricing model to the public. Many clubs can use Showpass to sell tickets for their online events, and we predict that Showpass usage will move back to regular year traffic once school is in person in September.

Goal 6: Financial Analyst

Values: Analytics, Transparency, Supporting

There is currently no permanent position in the AMS that is dedicated to financial innovation and progress. If a student needs help with alleviating any financial burden, they would have to approach the office of the Vice President Finance and their student staff members. Oftentimes, the team is faced with a high volume of students seeking help. Furthermore, these student staff members are faced with a high level of confidential information and emotional burden, but lack professional knowledge and training to deal with certain scenarios.

Lucia will take the initiative to create a new permanent staff role in the AMS. This will be a managerial role that would require a full-time individual with prior experience dealing with finances and an open-mind to facilitate student support.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Analytics Reporting on a quarterly basis to allow for VP finances to make well informed financial decision
- Produce 4 quarterly reviews on the financial health of the AMS
- Support incoming staff and the VP finance with Financial tasks during transition
- Ensure fluid transition to new expense reporting and accounting system
- Keep expense rate within 10% variance

There is currently no permanent position in the AMS that is dedicated to financial innovation and progress. If a student needs help with alleviating any financial burden, they would have to approach the office of the Vice President Finance and their student staff members. Oftentimes, the team is faced with a high volume of students seeking help. Furthermore, these student staff members are faced with a high level of confidential information and emotional burden, but lack professional knowledge and training to deal with certain scenarios. Lucia has strived to create a new permanent staff role in the AMS. The Assistant Manager of Finance and Administration is a managerial role that requires a full-time individual with prior experience dealing with finances and an open-mind to facilitate student support. In the past 6 months, the team has drafted up

the job description as well as explained to the union of our conference and catering staff that this position is necessary for the society. However, due to the increasing deficit and tight budget of the AMS during the COVID-19 pandemic, the AMS has unfortunately not been able to hire for this role. Once the budget allows, the AMS will hire a Financial Analyst in the future.

Goal 7: Clubs Benefit Fund Starter Pack

Values: Innovative, Empowerment, Inclusion

Lucia would present and support a code change to the Clubs Benefit Fund allowing for new clubs to access the fund before their event as a way to inject funding and ensure new clubs are successful.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Increase the usage of the Clubs Benefit Fund by 25%
- Funds and Grants Coordinator communicate to new clubs about the new program
- Ensure 100% of new clubs constituted receive a financial boost in their first year of operations out of the Clubs Benefit Fund
- Make sure that 100% of funds are being used to fund events and expansion of club membership

Over the summer, Lucia successfully launched the AMS Seed Funding program for newly constituted clubs. Lucia implemented a code change for the Clubs Benefit Fund, which ensures that a specific portion of the fund will be reserved to support newly constituted clubs each year. This seed funding provided a financial boost for all new clubs during their first year of operations. The funding went towards each club's initial events and/or special projects. The Funds and Grants Administrator communicated the new AMS Seed Funding program to all new clubs, and the funding has been allocated appropriately for this term. This initiative supported AMS clubs while also increasing the Clubs benefit fund usage, which has been under-utilized for years. To further work towards improving the Clubs benefit fund usage, Lucia also implemented a code change that no longer requires the fund to be issued on a reimbursement basis. This change reduced some of the administrative barriers associated with accessing the funding. Another code change now allows clubs to apply up to \$10,000 instead of the previous \$2,000 before this year.

Furthermore, Lucia and her team worked on promoting the Clubs Benefit Fund online and are producing resources that will help guide applicants throughout the application process. These resources helped improve the quality of applications received and subsequently increased the number of successful applications. We increase the usage of the fund by more than 120%.

Goal 8: Square Reader Loan Program

Values: Collaborative, Outreach, Accessibility

Lucia is planning to acquire new square readers, the ones that accept debit, and have them available as short term rentals for clubs in the Clubs Resource Centre. A club's treasurer could then ensure that all membership fees are obtained as quickly as possible as most students do not have cash and may not want to carry cash. The finance team thinks that this program will be a huge success as it will allow for smaller clubs who can't afford the \$60 reader to be able to accept payment whether at an event or membership dues. Lastly, by putting the Square Reader Loan Program in the Clubs Resource Centre it will introduce new executives to the resources beyond square that the centre has to offer.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Ensure that clubs are aware of the program through active marketing via email and newsletter by January of 2020
- Ensure that 100% of clubs are able to access and utilize the Square program
- Re-evaluating the use of the loan program at the end of the year and see if more square readers need to be ordered

Lucia and her team have acquired 100 new Square readers, to be loaned free-of-charge to clubs and constituencies. The Square readers were funded by the Clubs Benefit Fund. The Square Loan program is being actively marketed through emails to treasurers, and the program will be conveyed to clubs through the Clubs Newsletter as well. 100% of clubs are able to access and utilize the Square loan program. They simply need to fill out the form on Campusbase to request a reader, and the Financial Systems Administrator would follow up with their request. The request form has been circulated around to treasurers, and we have actively promoted the program. This loan program allows clubs and constituencies who may not be able to afford the reader to use its services when selling merchandise, tickets, memberships, or other items. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic where in-person events are severely reduced, there has not been a demand for the Square readers. However, since school is slated to be in-person in September, we project that the demand for the purchased Square readers will increase significantly.