Memorandum of Understanding for a U3A National Alliance

Introduction

U3A (University of the Third Age) began in Australia in 1984, in Melbourne. Since then the movement has grown to more than 200 individual U3As across the country, with membership exceeding 60,000. From the early days, a network was established in Victoria to assist both existing U3As and the formation of new U3As in that state. A similar body arose in NSW in the early 90s. Recently, moves have taken place to form a network or alliance of U3As in both Queensland and South Australia.

For some years there has been a desire expressed by some members of U3As in Australia for a national body of some sort to foster a greater public awareness of the work and benefit to retired older citizens of the U3A movement in Australia, and to assist in the interaction of U3As across state boundaries.

This draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a national alliance of U3As in Australia is effective from 10th March 2010.

1.   Name

The name of the alliance will be *U3A Alliance Australia* (short title U3A Alliance, abbreviated name U3AAA).

2.   Objectives

The aim of U3AAA is to foster a loose confederation of U3A Networks across Australia for their mutual benefit. The Alliance has three Objectives:

(1)   To foster closer cooperation between U3As across Australia.

(2)   To co-ordinate a national standpoint on issues of mutual interest to individual U3A's.

(3) [deleted]

(4) To maintain a register of all U3As in Australia.

*[**Note**: U3A Online already maintains a register of U3As in Australia and New Zealand: the adoption of the third objective would be achieved by accessing the U3A Online website.]*

3.   Principal Activities

The principal activities of U3AAA will be:

- To coordinate information flow and networking within the U3A movement.
- To coordinate a national vision for the U3A movement and to project that through the media.
- To establish links with kindred seniors and educational bodies in Australia and overseas.

4. Membership

(1) Initial membership comprises the network organisations from NSW, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia, together with U3A ACT, and U3A Online; all of these are incorporated entities. U3A UWA, U3A Hobart and U3A Darwin will be included in the MOU to provide representation for Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory, respectively, within the Alliance, until such time as an equivalent state/territory network is established.

(2) U3AAA will operate under this Memorandum of Understanding between its members for at least two years, before considering any formal constitution or registration as an incorporated association. This approach will provide flexibility as the alliance develops, with minimum effort and cost.

(3) A member of U3AAA may withdraw from membership by submitting an application to cease membership, to the secretariat.

5. Management

(1) The alliance will be managed by a Steering Committee comprising the Presidents (or their nominated representative) of each member of the alliance.

(2) The chairmanship and secretarial functions of the committee rotate among the membership, commencing with the NSW Network.

(3) The registered address initially will be that of the NSW Network.

(4) The name will be registered in NSW. It is proposed that the State networks (where these exist), U3A ACT, and U3A Online each contribute $50 to a fund to be administered by the NSW Network to meet expenses involved in establishing the alliance.

6. Meetings

Meetings will be conducted electronically and contact will be achieved mainly by using modern technology.

If the opportunity arises, additional meetings may also be held when members attend State network conferences, but not so as to incur extra expense.

A quorum will be two-thirds of the membership, and agreement on decisions will ideally be by consensus, but if put to a vote, will require at least-two-thirds of the membership approval.

7. Records

Records (minutes, correspondence, etc) will be maintained electronically. The possibility of an online storage system will be explored, so that files and records can be easily accessed on the change of secretariat.