INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The UNSW Administrative Staff Network (AdminNet) Committee held its inaugural meeting on 14th March 2003 followed by AdminNet’s launch in October 2003. AdminNet is run by volunteer administrative staff, and participation is open to all staff at UNSW who have an administrative component to their jobs. This includes all professional staff employed by or affiliated with UNSW [administrators].

The objectives of AdminNet are to provide a means of communication for the administrative staff at UNSW, to facilitate resource sharing and to improve the profile, professional standing and development of administrative staff within the University.

A report prepared by the Australian Universities Quality Agency for the University of New South Wales in 2006 reported that the AdminNet network was providing a useful resource to the University, it was suggested that the University should consider providing additional resourcing to support the network.

UNSW CURRENT STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND ADMINNET

AdminNet aligns with the elements of the UNSW Strategic Intent as follows:

Values

- Innovation, initiative and creativity: AdminNet is an innovative and efficient way of sharing knowledge, skills and resources across the University administrators.
- Equity, opportunity and diversity: Membership and participation in AdminNet is open to all staff and the committee values input from UNSW’s diverse pool of employees and offers many opportunities to enhance professional skills and people skills in an equal opportunity environment.
- Teamwork: AdminNet’s key functions are impossible without teamwork and networking. The committee is composed of a wide range of administrators, from many different areas. A key initiative of AdminNet is the email explode list, which allows for the breaking down of barriers and sharing of resources and information.
- Sustainability: AdminNet is a volunteer group, which requires only a small amount of funding each year to run activities. It is sustained by a rotating group of volunteers, who as they gain experience move forward and set up succession planning within the committee. The individual staff member will also take those skills back to their workplace which is beneficial to the unit/department.
- AdminNet, like the UNSW’s Blueprint to Beyond 2010, aims to break down barriers between different administrators located in Faculties, Schools and Central Units as well as reaching out to other institutions.

UNSW’s administrators are key contributors to the following UNSW objectives and strategies:

Research

AdminNet supports staff that provide valuable administrative support to UNSW researchers and research projects. Such administrative support includes finance, policy and other project management support which contributes strongly to ensuring there is an appropriate research environment at UNSW.
The Student Experience
The Student Experience is strongly influenced by administrators, and AdminNet contributes by sharing examples of best practice, timely advice and procedures regarding assistance to students. AdminNet supports a positive learning and teaching environment and assist administrators to provide appropriate financial, educational and personal support to students.

Community Engagement
AdminNet encourages administrators across campus to achieve high standards in environmental sustainability, by sharing information about on-campus recycling of toners as well as furniture, spare stationery, the Environment Unit, the student-run organic food outlet, the ‘save energy’ campaign etc.

AdminNet encourages administrators across all Faculties, Schools and Divisions to communicate and develop collaborative links.

AdminNet has also inspired other University administrators to develop their own staff networks.

Capabilities
AdminNet improves staff operational capabilities by:
- Offering opportunities to network outside the work unit and develop professional relationships and contacts with other University administrators;
- Linking staff in similar roles across work units, departments and campuses;
- Offering opportunities to be part of a committee and develop leadership, organisation, event management and committee skills;
- Running skills development and information sessions/seminars (such as the “Fringe Benefits Tax” lunchtime session in October 2008);
- Distributing UNSW related information to administrators such as; Facilities Management; Finance; Institute of Languages – WEP.
- Knowledge sharing, process sharing, resource sharing and problem solving via the use of the email explode list and meetings;
- Supporting staff to develop social, communication and networking skills within a positive and friendly environment.

Resources
AdminNet supports the staff resources of the University by ensuring knowledge and skills are shared to provide “the most cost-effective professional support”. It encourages professional networking so that administrators can identify persons who can assist and support them in their roles. AdminNet also encourages communication of short-term job opportunities and transfers within UNSW, and can be a communication mechanism for experienced UNSW casuals.

The communication mechanisms of AdminNet are also used to assist with managing physical resources and reducing wastage. For example, sharing and lending of equipment for functions or events or requesting resources that are needed by a project or group, or that are unwanted and may be of use to other work units.

OneUNSW and AdminNet
AdminNet are aware of the principles of OneUNSW and its selected members are key to the development, testing and implementation of these stream-lining projects.

The current Organisation and Staff Development Services (OSDS) unit in the Human Resources Department supports the vision, aims and activities of AdminNet.
ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008

1. Committee Members
   The committee is comprised of general members and the following office bearer positions for which no previous experience is necessary: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, IT Officer and Marketing Coordinator. (Due to the lack of UNSW funding, a Treasurer was not required for 2008). Each office bearer is elected for 2 years. This time frame offers a significant opportunity to gain and/or improve skills such as chairing meetings, minute writing, financial and budget matters, web design, events management, and OHS. Monthly committee meetings and monthly lunch-time seminars guarantee the application of these skills on a regular basis and, thus, provided a functional and positive opportunity for the development of these essential skills.

   At least five new AdminNet members were appointed to office bearer positions for the last term, allowing them the scope to develop and demonstrate new skills in these roles.

2. Membership
   AdminNet currently has 450 members.

   AdminNet have an email explode list comprising or all members of this network. Members can circulate questions on any UNSW related topic to the explode list and be rewarded with numerous replies with helpful information. This has proven to be one of the most effective and positive aspects to AdminNet, and encourages the sharing of information to assist fellow administrators.

3. Development of competencies
   AdminNet surveyed members to find out the topics that were of greatest importance to administrators. We then held four monthly lunch-time seminars on a range of topics which had been identified and were relevant to all administrative positions within UNSW. These seminars offered administrative staff a means of self-directed learning and enhancing their understanding of the University’s overall policies, procedures, and systems to build on during their career and life.

4. Development of careers
   AdminNet provides the environment to develop the skills the careers of administrators in two ways. Firstly, by actively enhancing the development of skills and competencies as described above, and assisting staff to achieve confidence to apply for positions which require those skills and competencies. Secondly, AdminNet provides the only network open to all administrative staff at UNSW through which members get to know each other across campus and can find out about career possibilities in other areas of UNSW. AdminNet supported this form of networking with an afternoon tea for Administrative Professionals Day held on 30th April 2008 and had a combined End of Year Lunch with TechNet which was held on 3rd December 2008.
CONSTRAINTS IN 2008

Due to the lack of funding in 2008:

1. AdminNet was unable to train their IT Officer in Dreamweaver so that AdminNet’s website http://www.adminnet.unsw.edu.au could have been re-designed and expanded as a matter of urgency.
2. No Treasurer was appointed as no money needed to be reconciled.
3. AdminNet functions could not be catered.

2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1. Committee Meetings
   26th February
   1st April
   13th May
   10th June
   1st July
   5th August
   2nd September
   8th October
   5th November

   The minutes from each meeting are available on the AdminNet website.

2. Lunchtime Seminars
   Creative Decision Making - 13th August
   Financial Services – question and answer session - 26th August
   Engagement of Contractors and payment of their invoices (FSD01) – 23rd September
   Fringe Benefits Tax explained – 28th October

3. Networking Events
   Afternoon Tea for Administrative Professionals Day - 30th April, sponsored by ATEM

   AdminNet joined by TechNet held their annual End of Year Lunch, on Wednesday 3rd December, with a number of UNSW related bodies supporting this event.

   The lunch was held in the UNSW Quad restaurant with the catering staff substantially discounting the food. There were 111 members who attended this very successful lunch. Donations in terms of prizes and or gift vouchers were received from the following organizations:

   - ANZ Bank
   - UNSW Book Shop
   - Kampus Hairdressing
   - The Unicom Credit Union
   - UNSW Sport & Recreation

   The AdminNet Committee would like to acknowledge and thank OSDS for funding this event which was in the amount $1,500 (AdminNet contribution).
AIMS FOR 2009

AdminNet has many future projects in mind to meet its objectives:

- To appoint a Patron. Prof Barbara Messerle, Head of School, Chemistry has been approached;
- To continue to hold regular committee meetings;
- To increase the number of lunchtime sessions held to 10 per calendar year;
- To continue to increase membership numbers to 600 by the end of 2009;
- To hold social events for the purpose of networking;
- To provide useful information in the form of a “tips sheet” on a monthly basis via the AdminNet email explode list and website;
- To redesign and expand AdminNet’s website which may include a list of resources; UNSW current staff looking for work within the UNSW;
- To pilot a ‘New Colleague’ support system within AdminNet across the university, for new administrative staff or existing staff in a new position;
- To identify development and on-going learning requests from administrative staff through annual questionnaires;
- To liaise with similar groups in other institutions enhancing cross-institutional network activities, in particular with ATEM (Association for Tertiary Education Management, http://www.atem.org.au). In keeping with the University’s focus on bringing in external funding, AdminNet intends to apply for funding from ATEM;
- To continue to actively assist the University of Wollongong with setting up their own AdminNet;
- To provide information on AdminNet to all new administration staff through the Faculty/School/Dept HR Consultants/Officers.

AdminNet sees its future in addressing administrative staff development issues as a complement to the UNSW strategy.

Calendar of Events 2009

Committee Meetings

23rd February
2nd March
6th April
9th June
3rd August
6th October
16th October

Lunchtime Sessions

25th March
29th April
14th May
18th June
14th July
18th August
16th September
14th October
10th November
2nd December - (End of Year Lunch - Combined with TechNet)
CONCLUSION AND BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR 2009

UNSW administrators have demonstrated via their association with AdminNet and participation in events that they are keen to develop skills and share information. In six years AdminNet has grown to include 450 members and consistently holds events and seminars that are well supported by the administrators on campus.

In order to continue to act as a network for administrators and hold functions, seminars and celebrations that support staff in their UNSW roles, the AdminNet Committee believes that AdminNet should be financially supported by OSIDS in 2009. This assistance would be used to promote communication, knowledge sharing and networking within administrators at UNSW.

With past experience in mind, growing member numbers and the ambition to realise the aims for 2009, the AdminNet Committee applies herewith for funding in the amount of $5,000.

AdminNet will also be applying to the UNSW ATEM committee for additional funds to also support its activities.

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AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES QUALITY AGENCY

Report of an Audit of The University of New South Wales

3. People

3.2.2 Networks for Sharing Good Practice

AdminNet and TechNet are initiatives of UNSW staff that assist in communication and the sharing of good practice across the University. AdminNet, which was established by administrative staff, is supported by Organisation and Staff Development Services (OSIDS). TechNet is an initiative of the technical staff of UNSW and is run by a volunteer committee, and also supported by OSIDS. In common with similar networks in other universities, TechNet provides a technical support network that includes: a database of skills, equipment, resources and facilities; web based training; and mentoring and assistance for technical staff. In recognition of the valuable role played by these semi-formal networks, the Audit Panel suggests the University consider the provision of some additional resourcing support to each network.

Reference: AUQA Audit Report Number 42
http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/universities/
## 2009 AdminNet Funding Request

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Benefit to organisation</th>
<th>Resources required</th>
<th>Funding requested</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training &amp; Knowledge Sharing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information sessions eg: HR Policies &amp; Processes; strategic directions; Environment Unit; NSS; etc</td>
<td>Visible presence of AdminNet on campus; Visible presence of support from UNSW for professional development of staff; Sessions complement existing training opportunities of OSDS; Increase knowledge capabilities and networking skills of staff. (link to OneUNSW initiative)</td>
<td>Volunteer time to coordinate activities, OSDS administrative support Room hire, catering; sandwiches, tea, coffee</td>
<td>$1288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships for ATEM – administrative staff professional association membership <a href="http://www.atem.org.au">www.atem.org.au</a></td>
<td>Increase - knowledge, capabilities; networking skills of staff; professionalism &amp; development of staff; and management skills of administrative staff. Act in a marketing role and advise AdminNet on skills gained from the membership.</td>
<td>Membership @ $121 2 memberships = $242 OSDS management support to assist with promotion and selection criteria/process.</td>
<td>$242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AdminNet website upgrade and supporting scholarship for website skills training <a href="http://www.adminnet.unsw.edu.au">www.adminnet.unsw.edu.au</a></td>
<td>Visible electronic presence of AdminNet on campus. Increase technical capabilities of staff. Allow successful applicant to provide assistance to other administrative staff and transfer skills gained. Allow AdminNet activities to be developed into online resources for staff.</td>
<td>Web training for a committee member and software upgrade to utilise new technology for the website. Volunteer committee time. OSDS administrative support. OSDS management support to assist with promotion and selection criteria/process.</td>
<td>$1120</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Networking</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing to promote AdminNet and its activities</td>
<td>Communicating benefits of AdminNet to staff and encouraging staff to join and participate in events.</td>
<td>Purchasing of promotional items such as pens etc. printing brochures, flyers etc. Volunteer committee time.</td>
<td>$850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email explode list</td>
<td>An electronic mechanism which provides a resource to: knowledge sharing, process sharing, resource sharing; problem solving; networking.</td>
<td>Used by AdminNet members when required</td>
<td>Nil from UNSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Benefit to organisation</td>
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<td>Funding requested</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey Monkey</td>
<td>A resource used to create surveys/questionnaires, that is sent out to members to identify development of AdminNet and on-going learning requests (eg lunch time sessions).</td>
<td>Volunteer committee time. OSDS administrative support. OSDS management support in analysing and using the results.</td>
<td>Nil from UNSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATEM event on campus ATEM funding available – for Administrative Professionals Day May 2</td>
<td>Visible presence of AdminNet and ATEM on campus, recognition of Administrators on campus, increase networking skills of staff (link to OneUNSW initiative)</td>
<td>$500 available from ATEM Volunteer committee time. OSDS administrative support.</td>
<td>Nil from UNSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second ATEM event on campus (external ATEM funding available) – a follow up from Administrative Professionals event</td>
<td>Visible presence of AdminNet and ATEM on campus, recognition of Administrators on campus, increase networking skills of staff (link to OneUNSW initiative)</td>
<td>$500 available from ATEM Volunteer committee time. OSDS administrative support.</td>
<td>Nil from UNSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Year BBQ (joint with TechNet)</td>
<td>Visible presence of AdminNet on campus, visible presence of support from UNSW for professional staff, increase networking skills of staff (link to OneUNSW initiative)</td>
<td>$1500 based on budget for this event held in previous years (approx 100 in attendance at $15 per head) Volunteer committee time. OSDS administrative support. Guest speaker- AdminNet Patron</td>
<td>$1500</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total funding allocation requested</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>$5000</strong></td>
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Signed on behalf of AdminNet Committee in consultation with the Committee

Committee members:
Tatjana Kroll; Anne Jordan; Christine Tonous

**WEBSITE**
http://www.adminnet.unsw.edu.au/