

Policy Plan 2024-2025



SVU Volleybal

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Prologue

Dear reader,

The 55th Board of SVU Volleybal, hereinafter referred to as The Board, Board 55 or the 55th Board and SVU respectively, hereby presents the policy plan for the association year 2024-2025. It contains all the long- and short-term goals that the board envisions for the association. We are delighted to be able to propose our ideas that we believe will benefit the members of this association for the year 2024-2025 and the future years to come.

The structure of this document is as follows: The first part includes a general description of the board's long-term vision. The second section sets out the board's short-term vision. The third and final section contains an annual overview for members and external parties to provide insight into all the activities for the coming season.

This document serves as a guideline for this and all future boards. The document only contains guidelines and objectives. The board may invoke their discretion. Members will always be informed about important decisions and, if necessary, a vote will be held during the next General Members Meeting.

We hope you enjoy reading this policy plan!

Board 55

Ruth Daniel, Robin Wezenberg, Nina Scheer, Lisette Pot and Selin Yağmur Çakmak

1. Introduction

SVU Volleyball, known simply as SVU, is Amsterdam's largest international student volleyball club, boasting 15 competition teams and one mixed training team. Our teams range from 6th class to promotion class, with players training once or twice a week. As an active and vibrant association, SVU emphasises both skill development and the joy of playing volleyball together. Our goal is to give members the chance to improve their skills, individually and as a team, while building a strong sense of community and making lifelong friendships. This season, SVU remains the largest student volleyball club in Amsterdam with 16 teams. Although limited training slots at Sportcentrum VU prevent us from adding more teams, we are focusing on strengthening the skills within our existing teams. By attracting higher-level players during try-outs and supporting our current members' growth, we aim to raise the club's overall skill level. This focus on development also helps manage the regular turnover of players, as stronger members can step into higher teams when positions open up.

In addition to volleyball, SVU offers a vibrant social scene, hosting a variety of sports-related and social events throughout the year to encourage interaction and fun. As an international club, we celebrate a wide range of cultural backgrounds, enriching our community with diversity and creating a welcoming environment for everyone. In 2024-2025, Board 55 wants to upkeep the traditions and great atmosphere that make SVU such a welcoming association, while focusing on creating a safe environment to play sports. Therefore, this policy plan will highlight some new measures as recommended both by Board 55 and the Nevobo to ensure that social safety is supported even further.

2. Long Term Goals

2.1 General Matters

2.1.1 Association Culture

SVU aims to be a club that is open and welcoming to everyone, regardless of background or nationality. We are proud of our – albeit self-given – reputation as the most "fun" volleyball club in Amsterdam, a title we strive to uphold through fostering a strong sense of community and inclusivity. Building connections among members is a top priority, with numerous opportunities throughout the season for members from all teams to interact. By involving both new and seasoned members in organising activities, we strengthen bonds across teams and create an inviting atmosphere that encourages everyone to feel at home.

As an international student volleyball association, SVU has made significant strides over the years in making our activities and information accessible for non-Dutch members. Last year's board played an essential role in this by translating all official documents into English and conducting General Members Meetings in English, making it easier for everyone to participate. We're grateful for these efforts and are committed to continuing this practice to ensure inclusivity. Although less than 10% of our active members last year were international, a third of our total membership this year is non-Dutch, highlighting the need for further efforts in inclusiveness.

To meet this need, we'll continue to provide all SVU documents in English and will hold General Members Meetings in English to ensure accessibility for everyone. Since we're based in the Netherlands, where most members primarily speak Dutch, we'll also provide information in both Dutch and English wherever possible. Additionally, members are welcome to ask questions in Dutch during meetings or request clarification in Dutch if needed. Although balancing committees with members from different teams and backgrounds can be challenging, we believe that encouraging active involvement is essential for SVU's ongoing success as an inclusive and welcoming association.

2.1.2 Safety, Diversity and Inclusion

At SVU, we prioritise creating a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all members. We want everyone to feel comfortable deciding whether to join activities or traditions without any pressure, especially new members. Our culture is distinct from more "traditional" associations, and we emphasise a non-obligatory approach during introductory events and other gatherings.

To support this safe atmosphere, members have access to carefully selected confidential advisors, both internal and external, who are available for anyone needing support or a private space to discuss concerns. We make these advisors visible within the association to ensure everyone feels comfortable reaching out. In addition, we are continuing the initiative started by the previous board to establish a safety, diversity, and inclusion focus group. This group will serve as a platform for open discussion on these topics, led by a moderator to ensure a safe and respectful environment. Members can express interest in joining the focus group, which will be held in the second half of the season, allowing us to review and address feedback before the second General Members Meeting.

To gather input from all members, we will distribute an anonymous survey on the club's culture, safety, and inclusivity. The survey will be shared at the end of the first half of the season, with responses reviewed regularly so we can share insights and potential actions at the second General Members Meeting. The form will be available through the monthly infomail and WhatsApp groups, and will include contact information for the board and confidential advisors, allowing members to stay anonymous or choose to follow up directly if they wish. Through these combined efforts, we aim to make SVU a comfortable, inclusive, and safe space where all members can feel heard, valued, and fully enjoy their experience within the association.

2.1.3 Behavioural Code

At SVU, we are dedicated to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment where everyone feels at home. We embrace diversity and welcome people of all genders, sexual orientations, and cultural, social, and religious backgrounds. To ensure a positive experience for all, we have a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of racism, discrimination, exclusion, or bullying. These behaviours are not acceptable at SVU. Last year's board established a behavioural code to set clear standards for conduct, which we will continue to build upon. This code reinforces that inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. All members are expected to uphold these standards at all times, and violations will be addressed by the Board, or if needed, in collaboration with the Supervisory Board. If necessary, disciplinary actions, including expulsion, may be considered, with each case assessed individually to ensure fairness.

Our commitment to a positive club culture also includes promoting good sportsmanship and respect. We expect all members to demonstrate respect toward their own teammates, players from other associations, and especially referees, as they play a crucial role in the game. Additionally, we strictly enforce a zero-tolerance policy on drugs at all SVU events, both at the VU Sportcentrum and external locations, to maintain a safe and respectful environment. To further support inclusivity, we will integrate national guidelines on LGBTQ+ inclusion in sports into our code, ensuring that all members feel supported and respected. Each of these points—our code of conduct, respect for referees, good sportsmanship, zero-tolerance policy on drugs, and LGBTQ+ inclusivity—will be elaborated on in Section 3.1.1.2, providing a comprehensive view of our commitment to a positive and inclusive association culture.

2.2 Administrative Matters

2.2.1 Materials

SVU currently has 9 women's teams and 6 men's teams competing in volleyball, making it essential to maintain high-quality equipment to support a successful season. Most of our hardware is provided by the Sportcentrum VU, which requires that these items are kept in good condition. If any equipment needs replacement due to regular wear, the SVU board will coordinate with Sportcentrum VU to arrange for new items. However, if replacement is needed due to careless handling by SVU members, the club will bear the costs.

At the start of each season, ball bags with whistles are distributed to teams, and competition shirts are handed out to individual members (see section 2.2.2 for details). A spreadsheet tracks each member's assigned shirt size and number, making it easy to identify any unreturned shirts at the end of the season. The Secretary will collect all ball bags and shirts after the season, setting a return deadline. Members who fail to return items on time will be fined, with the Secretary reporting this to the Treasurer. To ensure quality and consistency, SVU-owned match and training balls are regularly inspected. Each training basket is stocked with 12 balls, and we prioritise using the same type of ball for uniformity. Thanks to last year's investment in new equipment, most balls remain in good condition, allowing us to focus on proper maintenance. If trainers require additional materials for training, the board can consider purchasing them in consultation with Sportcentrum VU. These measures help ensure that our teams have the resources they need for an organised and successful season.

2.2.2 Competition Shirts

Since the 2019-2020 season, SVU has been using competition shirts funded and sponsored by the VU. However, as VU funding is no longer available for new shirts, a dedicated savings account, known as the 'Shirts Saving Plan,' has been established to finance future purchases sustainably, as detailed in section 2.3.3. To address the issue of correctly fitting shirts, an additional order was placed in the 2022-2023 season. This season, we had to place another order to replace missing shirts, which was a significant expense that further strained our resources and depleted much of the savings. This year, we are focusing extra attention on improving shirt administration by creating a simpler timeline and tracking system. This will allow future Secretaries of SVU to more easily manage the inventory and track the number of shirts, helping to avoid costly, last-minute orders and ensuring we can continue to provide uniforms to all players in a more efficient and sustainable way.

2.2.3 Sportlink Club Portal

Accurate records in the Sportlink Club portal, including current photos, are essential for all members. The Secretary will ensure playing members' photos are up-to-date, using images from the Smoelenboek. This is particularly important for competition players, who rely on accurate info for match scheduling, as well as for recreational players in Team Mix 1, who need accurate records for tournament participation. Keeping these details current ensures smooth engagement for all members.

2.2.4 Alumni Plan

Alumni are former SVU members who continue to support the club through an annual contribution of €25. The €25 fee gives alumni access to SVU events (except for introductory activities) and allows them to join team activities, as long as the team agrees unanimously. As more alumni join, we will review this policy to ensure fairness, see section 3.2.3. Becoming an alumni member is a way for former players to stay connected to SVU, attend certain events, and show ongoing support. This membership essentially acts as a sponsorship, helping to sustain the club financially while also maintaining relationships with past members. With the lustrum celebrations this year, we expect the number of alumni members to grow, which gives us a valuable opportunity to strengthen this connection further.

2.3 Financial Matters

2.3.1 Professionalisation

As SVU grows, we're working to make the club more professional, particularly in how we handle our finances. The past few years, two important improvements have been made:

1. **Conscribo Accounting Software:** We've been using Conscribo since the 2021/2022 season to simplify our financial management. It links directly to the club's bank account, making it easier for Treasurers to keep track of transactions and reducing the risk of mistakes or fraud. At the end of each year, Conscribo gives us a clear financial overview, helping the Board stay on top of finances more efficiently.
2. **Direct Debit Payments:** To make payments easier for everyone, we've switched to direct debit for all membership fees and quarterly activity payments. Members will receive an email two weeks in advance, giving them time to ensure they have enough funds in their account. Payments will then be automatically processed in bulk, reducing manual work for the Treasurer. We are also adding fines to direct debit payments, which will be applied if any rules are violated. Affected members will be notified in advance, and the fines will be collected with their regular payments.

2.3.2 Financial Stability

In recent years, the NT and IT events have been pivotal in ensuring SVU's financial stability. To protect against the possibility of a year without either event, a financial reserve of €7,449.29 has been established. This reserve is meant to cover any shortfalls, allowing SVU to weather a "disaster year" without compromising its overall financial health. If such a year occurs, both events would need to resume the following year to restore normal operations. To further safeguard SVU's finances, a contingency plan should be consistently updated and reviewed. This plan takes into consideration unexpected expenses from the previous year, the size of the general buffer, and current membership figures. While the contingency fund is flexible, it should not become excessive, as the funds could be better used elsewhere within the association.

Additionally, the Treasurer has introduced a set of guidelines for committee budgeting, ensuring a standard approach for budget preparation and review. All committee budgets must be carefully examined by the Treasurer before events take place. Effective communication between the Treasurer and the committee treasurers is essential to maintaining consistency and transparency in financial management across the association.

2.3.3 Shirts Saving Plan

In the past, SVU received match shirts on loan through a sponsorship from the VU, which covered replacements for worn or missing shirts. With the end of this sponsorship, SVU is now responsible for funding shirt replacements. To manage this, a savings fund was established, with the goal of contributing at least €500 annually. We aim to build a total of €8,000 within the next 3 to 4 years to cover ongoing replacement needs. Currently, the savings fund holds €5,441.55, though a portion was recently spent on a shirt order. Replenishing this fund is a priority, and we hope to contribute more than the usual €500 this year to rebuild the reserve. Additionally, after the International Tournament,

all crew shirts will be collected and reused for future events, including both the International and Night Tournaments. This will help reduce long-term costs by minimising the need for new crew shirts each year.

2.4 Technical Matters

2.4.1 Recruitment

Each year, SVU experiences a significant turnover in membership, with new players joining and others leaving across various skill levels. While recruiting lower-level players is generally easier, attracting talent for higher-level teams remains more challenging. This year, for example, filling the Gents 1 team was particularly difficult, as several players left, and the team wasn't fully staffed at the start of the season despite some creative decisions that were made to fill the roster. Since most non-student volleyball clubs finalise their team rosters by the end of May, it's crucial for SVU to start advertising open positions for higher-level teams earlier in the year. By understanding the plans of current high-level players, we can better identify potential gaps and target our recruitment efforts more effectively, even focusing on specific positions if needed, through social media for example.

In addition to external recruitment, SVU should also focus on internal player development. This year, many players moved up to higher teams, and we aim to continue creating pathways for current players to progress within the club. By offering opportunities for players to participate in higher-level training sessions, we encourage skill development and help strengthen the overall quality of our teams.

2.4.2 Trainers

SVU experiences a high turnover rate among trainers, much like with players. Retaining trainers for longer periods is crucial for maintaining stability and growth within teams. To promote a positive and rewarding trainer experience, SVU offers benefits such as allowances, recognition stars, and training sessions for both licensed and unlicensed trainers. Each year, we assess measures to encourage trainers to stay with the club. At the start of each season, the Head of the Technical Committee organises an introductory training for new trainers, outlining their key responsibilities and providing an opportunity to exchange knowledge. This session is essential for aligning all trainers with SVU's goals and expectations.

To further enhance the quality of training, SVU supports trainers in obtaining licences such as the VT2 and VT3. These licences are relevant to the level at which SVU competes and help improve both the trainer's skills and their commitment to the club. The VT2 course, in particular, is a valuable investment for SVU, as it has the most potential for long-term impact. This year, the VT2 course will be held, as detailed in section 3.4.1. While VT3 training is also available, it should be considered on a case-by-case basis due to the cost and long-term commitment required from both the trainer and the club.

2.4.3 Referees

Referees are an essential part of every sport, whatever the level might be. Volleyball is no exception, which is why it is important to involve all members in refereeing. The different levels of qualifications required for referees are as follows, each with its specific requirements and responsibilities:

- V6: The V6 licence is required to referee a match, and all members must pass the Game Rule Test, available online in English. Members who have not passed it yet are regularly reminded, particularly by team captains, and while there are no penalties for failing the test, refereeing without a V6 licence results in a fine.
- V4: A V4 licence is required for refereeing higher-level matches starting from the 2nd class, and it can be obtained by attending an in-person training session. This training, which lasts a few hours, is provided internally by SVU's certified experts.
- VS3: A VS3 licence is required to officiate Promotion class matches and, potentially, third division games. Each team in the Promotion class must earn at least 12 points from VS3 referees to meet Nevobo's annual requirement. While we successfully met this target this year, recruiting enough referees continues to be a challenge each season. From the 2024-2025 season onward, failure to meet the requirement will result in sanctions.
- VS3 Second: Besides the VS3 referees, VS3 Second referees are also much needed. Particularly since all the Gents 1 matches need a VS3 Second referee designated by SVU itself. The course only takes up to 3 hours. The second referee supports the VS3 first referee with tasks during the match.

The Nevobo has set a goal for clubs to become "Arbitration Proof." How SVU will achieve this is outlined in section 2.4.4. To meet this goal, four key conditions must be satisfied:

1. The association must have a referee coordinator,
2. A club arbitration plan must be established,
3. A designated board member must oversee arbitration,
4. A sufficient number of qualified referees must be maintained.

2.4.4 Arbitration

As mentioned earlier, referees are a crucial part of the game. SVU is responsible for providing referees for all home games, as well as ensuring that each team in the Promotion class earns 12 points through officiating. As SVU has grown in both size and skill level, the demand for referees with various qualifications has also increased, in line with our goal of raising the overall standard of the association. It is vital for SVU to maintain a sufficient number of regional referees to meet these requirements. Due to high turnover, we must also ensure a consistent supply of V4 and VS3 referees to prevent shortages when licensed members leave. This year's efforts to address this challenge are outlined in section 3.4.3.

Additionally, the Nevobo aims for clubs to become "Arbitration Proof," as explained earlier. The criteria for this are outlined in the club arbitration plan, which was updated at the end of the previous year by the Head of the Technical Committee. This plan details our current status and improvement goals for the year. Regularly reviewing and updating the plan will help track progress in

recruiting and training referees, ensuring a steady flow and ideally a growth in qualified referees at SVU.

2.5. External Matters

2.5.1 Privacy

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was introduced in 2018 to protect personal data and ensure transparency in its use. Under the GDPR, personal data can only be used with the individual's consent. To comply with these rules, SVU asks members to complete a digital GDPR form, where they provide personal information and specify how it can be used. Members must fill out this form, especially to provide emergency contact details, and to indicate whether they agree to be featured on SVU's social media. The form helps us keep track of members' preferences and ensures that their wishes are respected, particularly regarding photo use. To address members being hesitant to fill in the official-sounding questions on the form, we plan to offer an opportunity for those who haven't given consent yet to update their preferences, especially during the half-year membership turnover.

2.4.2 Sponsors

SVU generates additional income by attracting sponsors who align with our values and appeal to our members. We focus on building long-standing relationships with existing sponsors, such as DressMe, while also exploring opportunities to bring in new sponsors that resonate with our diverse member base. These sponsors should not only be relevant to students involved in sports but also offer opportunities in areas like part-time jobs, events, and career development. To attract new sponsors, we emphasise that SVU is a student sports association, which distinguishes us from other student organisations. Our members are a mix of social, party-loving individuals and ambitious, future professionals from various academic backgrounds, making SVU an appealing partner for a wide range of companies. Further details about our sponsorship goals and strategy for this year will be discussed in section 3.5.2.

2.5.3 Relationship with the Sportcentrum VU and SSA

We want to strengthen our partnership with the Sportcentrum VU, as they are our main connection and provide us with the space to hold our events and activities. Their support is essential to our club's success, so we aim to maintain a positive and collaborative relationship with them. Additionally, the SSA (Stichting Studentensport Amsterdam) links the universities with student sports clubs across Amsterdam, including SVU. It's important for us to keep a good relationship with SSA as well, especially since they will now be handling the subsidy that was previously provided by the Sportcentrum VU. By working closely with both the Sportcentrum VU and SSA, we can ensure SVU's continued growth and stability. We elaborate more on this topic in sections 3.3.4 and 3.5.1.

3. Short Term Goals

3.1 General Matters

3.1.1 Culture

At SVU, we are committed to creating a welcoming and open environment for everyone, no matter their background. We want every member to feel included and comfortable, whether they're new to volleyball or have been with us for years. We welcome people of all genders, sexual orientations, cultures, religions, and social backgrounds. This year, SVU is prioritising social responsibility and safety within the club by following a number of guidelines set out by the Nevobo and the SSA, as well as updating the code of conduct.

3.1.1.1 Social Responsibility

This year, SVU is prioritising social responsibility and safety within the club by implementing measures in line with Nevobo's 4 Vs of Social Responsibility, as urgently recommended. These standards are not only essential for creating a safe and inclusive environment but also a requirement to qualify for free VOG (Certificate of Good Conduct) access, as stipulated by the municipality.

The 4 V's of Social Responsibility include the following key areas:

1. Association-Wide Code of Conduct ("Verenigingsbrede Gedragscode"): We will update the club's Code of Conduct to define expected behaviours and create a respectful, inclusive culture, see section 3.1.1.2.
2. Confidants at the Club ("Vertrouwenscontactpersoon op de club"): Confidants are available to listen to concerns, address issues confidentially, and provide guidance on further steps if needed. This year, we will further raise awareness about the role of our confidants to encourage members to reach out, ensuring that support is accessible to everyone. Additionally, we aim to create a guide for future confidants on how to navigate these conversations and the flow of information.
3. VOG for critical members ("VOG voor kaderleden"): Key members such as trainers, board members, and Kasco and RVC members will be required to obtain a VOG. This ensures that those in leadership roles are properly screened, building trust within the club. For VT2 trainers, this is already a requirement. We are in the process of getting recognised as an association that qualifies for free VOGs.
4. Educated trainers ("Vakkundig geschoolde trainer-coaches"): We will continue to enhance our trainers' education by bringing in an experienced external trainer and offering VT2 courses to ensure a high standard of training and safety within the club.

3.1.1.2 Code of Conduct

Our goal is to keep SVU a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. Building on last year's board's work, we will update the code of conduct to align with NOC*NSF standards and meet SSA and municipal requirements. This year, we'll focus on:

1. Sportsmanship: Emphasising respect on and off the court to foster a positive atmosphere where everyone enjoys playing.
2. Respect for Referees: Reinforcing the importance of treating referees with respect to encourage more people to take on this vital role.

3. Zero-Tolerance Policy: Enforcing a strict ban on soft and hard drugs at all SVU events, and promoting responsible alcohol consumption to maintain a safe environment.
4. Inclusivity: Strengthening our commitment to being an inclusive club for all, including adopting an LGBTQ+ policy in line with NOC*NSF guidelines.

3.1.1.3 Anonymous Survey

Last year, an anonymous survey was sent out to gather feedback on the club's culture and safety. This year, we want to implement it again and plan to distribute it at the end of the first half of the season. This will allow us to evaluate the results and share insights at the second General Members Meeting. Additionally, we're re-establishing the focus group for members who want to discuss these topics in more depth, with an option in the survey to stay anonymous or provide contact information to join the group.

3.1.2 Committee Matters

One challenge we've noticed over time is the loss of important information between committee handovers. With committees often having new members each year, vital details or agreements can get lost, resulting in the unnecessary need to "reinvent the wheel." This can lead to confusion or inefficiency, such as missing key agreements, like the required number of sober members or first aid-certified volunteers for major events like the International Tournament. These gaps in information make it harder to maintain consistency and can impact the smooth running of events. To address this, we are working with the committee coordinator to ensure each committee updates its script this year. This will help create a better flow of information, making sure new members can easily pick up where previous ones left off without needing to start from scratch.

Additionally, we are exploring the possibility of merging the Webcie and Mercie this year. Both committees have seemingly too little work this year to justify forming whole committees, let alone separate ones. The merger could create a more dynamic committee with more opportunities to be creative and have fun while making meaningful connections with other members, as being a part of a committee typically leads to. Finally, the Galacie will not be in operation this year, as the annual gala will be hosted during the Lustrum week and organised by the Lustrum Committee.

3.1.3 Board Visibility and Recruitment

This year, we aim to increase the visibility of the board, ensuring that members know who to approach with any questions or concerns. A visible and accessible board helps foster a stronger connection with the club and ensures smoother communication. At the same time, we want to highlight how rewarding and enjoyable being a board member at SVU can be. To encourage more members to get involved, we will actively promote the board experience by showcasing the friendships, skills, and fun that come with the role. We'll start recruitment earlier, even before the "Board Interest Borrels," to give potential candidates more time to consider applying. By sharing stories from current board members on social media, we hope to inspire others to take the leap and make board membership something members look forward to with enthusiasm.

3.2 Administrative Matters

3.2.1 Accessibility of Information

We want to ensure all members have easy access to important information. To help with this, we encourage everyone to join the relevant group chats and read the monthly info emails, which are also shared as PDFs for easy reference. Our social media will provide updates, and the board will send out the yearly How To Survive guide, summarising all key information for new and returning members. Unfortunately, the guide will be sent out later than usual this year, but we'll ensure it reaches everyone as soon as possible. We will also continue using the announcements chat, where only board members can post, to consolidate crucial information. By keeping communication clear and accessible, we aim to keep everyone informed and connected.

3.2.2 Match Shirts

As usual, the Secretary took responsibility for tracking and distributing the match shirts to each team this year. To improve efficiency, we requested shirt sizes in advance via the form used for the Smoelenboek, ensuring that everyone received a shirt in the correct size. Additionally, we placed an extra order for shirts to ensure we could accommodate everyone's needs and maintain consecutive shirt numbers within teams. We are focusing some extra attention on careful shirt administration to streamline the process and improve inventory management. This will help ensure we are better equipped to meet demand and track shirt distribution more efficiently going forward.

3.2.3 Alumni Plan

To make being an alumni more appealing and fun, we want to keep alumni members updated and engaged with the club. Like last year, there is an alumni group chat, which we aim to make more lively and active, sharing updates and keeping everyone in the loop. Additionally, we hope to plan an alumni-only event to give former members a chance to reconnect and celebrate together. Also, this year is a lustrum year, which means we're celebrating SVU's 55th anniversary! The Lustrum Committee is reinstated to plan a range of exciting events, including a dedicated lustrum week. It's a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with past members and welcome them back to SVU, potentially as new alumni members. We hope to make this year memorable for everyone, both new and old members alike.

As our alumni base continues to grow, we recognize the need to adapt our alumni plan to accommodate a larger number of members in the coming years. Currently, the €25 fee provides alumni with access to SVU events (excluding introductory activities) and allows them to participate in team activities, provided there is unanimous agreement from the team.

We have reviewed this policy and, starting this association year after the first General Members Meeting, we plan to make changes to ensure fairness. Specifically, alumni will no longer be able to join SVU-only events, such as the International Tournament. For the Night Tournament, however, everyone is still welcome to participate, as externals can sign up with their own teams — and alumni will be required to do the same in order to take part.

3.3 Financial Matters

3.3.1 Professionalisation

Significant efforts have been made to professionalise SVU's financial management, as outlined in section 2.3.1. We will continue using Conscribo accounting software, which provides a clear and reliable financial overview, and direct debits for all membership and activity payments. This year, we will be stricter in enforcing the policies already in place, particularly regarding fines imposed on teams or individuals for breaches of internal or Nevobo rules. Due to some unforeseen costs early in the season, see section 3.3.2, we will focus on tightening the club's finances to ensure we avoid running at a deficit.

This year is a Lustrum year, and the Lustrum Committee (Luco) is organising several events, including the gala, which will significantly increase the committee's financial activity. To ensure proper financial management, we propose that during future Lustrum years, either the current or a former SVU treasurer should also serve as the Lustrum Committee's treasurer, similar to how the SVU treasurer handles the International Tournament finances. Since the committee starts its planning before the new board is elected, there may be timing challenges, but it is crucial that the role is filled by someone with experience to avoid potential risks.

3.3.2 Unforeseen Costs

Unfortunately, at the start of the year, SVU faced several unforeseen costs. The previous year's gala ran at a loss, and additional repairs were needed after the event. An extra shirt order also had to be placed due to a shortage. On top of that, we were informed that our subsidy from the SSA will be significantly reduced, with the €8,500 we typically receive likely to be cut in half next year, see section 3.3.4. Hall rental costs also turned out to be slightly higher than anticipated. While the financial situation this year is manageable, it's important that we stay vigilant with our budget to avoid running a deficit and ensure we can replenish the shirt savings plan for the future.

3.3.3 Shirt Saving Plan

This year, an extra order placed for team uniforms has significantly impacted our shirt savings fund, making it a priority to replenish this reserve. Typically, when items are lost or damaged, we can track them through careful administration and inventory management. At the end of each year, when members return their items, we categorise any unreturned items as either lost, unreturned by the member, or damaged and removed from circulation. However, following the 2022-2023 order and the summer inventory, we faced a shortfall, which has placed additional strain on our resources. As a result, we plan to contribute at least €500, or more if possible, toward rebuilding the savings fund to ensure we can continue to support future purchases and maintain a sustainable reserve.

3.3.4 SSA Subsidy

As mentioned earlier, one of our key goals this year is to strengthen our relationship with the SSA, the organisation that connects student sport clubs in Amsterdam with the universities. Like in previous years, we will attend several SSA meetings throughout the year and continue sending them monthly updates on how we are doing as a board. The SSA is a valuable resource that we can leverage as a network to guide us on various association matters. They are also responsible for

managing the subsidy of €8,500 that was previously allocated to us by the Sportcentrum VU. As the most active association at the Sportcentrum, with the most events and activities, we have benefited from this generous subsidy, which was the result of a long-standing and successful relationship between us and the Sportcentrum VU. However, starting next year, our subsidy will be significantly reduced. This year is a transition year, so we are receiving half of our subsidy from the SSA and half from Sportcentrum VU, which means we still get nearly the full original amount for this year.

The subsidy allocation is based on a calculation with five components: a basic component, materials, accommodation, competition, and trainers. The materials component is determined by the number of VU/UVA/HVA students, with diminishing returns, while the other components (accommodation, competition, and trainers) are based on actual costs relative to the number of students. One challenge is that our membership structure is different from many other clubs: we do not have "passive" members. All of our members are automatically placed in teams, which means we provide regular sports opportunities for everyone, every week. This means that we are restricted in growing our member base, as we would need to add more teams to accommodate additional members, as opposed to associations that offer a low-fee membership and allow members to sign up for classes sporadically. Another challenge is the number of registered students. For this year's subsidy calculation, the SSA used the number of registered students at the VU/UVA/HVA as of October 1st, 2023. However, last year it was believed that around 114 of our nearly 200 members were registered at the universities, but it turns out that only 73% of those students were actually registered. This led to a subsidy calculation based on just 83 students. This discrepancy has resulted in a lower subsidy than we expected.

We are working to get reclassified into a higher bracket for the materials component, where a three-class system is also used to determine how much each student counts towards the subsidy. Currently, we fall under class A, where students count only once. If we can move to a higher class, students could count 1.5 times or even twice, which would increase the subsidy amount we receive for materials. Unfortunately, this will only account for 40% of the subsidy. If we are unable to secure a larger subsidy, we may need to raise the contribution by around €20 per member. This is an important issue we are still navigating, and we are committed to finding the best solution for the club.

3.4 Technical Matters

3.4.1 Trainers

This year, the number of licensed trainers at SVU increased, due to the VT2 training sessions held in the first half of the year. Seven members are currently enrolled in the course. To further support trainer development, SVU will also offer specialised training led by an experienced external trainer, providing valuable insights and advanced techniques. Additionally, a bonus system is included in trainers' contracts to incentivise those who achieve VT2 certification, rewarding trainers once they are officially licensed. To qualify for full reimbursement of the course fees, trainers must commit to coaching for at least one more season at SVU. By offering these courses and incentives, SVU strengthens trainer retention, enhances training quality, and invests in long-term growth for the club.

3.4.2 Trainer's Drive

Efforts to improve the trainer's drive were already made last year. It was reorganised and expanded with new exercises, transforming it into a platform where trainers can share materials and inspire one another. We will continue building on this progress to make the drive an even more valuable resource for all trainers. To make it more accessible to both Dutch- and English-speaking trainers, more exercises will be uploaded in English, and the current content will be translated.

The Head of the Technical Committee will ensure all content meets a high standard, and the drive will remain a central hub for training resources, including the trainer's manual and training materials. Trainers will also be reminded every three months to upload their own exercises and sessions, promoting greater sharing of ideas and helping new trainers get started. These efforts will continue to build a more dynamic and useful resource for the whole team of trainers.

3.4.3 Arbitration

This year, the shortage of V4 referees became particularly challenging as several left the association, and the promotion of Gents 3 and Ladies 4 to the second class increased the need for V4-qualified referees. To address this, SVU organised a course to qualify two association experts, who are now able to train V4 referees within the club. Having these association experts not only allows us to conduct in-house V4 training but also ensures that they can mentor and train new experts, preventing a situation where we lack expert trainers.

The current Club Arbitration Plan (CAP) at SVU, updated last year by the Head of the Technical Committee, focuses on increasing the number of licensed referees, particularly for higher-level teams. This includes the following expectations:

- For teams in the Promotion league or higher:
 - At least one new VS3 licensed referee per season
 - At least one new VS3 second referee per season
 - All players must have at least a V4 licence
- For teams in the First or Second class:
 - At least one new VS3 second referee per season
 - All players must have at least a V4 licence

Efforts to try to meet these requirements are already underway, with new VS3 and VS3 second referees in the pipeline. Additionally, we will develop a cheat sheet to provide referees with a clear and concise overview of the most important rules of the game. This will serve as a quick reference tool, helping referees feel more confident and prepared when managing matches, ensuring they can make accurate decisions with greater ease and less stress.

3.4.4 Arbitration Committee

Refereeing often carries a negative image, despite being a challenging and rewarding role that contributes greatly to the sport. To improve both the popularity and appreciation of referees, SVU has introduced several initiatives in recent years. In the 2022-2023 season, the Arbitration Committee (Arcie) was created to support VS3 referees, VS3 second referees, and association

experts. Led by the Head of the Technical Committee, the Arcie organises activities throughout the year to engage members and build a positive culture around refereeing. This year, the goal is to host at least three activities that balance education with recreation, keeping the focus on sport and refereeing.

In addition to these efforts, we plan to enhance the respect for referees by adding a clause to the code of conduct. This will emphasise the importance of referees in the game and encourage respectful behaviour. Instances of rudeness towards referees have been observed, and we aim to create a supportive environment where referees feel valued and confident in their role. Through these initiatives, we hope to change perceptions and increase both interest and involvement in refereeing at SVU.

3.4.5 Hall Materials

We are currently working on getting the hall equipment repaired or replaced, focusing specifically on poles with defective handles and broken antennas. This is especially important because the Driekamp tournament this year required eight fields, and we didn't have enough antennas for all courts. To ensure future tournaments can utilise all available courts, we're aiming to have all materials fully checked and ready this year. The repair and replacement process takes a few months, but we are committed to completing it as soon as possible.

In addition, we emphasise the importance of keeping the SVU storage space organised. A cluttered or disorganised storage area often leads to misplaced items and makes it difficult to track our equipment properly. By maintaining an orderly space, we can manage our resources more efficiently and avoid unnecessary losses. Currently, there are only three keys to the storage — one of which is kept at the desk — and we are in the process of requesting additional keys to improve access. Unfortunately, this key request may take a few months to process.

3.5. External Matters

3.5.1 Partnership with SSA and the Sportcentrum VU

As mentioned in sections 2.5.3 and 3.3.4, we are focused on improving our relationship with the Sportcentrum VU, as they are a crucial partner for SVU, providing us with the space for our events and activities. Their support is key to our success, and we have recognized that they highly value clear and consistent communication with the board and the committees responsible for organising events. To enhance our visibility and strengthen this connection, we hold our weekly board meetings at the Sportcentrum and make it a priority to have smaller catch-ups with staff and relevant committees. This regular interaction helps us address any issues quickly and ensures we're well-informed about any concerns. Additionally, we want to signal that we take their concerns seriously, particularly regarding alcohol use and general member behaviour, reinforcing our commitment to maintaining a positive environment. Alongside improving our relationship with the Sportcentrum, we also recognize the growing importance of the SSA as a key partner financially and operationally, as detailed in section 3.3.4. Strengthening these relationships will be essential for SVU's continued success and growth.

3.5.2 Sponsors

As described in section 2.5.2, securing sponsors is a valuable way to generate additional income while forming partnerships that align with our club's values and benefit our members. We are committed to maintaining strong, long-term relationships with existing sponsors like DressMe and Jong Sportrevalidatie, but we are also actively looking to attract new sponsors. For instance, we are still in search of a new home bar following the closure of Disco Dolly and Het Feest van Ome Jan. We also see potential for additional passive income through Sponsorkliks, an easy-to-use platform where members can support the club by installing a plug-in and shopping online at a wide range of connected webshops. Many members may not be aware of the full range of stores available through Sponsorkliks, and we aim to raise awareness to maximise this opportunity.

Looking ahead, we plan to switch from BladNL to Print&Bind when our current contract expires in 2025. This change will save costs, as Print&Bind offers a more affordable service. To increase sponsor visibility, we will continue showcasing their logos on our website, social media, and on the iconic banners that are displayed during home game days. The €250 sponsorship fee, in addition to the cost of the banner, is a valuable investment that helps to strengthen the sponsor relationship and encourages long-term partnerships. Finally, we are focused on increasing brand awareness to attract more sponsors, as outlined in section 3.5.3. These efforts will help build a more sustainable financial base for SVU and offer more opportunities for our members.

3.5.3 Brand Awareness

To expand SVU's reach and attract new members and sponsors, we recognize the importance of a strong online presence. This year, we will focus on enhancing our brand awareness through strategic use of social media platforms, particularly Instagram and TikTok, while showcasing the exciting and engaging atmosphere of SVU.

3.5.3.1 SVU's Social Media

To increase SVU's brand awareness and attract new members and sponsors, we will focus on strengthening our online presence, particularly through social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok. These platforms provide a great opportunity to go viral and engage with a wider audience. We will focus on showcasing the fun and vibrant atmosphere at SVU while also highlighting the competitive side of our teams, making sure to appeal to both recreational members and high-level players. To attract new members, we'll emphasise that SVU offers the perfect mix of competitive play and social enjoyment. In cooperation with the Technical Committee, we will specifically target high-level players in the second half of the year, particularly in January and February, when they typically start looking for new teams for the upcoming season. This will involve tailored promotions aimed at showing how SVU can offer a competitive yet fun environment for serious athletes. Also, our website will highlight new teams, sponsors, and our Lustrum celebrations, while featuring fun blogs that reflect the atmosphere at SVU. The previous boards introduced an inventory form to gather insights on how people discover SVU and the reasons why members stay or leave. We will continue collecting this data to gain a clearer understanding of how to improve our promotional strategies and enhance the overall experience at SVU.

3.5.3.2 Online Presence

We appreciate that committees and teams have their own Instagram pages to showcase the atmosphere at SVU, as it helps build a vibrant online community and highlight the fun and dynamic environment of our association. However, this also creates a large net of SVU-related accounts, which can sometimes result in important information being missed by members. To ensure that everyone stays informed, committee-related posts are either reposted or collaborated with the main SVU Instagram account, so key updates and events reach a wider audience. While we want members to enjoy the freedom of expressing themselves online, it's important to remember that these accounts—whether they represent a specific team or committee—are still an extension of SVU and, by association, the Vrije Universiteit. This means that any content shared should be respectful, appropriate, and reflect the values that both the board and the university expect to see. Content that could be seen as offensive, discriminatory, or inappropriate might damage our reputation, and therefore it is at the discretion of the board and the Commissioner of External Affairs to take action if any posts are deemed not in line with our standards. Additionally, event sign-ups and important information will always be posted in the relevant WhatsApp groups to make sure no one misses out on essential updates.

3.5.3.3 Canva

To support our content creation, we currently use Canva's premium version, which allows up to five accounts to collaborate on design work. This enables multiple committees to use the platform for their content creation, from promotional materials to event graphics. However, the premium fee will increase in 2025, and we should plan for this by considering a shared account system between committees to keep costs manageable while still creating high-quality content.

3.5.4 Interassociation Connections

Last year, the previous board hosted the first SVU Constitution Borrel, and we plan to continue this tradition in the coming year. In addition to this, we've been active in attending other CoBo's and relevant events hosted by various associations, and we've started efforts to organise another Interassociation Party, similar to the one held in the 2022-2023 season. This will help us strengthen our connections with other student sports clubs in the Netherlands. Last year, a successful joint tournament with UvO, Amsterdam's other student volleyball club, was organised as well and we're considering repeating this collaboration in the upcoming year. These events are great opportunities not only to have fun but also to boost SVU's brand awareness and build strong relationships within the wider student sports community.

4. Year Overview 2024-2025

All SVU activities are described in an annual overview in the 'How-to-survive'. For the sake of transparency, the core tasks and activities organised by the board will be clearly displayed in the annual overview. The board meets weekly and an information e-mail is sent to all members every first day of the month.

August	19	Try-outs
	21	Try-outs
	26	Try-outs
	28	Try-outs
	29	Teams Publication
September	7	Driekamp & Afterparty
	14	Home Game Day & Introactivity
	21	Home Game Day
	22	VT2 Training 1
	27-29	Introweekend
October	5	Home Game Day & Captain's Training & Week of the Referee
	6	VT2 Training 2
	12	Home Game Day
	13	Association Expert's Training & V4 Course
	19	Super Saturday & Garage Sale
	26	Home Game Day
	27	Expert's Trainers Training
November	2	Halloween Party
	9	Home Game Day
	10	VT2 Training 3
	15-17	International Tournament
	18	1st General Members Meeting
	30	Home Game Day & Borrel
December	1	VT2 Training 4
		Sustainable Sinterklaas
	8	VT2 Training 5
	9	Dies Natalis Tournament
	15	VT2 PVB
	30	Oliebollen Tournament
January		Winter Beach
		Board Interest Drinks
February	5	2nd General Members Meeting
		Valentines Roses
	15	Home Game Day & Borrel
	22-23	Night Tournament
March	1	Home Game Day
	7-16	Wintersport
	8	Super Saturday
	15	Home Game Day
	22	Home Game Day
	29	Home Game Day & Borrel

April	TBA	Borrel/Acco Events
	28-04 May	Lustrum Week
		Last Home Game Day
		Start Beach Season
May	12	3rd General Members Meeting
		Board Transfer Weekend
		Last/May Trainings (Depends on VU exams)
June	13-15	Hajraa Tournament
	20-22	GNSK
		Active Member's Party
		Closing Party
August		Surf Trip

5. Epilogue

We are beyond excited and truly honoured to be serving as the 55th Board of SVU Volleyball, and we're thrilled to share our plans for the 2024-2025 association year with you all! This policy document outlines our vision for the year ahead, and we hope it gives you a clear sense of where we're headed and the fun and exciting projects we're working on.

This policy will be discussed with the RvC and the Sportcentrum VU, and it will also be presented at the ALV on 18 November 2024. By doing this, we ensure that the RvC, the Sportcentrum VU, and all our members are up to date with the plans for this year, and it helps us maintain transparency and keep everyone in the loop.

We believe it's important that everyone understands our vision—not just for the current year, but also for the long-term direction of the association. If you have any questions or want to chat about our plans, the board is always happy to talk.

With kind regards,

Board 55

Ruth Daniel, Robin Wezenberg, Nina Scheer, Lisette Pot and Selin Yağmur Çakmak