

Reasons for Rejecting Application

MSA is committed to enhancing the academic and social experience of Monash University students. Protecting the freedom of students to express their cultural, religious and political views in a safe and respectful manner has always been fundamental to this aim, and is a commitment we have upheld in preparation for MSA's 2021 Orientation Festival.

However, this is not unqualified. MSA holds an overarching responsibility to distance itself from those who seek to mislead or deceive the student community - a responsibility enshrined in MSA's Orientation Terms and Conditions (T&C's). Accordingly, MSA has decided to deny a sponsorship application by 'Generation Liberty'.

Generation Liberty is a program established by the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) - an Australian policy think tank whose self-proclaimed objective is 'preserving and strengthening the foundations of economic and political freedom'. However, the IPA has a clear and consistent track record of misleading and deceptive conduct in relation to climate policy.

In 2012, a report by Tara Clark and nine other environmental scientists revealed little to no coral re-establishment at Stone Island following major flood events.¹ However, in a 2019 online documentary on the Beige Reef, IPA senior fellow Jennifer Marohasy purported to show healthy Acropora corals at Stone Island in the same location as the 2012 study, concluding that 'claims that the Great Barrier Reef is in crisis are not true.'² Associate Professor Andrew Hoey of James Cook University's Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies suggested that such a conclusion 'is ludicrous, and is akin to visiting a house that is left standing after a natural disaster ... and concluding there has been no damage.'³ Infact, according to Tara Clark, not only was the documentary 'filmed in a different location and environment' to the 2012 study, but the findings of the report were 'clearly misrepresented'.⁴

In 2010, former IPA Executive Director John Roskam confessed to having 'helped and supported just about all' climate change deniers,⁵ particularly in lobbying to abandon the Paris Climate agreement and abolish subsidies for renewable energy.⁶ In 2005, the IPA established the Australian Environment Foundation - an organisation which claims to 'protect the environment' through an 'evidence-based, solution-focused approach to environmental issues'.⁷ However, there has no been acknowledgement by the IPA or its subsidiaries in their financial reports that they are sponsored by an array of oil, gas and mining corporations

¹ <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep19285>

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqFFqBuFVqU&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=InstituteofPublicAffairs

³ https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/nov/19/scientist-says-rightwing-thinktank-misrepresented-her-great-barrier-reef-study?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

⁴ https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/nov/19/scientist-says-rightwing-thinktank-misrepresented-her-great-barrier-reef-study?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

⁵ <https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/the-benefit-of-the-doubt-20100507-ujof.html>

⁶ <https://ipa.org.au/publications-ipa/exit-paris-stop-subsidies-now>

⁷ <http://www.energy-without-carbon.org/AustralianClimateChangeDenial>

including ExxonMobil, WMC Resources, Philip Morris, Caltex, Shell, Hancock Prospecting and Esso - all of which have a vested financial interest in quashing renewal alternatives.⁸

In 2003, the IPA's Jennifer Marohasy drafted a report titled 'IPA Backgrounder, Myth and the Murray: Measuring The Real State of the Environment'.⁹ The report proved critical in persuading a Senate committee to overturn recommendations to increase the volume of water released into the Murray River.¹⁰ This decision, which reserves more water for irrigation use, has resulted in considerable drought across the Murray Darling Basin, the degradation of river banks and wetlands, and the deaths of over a million native fish. In 2004, it was revealed that Australia's largest irrigation company, Murray Irrigation Limited, had contributed over \$40,000 to the IPA prior to the release of Marohasy's report.¹¹ This had not been disclosed in the report, on the IPA website or to the Senate Committee, leading Tasmanian Labor MP Dick Adams to claim that the committee had been "hoodwinked".

Most notably, the IPA continues to disseminate unsubstantiated conspiracy theories that the Bureau of Meteorology manipulated temperature data through 'homogenisation' to remove evidence of high temperatures in the early 1900s.¹² On this basis, Jennifer Marohasy claims that 'blaming the recent fires on climate change is to rewrite our temperature history' and that 'those who do fake science and ... remodel the historical temperature record to something completely different, need to be held to account'.¹³ However, not only is homogenisation accepted by weather agencies and climate researchers around the world as an appropriate method for removing known errors,¹⁴ but the data in question had not been homogenised.¹⁵

Clearly, the IPA continues to engage in a blatant pattern of misleading and deceptive conduct in relation to climate science.

This is contrary to s.3 of the T&Cs, which prohibits sponsors from engaging in 'misleading or deceptive conduct'.

Generation Liberty are invited to produce any substantive evidence which they believe refutes these claims. MSA is willing to entertain a forum for debate on the matter to ensure that Generation Liberty is provided every opportunity to do so.

Kind regards,
MSA Executive

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institute_of_Public_Affairs

⁹ <http://jennifermarohasy.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/MurrayMythsWeb.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22committees/commsen/07094031-1597-49d4-ba90-e35a4a351919/0001%22>

¹¹ https://www.gem.wiki/Institute_of_Public_Affairs

¹² <https://ipa.org.au/publications-ipa/submissions/law-unto-australian-bureau-meteorology>

¹³ <https://www.desmogblog.com/jennifer-marohasy>

¹⁴ <https://theconversation.com/no-the-bureau-of-meteorology-is-not-fiddling-its-weather-data-31009>

¹⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2020/jan/15/the-australian-says-it-accepts-climate-science-so-why-does-it-give-a-platform-to-outright-falsehoods>

23 February 2021

Professor Margaret Gardner AC
President and Vice-Chancellor
Monash University

Dear Vice Chancellor,

The censorship of ideas at Monash University

I am writing to you in relation to the decision of the Monash Student Association (MSA) to reject a sponsorship application made by Generation Liberty to host a stall at the Monash University Orientation Festival.

The MSA Orientation Festival should be the most exhilarating and exciting time for thousands of new students, many of whom are setting foot on a university campus for the first time, as they begin to explore new ideas and expand their intellectual horizons. The idea that a small minority of students are using this as an opportunity to censor other students for beliefs or ideas they allegedly hold, and to censor certain ideas from the study body, has no place in a free society.

In addition, these actions are not reflective of the wants or needs of the students that MSA claims to represent. A survey conducted in 2019 by Generation Liberty and the Institute of Public Affairs of 500 university students from across Australia found that 82% of students agree that students should be exposed to different views, even if those views were challenging or offensive, while only 2% of students disagreed.

By prohibiting Generation Liberty from participating in the Orientation Festival, MSA, and by extension Monash University, are siding with the 2% of students who wish to censor ideas. Furthermore, MSA is actively contributing to the more worrying statistic also found in this research; 59% of students agreed that they are sometimes prevented from voicing their opinion on controversial issues by other students.

IPA Board of Directors: Geoff Hone – Chairman, John Roskam – Executive Director

Dr Michael Folie, Dr Tim Duncan, Michael Hickinbotham, William Morgan, Maurice O'Shannassy, Rebecca Clough, Leslie Gillespie OAM
IPA Honorary Life Members: Mrs Gina Rinehart, Mr Harold Clough AO OBE CitWA, The Hon. Rod Kemp, Dr Bryant Macfie, Mr Baillieu Myer AC

Level 2, 410 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000 | 03 9600 4744 | www.ipa.org.au | ABN: 49 008 627 727

We were informed of the MSA's decision to reject Generation Liberty's application for a stall at Orientation Festival via email on 18 February 2021. The stated reason for the rejection was related to the position of the Institute Public Affairs on climate change. The letter of rejection is attached.

The decision of the MSA to reject Generation Liberty's application for a stall at Orientation Festival is an outrage. Universities should be a place of open and free debate where students have the opportunity to express and hear a variety of opinions on important social, cultural, and political matters.

Generation Liberty is the largest youth liberty organisation in Australia, with over 1,800 members across Australia aged 16-25. We have been present at dozens of campuses across Australia for over five years, including participating in dozens of Orientation Festival events, without incident.

Generation Liberty also provides an array of educational programs for young people that MSA is actively preventing Monash students from being exposed to. Our new Book Club program explores the work of George Orwell, Franz Kafka, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and Charlotte Brontë, amongst others. Our winter school program, IPA Academy, brings together students from around the country for a weeklong intensive program. The curriculum is taught by some of the most esteemed academics in the country and has also included international guests such as acclaimed American economist Gary L. Wolfram, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Hillsdale College.

Generation Liberty has a proven track record of highly successful and popular campus events, such as our campus debate series which has seen crowds of over 300, and our sold-out film screenings of the documentary *The Rise of Jordan Peterson*.

To seek to deprive the students of Monash of these opportunities, which the MSA is doing, due to perceived political beliefs of our organisation is an insult to the discernment of Monash students, who should be free to decide for themselves.

I note that "political belief or activity" is a protected attribute under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, and that treating groups or individuals unfavourably because of their political beliefs or opinions is potentially unlawful "direct discrimination" as defined by section 8 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*.

I have copied this email to the Chancellor of Monash University and Chair of Monash University Council Mr Simon McKeon, the Minister for Education the Hon Alan Tudge MP, and the President of MSA James McDonald.

Following the MSA's rejection last year of an identical application by Generation Liberty, it is clear that the Association has demonstrated a pattern of behaviour that is inconsistent with its duty to represent the interests and wellbeing of all students.

If Monash University intends to preserve the purpose of the university as a home of intellectual inquiry and free thought, and to promote the wellbeing and interests of its students to participate in a diverse and stimulating campus environment, then it must act now.

Kind regards,



Renee Gorman

**National Manager, Generation Liberty
Institute of Public Affairs**

T 0456 091 264 | 03 9600 4744

CC: Mr Simon McKeon AO
Chancellor of Monash University
Chair of the Monash University Council

CC: Hon Alan Tudge MP
Minister for Education and Youth

CC: James McDonald
The President of Monash Student Council
Monash Student Association

Attachment: Letter from MSA – Reasons for Rejecting Application

.../END

From: Peter Marshall <peter.marshall@monash.edu>

Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2021 4:14 PM

To: Renee Gorman <rgorman@ipa.org.au>

Cc: simon.mckeeon@monash.edu <simon.mckeeon@monash.edu>; james.mcdonald@monash.edu <james.mcdonald@monash.edu>; Alan.Tudge.MP@aph.gov.au <Alan.Tudge.MP@aph.gov.au>

Subject: The censorship of ideas at Monash University

Dear Ms Gorman,

Thank you for writing to the Vice-Chancellor regarding a decision by the Monash Student Association (MSA) to decline your request to participate as a sponsored stall holder in their O-Week activities/events. The Vice-Chancellor has asked me to reply as I am responsible for arrangements regarding access to our campuses.

At Monash University, freedom of speech and academic freedom are valued and protected. We hold these freedoms as fundamental to the nature of a university, and they are enshrined in our founding legislation.

We take seriously our obligation to provide an environment that enables our community to engage in critical and free enquiry by asking important questions – even if these questions are controversial – to share their findings, and to engage in informed intellectual discourse and public debate.

I understand you sought a sponsored site as part of the MSA event and activities during O-week; the MSA is an independent incorporated association and the University is unable to compel the MSA as to who should participate in its sanctioned events and which organisations it should receive sponsorship from. Nevertheless our campuses are public places, if Generation Liberty wishes to book available space and/or an agreed location in order to promote your activities to our students, you are able to do so by making an application to the University via [Monash Venue Services](#). They can advise you of the conditions for providing space and whether any fees will apply.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Marshall

PETER MARSHALL

Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice-President

Office of the Chief Operating Officer

Monash University
34 Exhibition Walk (Building 3C)
Monash University VIC 3800
Australia

T: +61 3 9902 9897

E: peter.marshall@monash.edu
monash.edu