

Annual Report

Introduction

Written by the Chair, Jamie Lee

In 2022, the second year of OSA's operations, we have continued to build a strong foundation for the organisation and significantly expanded our activities. At the start of the year, we began with a vision of how we envisioned the purpose of the organisation for the year with three main pillars – community, advocacy, and professional development. In alignment with that vision, we initiated a multitude of new events, projects, and initiatives to provide what we believe is important to support English-speaking students in the Faculty of [Education](#).

Within the community pillar, we hosted many recreational events with the purpose of bringing together students from the faculty, including a skating event, board game night, and various parties. We also played a large role in welcoming and creating a community for freshmen students at the start of the school year by supporting our tutors and being a key contact point for students that wanted to meet new friends in the Changing Education (CE) programme. For example, we hosted a welcome party in Sivistys that brought together 3 cohorts of students from the Changing Education programme. This party was a great success because it was one of the first opportunities that the freshmen students were given to meet upper year students in a casual environment, and it set the foundation for a flourishing CE community. Subsequently, freshmen students approached OSA with the idea to host a Thanksgiving dinner party as an idea to bring together students from our programme, many of them international, to celebrate dishes from different cultures. Furthermore, another freshmen student approached the board with the idea of starting a bi-weekly peer support group for students in the programme. This student had social work experience and wanted to create a safe space for students to share and support one another. The board was receptive to such proposals and gave them the support they needed to host new events and initiatives – which I see as a testament to how OSA has been successful to fostering a supportive community.

In the advocacy pillar, OSA has been a main driver of change in the Changing Education community, particularly in supporting students' needs and concerns. For example, at the beginning of the year, one of our in-person classes was changed to fully online because of some concerns about students not being able to attend in-person lectures. Many students found this decision by professors to be unfair because many of us had moved to Finland to attend classes and wanted to have the chance to have in-person lectures when it was safe to do so. Therefore, we quickly organized a petition and sent a letter to the professors expressing our concerns. This petition was effective, and the professors decided to make half of the lectures in-person/hybrid to accommodate for students who wanted to participate in-person and/or online. In addition, this year we formed the Anti-racism & Equity committee to further our advocacy work. The "Anti-racism & Equity Committee" section further explains our activities.

Finally, we also worked on the professional development pillar by initiating events to support students' career planning. For example, we started a Fireside Chat event series bringing in professionals such as start-up founders and representatives from the Finnish National Agency for Education to talk in a casual environment about their professional journey.

Overall, I am very proud of all our initiatives in the past year and am excited to see where the organisation goes in future years. We have received amazing feedback from our students and professors about our work which gives me reassurance that the work we are doing is important. We even had

Commented [NM1]: Educational Sciences - the official name

freshmen students share that one of the main reasons they decided to come to the Changing Education programme is because the work they saw OSA doing via social media. I am glad that OSA has been able to inspire so many students and hope that it continues to grow and as community and support for our faculty.

Commented [SN2]: This made me so happy to see! You did a fantastic job!

Commented [NM3R2]: Me too! Tears of happiness here :)

Governance

Written by the Secretary, Elena Liikanen

The 2022 Board was composed of the following members:

- Chairperson: Jamie Lee
- Vice-chairperson Aparna Shakkarwar
- Treasurer: Sophie Lehner (left the role in the Spring General Meeting 24.02.22) followed by Tommi Mäki who was elected during the Spring General Meeting
- Secretary: Elena Liikanen
- Events' Manager, Member for the Environment: Naïke Gorr
- Social Media Manager: Laura Ramula
- Students' Advocate and Member for Equality: Lena Reher (left the role on 20.8.2022)

In 2022, OSA has developed our practices further. We kept up agenda-making and minute taking as it had been done the year before. As per our 2022 action plan, we have shared the teams file for minutes and agendas so that they can be viewed by our members from our website through a link in order to be as transparent as possible.

Throughout the year we organized 15 meetings out of which one was an open meeting so that the members who might want to join the board could see how our meetings are run. OSA organized a Spring General Meeting on 24.02.22 and Autumn General Meeting on 15.11.22 as per the Rules of the Association. The minutes from general meetings were shared with members by email and are also accessible through our website.

Minutes, the List of Members, [event registers privacy statement](#) and [list of members privacy statement](#) have been carefully compiled and maintained throughout the year.

We strove to enhance our communication and thus started using Mailchimp to create potentially more attractive emails. Mailchimp also enabled us to create landing pages for collecting email addresses of our members. Mailchimp also enables tagging the members in different groups, so that it's possible to send tailored e-mails for certain cohorts (e.g. new members). The information about Mailchimp and how we have used it was passed forward to the next board. As last year, we strove to render the emails informative and concise while also warm hearted and welcoming.

As last year, our priority was to ensure that OSA will have a board for 2023 too, so each board member did their part in informing about their roles to the next cohort of students. We all made a short video of us describing our role and what we have gained from it to be shared in group chats. We also engaged with new students, answered questions, spoke about our roles and had an open meeting for possible questions and inquiries. After the election of the new board, we had a transition period with transition dinner, group meeting of both boards, one-to-one meetings (e.g. former and current secretary) and we created a group chat where the new board can ask the old board anything. We also shared our communications channels, shared resources and instructions and a password document (secured with a password), where we wrote down the crucial passwords to enter the accounts in OSA's name. Our idea was the new board members have an easy place to find all the passwords from and they can add the new passwords easily to the document this way.

Finance

Written by the Treasurer, Tommi Mäki

Start of the year was challenging due to our bank not communicating in English, which escalated to the resigning of our first elected treasurer. OSA elected new treasurer in the Spring General Meeting. Our annual operation plan got also revised couple of times, due to a positive occurrence of being recognized by the University of Helsinki with Maikki Friberg's Award for our equity work. We understood the great work our former board 2021 had done for promoting equality and equity, and our plan was ambitiously to continue that work.

We were very happy that OSA's finances were well off because of the surplus from last year and when we finally got the account rights, we were able to reimburse all the payments from the first part of the year. HYY gave us grants for our operations and projects, which allowed us to think big and make our young and small association achieve big things with our events.

We were able to also start the culture of assuring the well-being of our officials working as volunteers for the benefit of OSA. We were able to have some meetings face to face, but mostly COVID-19 still affected our events. We ended our year having increased the amount of surplus from last year, which is only good for the year 2023 operations and events. We are leaving the association in the state that the new board can start their work right away from the start of the year and they are able to finance everything with OSA's money not having to use their own personal money. Next year will also be easier to manage the financials since we started using Tilitin as a tool for our accounting. We also decided to set rules for the use of the Maikki Friberg's Award, so that it could only be used for the things associated with equity as that was the reason, we got awarded in the first place. According to our new rules, the award continues to be used for the equity work through our Anti-racism & Equity Committee, it helps people to have access to equity related events through socially sustainable student grants and gives possibility to people to engage in equity work by giving them a chance to apply for project grants for designing and holding equity promoting events.

Communication

Written by the Social Media Manager, Laura Ramula

Commented [SN4]: This is partly repeating the second sentence of the same paragraph. How about moving the second sentence of this paragraph down? I suggest the following edits:

"We were able to also start the culture...volunteers for the benefit of OSA. [cut the sentence from here]. We were able to have some meetings... using Tilitin as a tool for our accounting. [paste the sentence here] We also decided to set rules for the use of the Maikki Friberg's Award, so that it could only be used for the things associated with the equity as that was the reason, we got awarded in the first place. According to our new rules, the award continues to be used for the equity work through our Anti-racism & Equity committee,..."

Commented [SN5]: Anti-racism & Equity committee (for consistency, as this is how you call it earlier in this document)

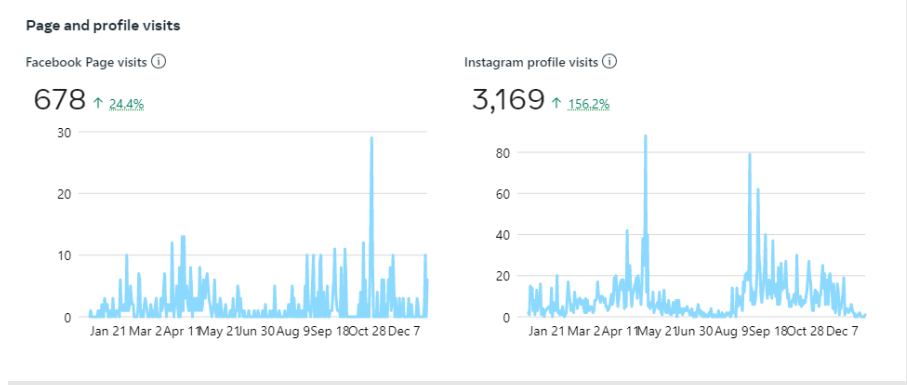
As set by the action plan for 2022, OSA used several platforms of communication to inform members of OSA events and operations. These included the Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/OSA-ry-111029931023191>), LinkedIn page, Instagram account (https://www.instagram.com/osa_ry/), OSA's website (<https://blogs.helsinki.fi/onestepahead>), WhatsApp groups dedicated for the students, and the OSA mailing list. We also used our twitter account for The Changing Education multimedia platform: Twitter:@ChangingEducat2 for a conference that many OSA members attended organized at the University of Helsinki. Students could also contact OSA through any of these platforms, and via our e-mail address osa@helsinki.fi. Students mostly contacted us through the e-mail address and the Instagram account.

The OSA mailing list was used to send a newsletter to subscribers almost every month, with information about activities, events and opportunities to ensure that members without social media accounts can access our information. We also sent an email per term to inform the students of Changing Education about the events that were held throughout the term.

The osa_ry Instagram account was the main platform used to promote events and updates for our followers and members. This was a great way to promote events to people that were not members of OSA, since many events also welcome students and people from other faculties and even universities. This platform also allowed for students, the public, and other student organization to contact us about anything that they wanted to share. For example, other student organizations asked us for help with collaboration with some events. Through the Instagram platform, we could also ask students for feedback about events or possible suggestions for upcoming ones. However, feedback forms regarding events were sent to registered e-mails for students that attended the event, to ensure feedback is collected from the right participants. The Instagram account also has a LinkTree to all the links that are relevant for members, such as how to join to be a member or where to sign up for events.

The OSArY Facebook page was used to share events and updates, as through this platform it is easy to post details about events and share them to groups that students are a part of, so relevant information is found by CE students. The Facebook page also allows for collaboration with other student organizations, so when events were in collaboration with other's these were shared to their respective groups.

Below is a graph our Facebook and Instagram page visits, and how they increased through the year:



Commented [SN6]: That's a fantastic way to illustrate the increasing interest in the organization and its growth! Great idea!

This shows how both page visits went up during the year, especially on Instagram. Thus, these platforms have been a great way to help OSA grow as an organization.

For event sign-up we mostly used Google forms and KideApp. Any data collected in these sign ups was deleted after the events.

For matters pertaining the Changing Education multimedia platform, the team could be contacted at changingeducation1blog@gmail.com

Events

Written by the Events Manager, Naïke Gorr

Throughout the year, OSA has actively organized a wide selection of events to promote the following three goals: I) **establishing a network** of internationals and internationally minded individuals, II) **educating** our members on various themes within the educational domain, and III) inculcating career and future relevant **skills and knowledge**. Due to the diversity of our member body we tried to host a wide variety of events such as social gatherings, fireside chats, and movie nights to ensure that every member would have the opportunity to join an event of their interest and liking. To this end we also requested event suggestions from all our members prior to planning of the year. This procedure ensured that we organized and executed events that were of actual relevance for our member body thereby also resulting in higher participation rates.

When it comes to the first goal, we organized events such as ice skating, board game nights, sitsits, and sauna parties where we actively tried to establish connections among the three cohorts of the CE community. To achieve the second goal, we hosted educational events such as the 2022 Educathon (education-related hackathon) and the movie-night series on inclusivity and equity where we attracted not only CE students but also students and individuals within and outside our faculty and even university. Here, *collaboration* was of great importance as we hosted several events in collaboration with other student associations both within our faculty and with other universities. Especially the 2022 Educathon enabled us to collaborate with other universities thereby opening the event to students outside the university of Helsinki. While OSA wants to provide a base for internationals and internationally minded individuals we also worked on improving our relationship with other education-related student associations such as Condus and Erikeepperi. This was of importance to us as we wanted to counteract the establishment of an international bubble as well as educate as many people as possible on education-related topics. These topics predominantly centered on *equity and inclusivity* due to which the 2022 Educathon and movie-night series were dedicated to these topics. The final goal was met by hosting a series of fireside chats where our member body had the opportunity to talk to professionals in our field.

Since we continuously seek to improve our events, we sent our *feedback* forms following each event asking for feedback and points for improvement. Through this procedure we got to improve reoccurring events and made sure that we would learn from our mistakes (e.g., asking for dietary restrictions and accessibility requirements).

Since most of our events were dedicated to rather sensitive topics and attracted very diverse groups of individuals, we made sure that every event adhered to our principles for a *safer space*. This protocol also included the provision of a Safety Person, which we introduced to our participants at the beginning of each event. Finally, I would like to note that a comprehensive overview of our 2022 events is available in the document “Activity Calendar 2022”.

Environment

Written by the Events Manager, Naïke Gorr

In terms of the environment, OSA adhered to the principles laid out in our environmental plan (found in the Action Plan 2022). In 2022, the responsibility for environmental awareness and environmentally friendly operations was mine. Since we were still impacted by the pandemic, we held both, online as well as in-person events which we tried to host as environmentally friendly as possible. To this end, we did our utmost best to provide food that is vegan, organic, seasonal, and wrapped in as little plastic as possible. Through the use of sign-up links we calculated the required amount of food to minimize left-overs and we recycled during on-site events (e.g., bottles and paper). In addition, we solely purchased decoration that is either biodegradable or reusable and tried to replace paper options with online option where possible. Finally, we encouraged our members to join the climate march to increase environmental awareness.

For the upcoming year, we highly encourage the new board to lay greater emphasis on environmentally friendly operations and to include similar themed events in the events calendar.

Equality and Wellbeing

Written by Aparna Shakkwar (Vice-Chair)

OSA was founded with principles of equality and wellbeing in mind. Our first board developed our own [Principles for a Safer Space](#) in 2021, which we have since kept in use at each event that we host. We also worked in accordance with HYY’s Equality Plan 2021-23 (also shared on OSA’s website) and followed HYY safety principles and principles of safer space. Apart from these documents, we also have a number of documents linked on our website that are meant to provide students with the correct resources in case they are dealing with a difficult situation, including information from HYY regarding harassment, Orbis’ “Equal Access at the University of Helsinki: First Steps for International Students who have a Disability or Learning Difficulty,” and our own anonymous feedback form in both English and Finnish.

The first board considered economic accessibility when setting membership fees and this year’s board kept the membership fee the same.

The board also recognized the importance of wellbeing and allocated a small portion of the budget towards wellness activities. In the spring, we had a board dinner to celebrate the accomplishments of the previous semester. In the fall, we had a sauna night with the current board as well as a dinner with the current board and the newly elected 2023 board.

We hope that next year's board puts an emphasis on wellbeing and makes sure to allocate some time and funding towards prioritizing their own wellbeing.

Finally, there is an anonymous feedback form available to members at:
<https://tinyurl.com/OsaAdvocate2023>

Commented [SN7]: @Shakkarwar, Aparna and @Mäki, Tommi J K , please check the phrasing here. According to my understanding of the law, the board members of non-profit organizations are volunteers, i.e. cannot get paid for their job. That might imply that board members cannot get benefits from the funds, like services, lunches etc. I am unsure whether it is allowed to directly state that part of funding will be used specifically for the benefit of the board.

Commented [SN8R7]: Tommi's suggestion from WhatsApp:

Maybe if you change the "next year's board" to "general meeting" it would be better or in otherwise include that the general meeting is making the decision of approving the budget plan presented by the board.
You maybe can rephrase it somehow.

Anti-Racism & Equity Committee

Written by Aparna Shakkarwar (Vice-Chair)

The Anti-Racism and Equity Committee was a new addition to OSA this year. Members voted to implement it at the Fall 2021 General Meeting based on the desire to improve anti-racist initiatives within the university. At the beginning of 2022, the committee established three goals we hoped to accomplish by the end of the year. These goals were:

1. Implement anti-racist curricula into current Changing Education courses.
2. Create an optional anti-racism course that is designed for Changing Education students.
3. Create a mandatory anti-racism course that all Changing Education students have to take.

This three-step plan was set because we felt there was a need for more anti-racist curricula in our classes. This could happen both by implementing anti-racist curricula in our current Changing Education courses, as well as by petitioning for a separate anti-racism course designed for Changing Education students. As we wanted to keep our goals realistic, we felt that it made sense to have the creation of an optional anti-racism course as the intermediate step. We are proud to report that OSA's Anti-racism and Equity committee was able to accomplish all three goals this year.

We were able to accomplish our first goal by hosting and facilitating workshops for all the faculty members who taught Changing Education courses. These workshops were designed to help faculty members understand how they could implement anti-racist curricula into their existing courses firstly by giving them a brief overview of what is anti-racist pedagogy and secondly by giving them time to brainstorm and discuss ideas with each other. After hosting three sessions, we had ideas written down on how to implement anti-racist curricula into all mandatory Changing Education courses.

Our second and third goals were able to come to fruition together. After having many discussions with the Changing Education faculty members and presenting our plan for action to the Equity Working Group, the faculty members took our proposal under consideration and discussed implementing an optional anti-racism course, as they told us it would be too difficult to re-arrange the entire curriculum for one course. However, after reiterating the importance of this mandatory course to them, as well as proposing solutions on how to re-arrange the curriculum, they agreed to add the anti-racism course as one of the mandatory Changing Education courses in the 2023-2026 curriculum cycle. The course will be in collaboration with the University of Jyväskylä and is being offered as an optional course to Changing Education students in the third teaching period of the 2022-2023 academic year in order to pilot the course.

Other than these three goals, the Anti-Racism and Equity Committee was also given a project grant by HYY for our four-part anti-racism event series, Jenga. This event series comprised of an introductory brunch, a book club, a movie night, and an arts-based sharing night. The brunch and book club happened in fall 2022 and the movie night and arts-based sharing night will happen in winter 2023. So far, participation has been outstanding and those who have come have been engaged and excited to learn and discuss. Our intention for this event series was to create discussions around anti-racism in a safe space, allowing us to build an anti-racist community. So far, we feel that we have been successful in creating this space and are excited about the last two events.

Commented [SN9]: Decide whether to capitalize the "r" and use that consistently. Earlier in Jaime's introduction, it's spelled "Anti-racism & Equity Committee"

Commented [SN10]: this is for consistency, as that's the title you use earlier in the document

We are excited to set the Anti-Racism and Equity Committee’s vision and goals for 2023, as we believe there is always work to be done. Seeing the enthusiastic participation of our members has been encouraging and we hope to accomplish just as much in the future.

Activity Calendar 2022

January/February: Welcome Educafe (31 st) Welcome event: Ice skating (12 th) Fireside chat I with Ed-Tech CEO (25 th)	August: Educafe (5 th) Tutor Welcome event (25 th) - Collab with CE tutors Tutor Welcome picnic (29 th) - Collab with CE tutors
---	---

<p>March:</p> <p>Fireside chat II with Ed-Tech CEO (17th)</p> <p>Elections (18th)</p> <p>Board game night (22nd)</p> <p>Speed dating with Ed-Tech companies (23rd) - Collab with Helsinki Education Hub</p> <p>Global climate strike (25th)</p>	<p>September:</p> <p>EBE Suomenlinna race (7th) - Collab with EBE ry</p> <p>Tutor Seurasaari BBQ (11th) - Collab with CE tutors</p> <p>OSA Sauna event (15th)</p> <p>HYY Intern. Pizza Night (20th) - collab with various international associations</p> <p>OSA Movie night on LGBTQIA+ (23rd) - Collab with Qaareva and Meg Jones</p>
<p>April:</p> <p>Board-bonding brunch (5th)</p> <p>Tram party (28th) - Collab with various student associations</p> <p>Party in collab with Ebe ry (30th)</p>	<p>October:</p> <p>Antiracism Brunch (7th)</p> <p>Condus Amazing race (13th)</p> <p>OSA Open Board Meeting (18th)</p>
<p>May:</p> <p>Vappu Student picnic (1st) - Collab with Ebe ry</p> <p>Educathon (5nd) - Collab with Erikeeperi & Condus & JYU & Abo Academy</p> <p>Sitsit collab with ESN (8th)</p> <p>Welcome Educafe (28th)</p> <p>Dinner with board (30th)</p>	<p>November:</p> <p>OSA Fireside chat III (Nov 1st) - Collab with National agency for education and culture</p> <p>Halloween Party (3rd) - Collab with SOCO</p> <p>Boardgame night (9th) - Collab with ESN, CISSI, Orbis</p> <p>OSA New Board Election (15th)</p> <p>Antiracism Book Club (18th)</p> <p>Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner (25th)</p>
<p>June/July: off</p>	<p>December:</p> <p>OSA Movie night (Disability inclusion) (Dec 2nd) - Collab with Erikeeperi and Prof. Hisayo</p> <p>Board - Allas Sea pool (4th)</p> <p>OSA Board dinner (7th)</p>

	OSA Holiday Party (9 th) OSA Transition Meeting (15 th)
--	--

