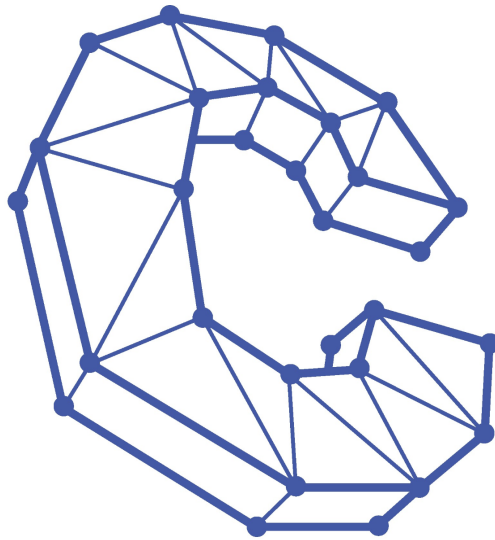




ComSSA 2025 President Report

Introduction	3
Summary of the club	5
Statistical analysis of club growth and metrics	5
Committee Structure	6
Summary of 2025 ComSSA activities	7
Outreach and engagement-focused events	7
Post-graduate and International student engagement	7
Social events	8
Networking events	8
Educational events	8
Workshops	9
Revision Sessions	9
Hackathon	10
Amazing Tech Race (ATR)	10
Social media and marketing	12
What went well	13
Challenges	14
Conclusion	15

Introduction

This document summarises what ComSSA has achieved throughout the year, to update the community about ComSSA's operation and actions taken to stay in line with ComSSA's mission statements:

- To foster an inclusive, supportive and collaborative computing community at Curtin University
- To bridge the gap between students and industry
- To represent computing students at faculty meetings

On behalf of ComSSA, I would like to thank my current fellow executive team:

- Justis Koh (Vice President),
- Cindy Lawrence (Secretary) and
- Kai Chen Chai (Treasurer)

And would like also to thank previous executive team members:

- Sean McGinty (Vice President)
- Stanley Zhong (Treasurer)

for all their time, perspectives, opinions and efforts to ensure the club's operations have become more inclusive, more enjoyable and more worthwhile for our members and committee. I'd also like to thank the ComSSA alumni, including our advisory committee:

- Haylee Jackson (2024 Vice President & Hackathon Director (July and December)),
- Justin Pan (2025 President) and
- Nicholas Wright (2023 Tech Coordinator and 2024 Ordinary Committee Member)

and ordinary committee members, especially those who served as coordinators this year:

- December Arvidson, Ethan Olson (Marketing Coordinators),
- Khidir Azhar (Events Coordinator),
- Thomas Han, Justis Koh (Tech Coordinator) and
- Joleen Chong (Revisions Session Coordinator)

for the countless hours they have given up to operate ComSSA, from discussion, planning and on-the-day events support, being able to learn from and reflect on the experiences and memories we created together will always be a highlight of this year.

I'd also like to thank the staff from the School of EECMS (ComSSA's partner), the wider Curtin community and our sponsors (Bankwest, Virtual Gaming Worlds, Visagio, WADSIH), for their ongoing intellectual, community and financial support and feedback throughout the year - without them, ComSSA could not have supported our members or grown to this scale.

Finally, thank you to all of our 485 members for coming to our events, chatting with us online and in-person about the latest tech news and opportunities, and helping us to build this diverse and welcoming community together!

Summary of the club

The Curtin Computer Science Students Association (ComSSA) is a student association, run by students for students, with a mission to create an inclusive and welcoming space for computing students and hobbyists alike to come together and collaborate and socialise with industry, faculty, and alumni, bringing all these demographics together. ComSSA is able to achieve this through the events that we run year after year, with a focus on networking, social, and educational events.

Statistical analysis of club growth and metrics

In the year 2025, ComSSA maintained high member numbers, with 485 members at the time of writing this report (29/10/2025).

Member Count Over Time

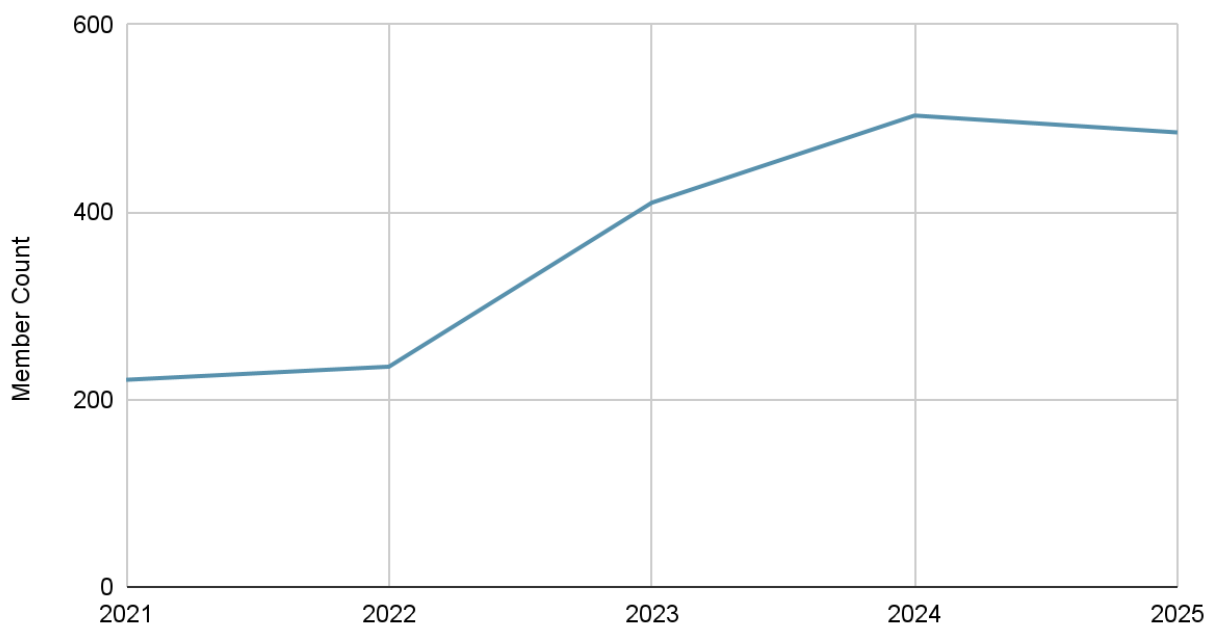


Figure 1: Year-on-year member counts

This number and how we got tracked throughout the year is broken down comprehensively in the 2025 Secretary Report.

Committee Structure

Following the outgoing 2024 committee's constitution change, the structure of the ComSSA committee in 2025 is as follows:

Executive committee members	4
Advisory committee members	3
Ordinary committee members	21
Total	28

The executive members/office bearers included the roles of:

- President
- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Secretary

Within the ordinary committee members, there were four team coordinators:

- Events team coordinator
- Marketing team coordinator
- Revision sessions team coordinator
- Technical team coordinator

The rest of the 21 members are separated into teams based on current skills, skills they would like to develop, and the workload of each team. As per the Guild's default custom constitution, the subcommittee members' role was removed, and all subcommittee members were made ordinary committee members.

Summary of 2025 ComSSA activities

Throughout the year 2025, ComSSA has held a large number of events, including:

Outreach and engagement-focused events

These are events that primarily allow ComSSA to establish a presence within the Curtin community, mainly targeting the new stream of students and participating in the Curtin Guild 'Guild O-Day'.

Semester	Name	Date
Semester 1	Guild O-Day	19/02/2025
Semester 2	Science and Engineering Expo	17/07/2025
Semester 2	Guild O-Day	23/07/2025

Besides the events listed above, ComSSA has also provided brief information sessions and talks at the start of lectures for first-year units at the start of the semester. This, along with the listed events, is done to establish with students, especially those who are entering tertiary education for the first time, that ComSSA is a student association that exists to benefit and add to their student experience, and list the events and services that ComSSA provides to these students.

Participating in Guild O-Day allows for the majority of the students looking to sign up and register as a member to do so on a day when the committee will be largely available to assist in this process.

Post-graduate and International student engagement

This year, ComSSA has put more effort into reaching out to the post-graduate and international student demographics, focusing on utilising Curtin staff members and events, such as the Masters of Computing orientation talks, to expose ourselves to these audiences. As a result, ComSSA has grown its number of post-graduate and international students significantly, contributing largely to the record of 485 members.

ComSSA has also continued to run our International Nights, aimed at allowing international students to come together

Social events

The main purpose of a 'social' event is to create an event where there is no defined agenda or required list of speakers, but rather the sole purpose of creating an environment where we facilitate socialising within the ComSSA community. Events ComSSA has run in 2025 to date with this purpose include:

Semester	Name	Date
Semester 1	Grill the Department	05/03/2025
Semester 1	Board Games Night	07/03/2025
Semester 1	International Night	04/04/2025
Semester 1	LAN Night	17/05/2025
Semester 2	Board Games Night	8/08/2025
Semester 2	LAN Night	26/08/2025
Semester 2	International Night	29/08/2025

Networking events

What defines a 'networking event' from ComSSA is creating and running an event in which we are able to allow the ComSSA community to network professionally, as opposed to facilitating social engagement and interaction, as we aim to achieve from ComSSA's social events. These networking events, in their formal nature, are a great way for industry and alumni to focus on presenting topics of their choice, and events run in 2025 with this purpose include:

Semester	Name	Date
Semester 1	Talks from the Industry	09/04/2025
Semester 2	Networking Sundowner	17/10/2025

Educational events

ComSSA also ran a number of educational events aimed at teaching students technologies used in industry through our workshops, as well as providing revision sessions to students to consolidate their understanding of concepts taught in first-year units.

Workshops

The workshops, planned by ComSSA's technical team, ran the following workshops this year:

Semester	Name	Date
Semester 1	VM Workshop	12/03/2025
Semester 1	Git Workshop	26/03/2025
Semester 1	Resume Workshop with WADSIH	14/04/2025
Semester 2	Visagio Backend Development	13/08/2025
Semester 2	Git Workshop	11/09/2025

The workshops delivered this year were a combination of ComSSA-delivered workshops and workshops delivered by our industry sponsors (WADSIH and Visagio). This proved to be a good mix, as workshops that taught students useful technologies that would be largely useful whilst studying for their degree, and in the very early stages of their career (such as virtual machines and version control) could be delivered effectively with the knowledge of the ComSSA committee. However, technologies and topics such as containerisation and web development could be captured and delivered better, with a more intimate understanding of what the industry demands.

This also proved a great way for students to engage more with people from the industry, directly learning from them and asking questions, aligning with ComSSA's mission of bringing students and industry closer together through our events.

Revision Sessions

Led by ComSSA's revision session team, ComSSA has continued its tradition of helping students with the first-year units of the Bachelor of Computing degree. The units that ComSSA has offered revision sessions for this year include:

- Fundamentals of Programming
- Programming Design and Implementation
- Data Structures and Algorithms
- Unix and C Programming
- Introduction to Software Engineering

The revision sessions team has delivered at least two revision sessions per unit, per semester, aiming to schedule these just before mid-semester assessments and final examinations to allow for the maximum benefit gained by these students. On top of this, revising the content and

activities provided in these workshops has been an ongoing task of this team, aiming to further increase the quality and effectiveness of these workshops.

Hackathon

The ComSSA Hackathon is a three-day event that combines aspects of our social, networking, and educational events all together into one. ComSSA, in line with our mission statement and values, aims to foster a diverse environment where all individuals, regardless of if they have a strong technical background or not, can thrive in this environment. As a result, in ComSSA's Hackathon, we construct our problem statement in a way that allows for non-technical solutions to be as viable as technical solutions.

This has worked well in our Hackathons as we see the participants ranging from first-year students to post-graduate students, and this is reflected in our list of winners, as no one demographic dominates.

Within ComSSA's Hackathon, we expect individuals who may not be of a technical background but will want to learn these skills or any skills that may assist them in crafting a solution. To accommodate this, the ComSSA committee delivers workshops, teaching content related to:

- Programming
- Pitching and presentation
- Simulation

As it is not required for students to make a proof of concept to give themselves a better chance at winning a prize in the hackathon, attendance in these workshops is entirely voluntary, including the nature of how these workshops have been run, as teams can request a workshop member to come to their group and deliver this workshop. This ultimately gives the students to attend and have the workshop which they feel is the most valuable for them.

Compared to previous years, where ComSSA has run two Hackathons (2023 and earlier ran one in Perth and one on Curtin's Singapore campus), this year ComSSA will run one Hackathon between November 28-30th.

Amazing Tech Race (ATR)

The Amazing Tech Race is a one-day event that combines aspects of ComSSA's social, networking and education events. This round-robin, capture-the-flag style event takes place over 2 hours, where participants solve each challenge for points, and slowly unmask the truth of the narrative that has been laid out for them. As usual, ComSSA attempted to keep our barrier of entry for this event (in terms of technical knowledge) as low as possible. To reach this, ComSSA included this in our challenge creation approach and placed a mentor with each team and challenge to assist accordingly.

This year, ComSSA has held one ATR in semester one on the 20th of April. This year, the ATR, ComSSA was majorly successful, selling over 80 tickets and seeing a high level of student engagement. If anything, it was quite reassuring when the team that achieved the highest number of points was a team comprised of first-year students. This result shows that ComSSA is creating this event at the right level, where, regardless of technical knowledge level, students are able to participate equally.

The ATR is an event that has continually received positive feedback and is highly recommended by the current committee to be continued.

Social media and marketing

In 2025, the ComSSA marketing team will continue to focus on short-form content promoting events in an engaging and entertaining way.

Furthermore, ComSSA has been able to maintain monthly newsletters for the ComSSA community, with these newsletters featuring ComSSA news, tech news, interviews with staff and alumni, as well as a fun puzzle page. The ComSSA newsletter has proven to be a great way to maintain engagement with our community through methods other than our events.

What went well

Things that went particularly well for ComSSA this year included our stronger engagement with academics and staff within the School of EECMS, particularly through events such as our Hackathon. Establishing these connections allowed for greater collaboration, mentorship opportunities, and valuable feedback, which in turn strengthened the quality and professionalism of our events.

Another key highlight was the committee's willingness to step outside of their comfort zones and take on new challenges. From developing new and engaging games such as Gorilla Type to experimenting with different media formats and ideas, the creativity and enthusiasm within the committee have been inspiring. This adaptability and drive to innovate have led to higher engagement across our events and a more diverse experience for our members.

A major focus this year was on providing more opportunities for our Ordinary Committee Members (OCMs) to get involved and take on meaningful responsibilities, beyond what had traditionally been reserved for executive members. Examples of this included OCMs such as VB and Rin taking on MCing and event coordination roles, demonstrating confidence and leadership. This shift towards greater inclusion and empowerment has not only built stronger teamwork but also helped with skills development across the entire committee.

Additionally, we emphasised documentation and transparency between the executive team and the wider committee, ensuring that OCMs were regularly updated on AGM-related tasks, planning processes, and advocacy for the upcoming 2026 executive roles. This open communication has helped improve cohesion, accountability, and succession planning within ComSSA.

Finally, our approach to marketing and outreach through short-form content has proven to be very effective, along with our continued collaboration with SAE for Industry Night. The partnership with SAE has provided significant value for both parties, and we are happy to continue this relationship moving forward.

Challenges

One of the key challenges ComSSA faced in 2025 was maintaining consistent committee engagement and initiative during peak academic periods. The bystander effect occasionally surfaced, with some tasks being delayed or left incomplete as workloads increased around exam time. Ensuring that all committee members remain proactive and confident in taking ownership of their responsibilities will be an important area of focus for future years.

Another major challenge was onboarding new committee members and helping them navigate the range of tools used within ComSSA, such as Notion, Discord, and Google Drive. The learning curve for these platforms proved steep for some, particularly early in the year, which occasionally slowed initial progress. Streamlining onboarding documentation and providing early training sessions may help future committees settle in more efficiently.

Committee burnout also became a notable concern, as the increased volume of events and communications with external parties created additional pressure on members. In particular, coordinating with industry representatives for events such as Talks From The Industry and Networking Sundowner was made more difficult by slow or inconsistent responses, often leaving limited time to finalise logistics. Beginning planning and outreach earlier and maintaining a buffer period for industry coordination would help reduce these stresses.

Finally, transitioning the club between executive teams and ensuring new members were properly acclimated to ComSSA's structure and expectations presented some challenges. While documentation and transparency improved, ensuring continuity and confidence during handover remains an ongoing process that will benefit from clearer mentoring and structured shadowing for incoming office-bearers.

Sophie notes on stuff that went well:

- Reaching out to academics more (hackathon)
- Getting outside comfort zone (eg, developing a new game and higher engagement for gorilla type)
- Giving more opportunities (previously only exec opportunities) to ordinary committee (eg, VB, rin MCing)
- Documentation and exec to OCM transparency (keeping them updated on AGM tasks and advocating for 2026 exec roles)
- Short form content & engagement with SAE for IN (happy to continue partnership for next year)

Conclusion

2025 was a rollercoaster: navigating very busy times throughout semesters and distributing the workload amongst the committee brought us all together, and highlighted each of our strengths amidst the stress. We ran events, built a community, had many laughs and learnt more about ourselves and each other, especially towards the end of some very late meetings.

To next year's committee: I would advise keeping in mind ComSSA's mission statement all throughout the year. *Why* would this event be beneficial to members and sponsors? *Why* do we want students to use one of their two Guild vouchers for *our* club? *Who* is the next person we can talk with to further this club (academics, leadership within EECMS, industry representatives)? Stay committed to the mission statement, stay curious and transparent (ask questions about anything and everything), challenge the status quo (improve our existing processes) and seek out opportunities for others within the committee (because I believe that is what leadership means) and yourself (never count yourself out of a chance to do something new).

Of course, ask for help from your committee members. Volunteer work while studying, working, doing extracurricular work and managing life will become overwhelming, and all committee members have the responsibility to be transparent about how they are managing their workload. Almost everyone I've met has been understanding about managing club commitments, and I'm more than happy to lend an ear and guide committee members where needed.

Onwards and upwards to ComSSA!



Sophie Melville
October 2025