

PRESS RELEASE

30th November 2018

For immediate release

MOTION MOVED IN SUPPORT OF SOUMI GOPALAKRISHNAN

The UQ Union Council has moved a motion in support of Soumi Gopalakrishnan, a recent graduate from St James College in Brisbane.

The motion calls on Peter Hoj and the University of Queensland to create a scholarship to allow Soumi Gopalakrishnan to attend University at UQ.

Soumi sought asylum in Australia as her family fled persecution in Sri Lanka on the basis of their Tamil ethnicity. Soumi and her family were placed on bridging visas and she graduated as School Captain and Dux of her high school.

However, due to her uncertain migration status, there are a limited number of scholarships available to Soumi. Further, Soumi is classed as an international full-fee paying student and will have to pay thousands of dollars upfront to commence her student.

Council notes that one of the objectives of the UQ Union is 'to further the right of all people to a quality education on an equal basis.' Thus, Council calls on the University of Queensland to provide a fully funded scholarship to Soumi so that she may choose to pursue her dreams of university education.

Council reaffirms the efforts of the Student Rights Collective to establish a refugee scholarship at the University of Queensland, and notes that UQ will fall in line with the Australian Catholic University and the Queensland University of Technology in offering such a scholarship.

Council firmly believes that Soumi's achievements indicate that she will be an asset to the University of Queensland, and that the wider community will benefit from Soumi being given the opportunity to pursue tertiary education.

Jeremy Lwin,
President
University of Queensland Union

