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**U S I**

**Union of Students in Ireland**  
*Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn*

**R U N N I N G F O R E L E C T I O N**

**U S I E X E C U T I V E T E A M**

**C O N G R E S S 2 0 2 0**  
A P R I L 6 T H - 9 T H

**K N I G H T S B R O O K H O T E L**  
T R I M , C O . M E A T H

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## WELCOME!

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We have put together this booklet as a means to provide guidance on running in USI elections to be on the Executive Committee. Putting yourself forward for an election can be daunting, but a really rewarding and memorable experience. This booklet aims to provide a step by step guide, as well as answer some frequently asked questions, and provide additional resources.

## ABOUT USI

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) is the sole representative body for students in Ireland and represents 374,000 students in over thirty member colleges across Ireland, North and South. Throughout its history, USI has worked relentlessly in the pursuit of student rights in all areas of the student experience. The goal of USI is to work for the rights of students and a fair and equal third-level education system in Ireland, and to better the lives of students at all levels of society. USI is a full member of the European Students' Union (ESU) which represents students from 46 National Students' Unions in 39 countries.

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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MO - Member organisation

USI - Union of students in Ireland

SU - Students' Union

DP - Deputy President

VP - Vice President

IOT - Institute of Technology

TU - Technological University

Free Vote - Left up to each individual delegate to decide how they will vote

Mandate - When you have to do vote a certain way based off of majority vote at class rep / student council

Hustings - A hustings is a meeting at which candidates in an election address potential voters

Delegate Leader - Each Member Organisation delegation will appoint a delegate leader, this may be the President of the Students' Union or another member of the delegation.

Stipend - A fixed / regular sum paid

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**KEY  
DATES  
FOR YOUR  
DIARY**

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Nominations open: 20th January  
Nominations close: 26th February  
Final date to withdraw from the  
ballot: 4th of March  
Hustings at Congress: Monday the 6th  
of April  
Voting takes place and  
announcement is made at USI  
National Congress: 7th April

**EXECUTIVE  
TEAM  
MAKE-UP &  
PAY**

The Executive Team of USI is made up of 11 members (10 full time and 1 part time). You can run for any of the positions outlined on pages 4-13.

The stipend of the President currently is €28,523. All other paid officers have a stipend of €27,398 full time and allocated pro-rata for part-time officers according to the hours of work agreed for part time officers.

We have included information about the roles but this is not exhaustive. It's recommended you talk to the officer in the role to get insight, you'll find their contact details on the last page of this booklet.

## THE PRESIDENT

- 
- Responsible for overall work of the organisation and delegating work and areas of policy to other members of the Executive Team
  - Responsible for policy work mandated to them by Congress
  - Chief spokesperson for the organisation
  - Supports and works closely with Presidents in Students' Unions across the country
  - Represents the student voice on the board of the Higher Education Authority and other boards
  - Manages the human resources of the Union
  - Responsible for drafting annual budget in consultation with Finance Committee
  - Reporting work of the Union to National Council and Congress
  - Chairs the Presidents Working Group
  - Responsible for supporting Member Organisations with organising National Council meetings.

**VICE  
PRESIDENT  
FOR  
ACADEMIC  
AFFAIRS**

- Policy officer with anything related to the area of Education
- Supports and works closely alongside Education Officers in Students' Unions across the country.
- Works with the Vice President for Campaigns and other members of the Executive Team to roll out Education campaigns such as Class Rep campaigns, and Exam Destress.
- Leads USI's International Affairs work, organizing and leading delegations to meetings of the European Students' Union four times a year
- Sits on the Board of Quality and Qualifications Ireland and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning, alongside other relevant national committees
- Other areas of work include: Quality Assurance, Academic Integrity, Teaching & Learning, and Student Partnership.
- Chairs the Academic Affairs Working Group at National Council.



VICE  
PRESIDENT  
FOR  
WELFARE

- 
- Responsible for the implementation of Welfare policy as decided at Congress
  - Works with the Mental Health Project Manager to develop campaigns, events and initiatives relating to student mental health
  - Responsible for Welfare publications and submissions
  - Supports Welfare Officers in Students' Unions across the country
  - Works with the Vice President for Campaigns to roll out Welfare campaigns such as on Mental Health and sexual health
  - Other areas of work include: Mental health, physical health, sexual health, consent, cyberbullying, policy on alcohol and drugs and other addictive behaviours
  - Chairs the Welfare working group at National Council.

VICE  
PRESIDENT  
FOR  
CAMPAIGNS

- Main responsibility for organising USI campaigns, in collaboration with relevant officers.
- Has the responsibility to organise and prepare campaign strategies and plans of action.
- Works with external organisations on campaigns and integrates the student voice.
- Supports officers in the roll out of events
- Chairs the campaign strategy committee and oversees the work of the committee. This committee coordinates the largest national campaigns of USI.
- Chairs the campaigns working group which discusses the implementation of campaigns with National Council
- Has responsibility for the coordination of Union Development with the President.
- Has responsibility for ensuring the publication of all USI's submissions , position and policy papers and communications.





VICE  
PRESIDENT  
FOR  
EQUALITY  
AND  
CITIZEN-  
SHIP

- 
- Policy officer with responsibility for anything related to the areas of Equality and Citizenship
  - Lead organiser of Equality events including Pink Training, Women Lead, EMpower, the Conference for Students with Disabilities, the Mature Students' Seminar and any other Equality Events as approved by Congress
  - With the Vice President for Campaigns, runs Equality and Citizenship related campaigns such as Voter registration and Disability awareness
  - Sits on the Board of AHEAD (The Association of ) and ICOS (Irish Council for International Students)
  - Provides the student voice to committees such as the National Strategy for Women and Girls and the National Access Plan Steering Group and other committees
  - Chairs the Equality and Citizenship working group at National Council

**VICE  
PRESIDENT  
FOR THE  
BORDER,  
MIDLANDS  
AND  
WESTERN  
REGION**

- 
- Regional officer who works with the following Students' Unions: Maynooth University Students' Union, Dundalk Institute of Technology Students' Union, Athlone Institute of Technology Students' Union, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology Students' Union, NUI Galway Students' Union, Institute of Technology Sligo Students' Union, St. Angela's College, Sligo Students' Union and Letterkenny Institute of Technology Students' Union
  - Communication between the USI Executive team and the member organisation Students' Unions in their region.
  - Assists member organisations in the region with the roll out of local and national campaigns.
  - Chairs the BMW regional working group at National Council.



Union of Students in Ireland  
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VICE  
PRESIDENT  
FOR THE  
SOUTHERN  
REGION

- 
- Regional officer who works with the following Students' Unions: Institute of Technology Tralee Students' Union, Cork Institute of Technology Students' Union, University College Cork Students' Union, Waterford Institute of Technology Students' Union, Limerick Institute of Technology Students' Union, Institute of Technology Carlow Students' Union, Carlow College Students' Union and Carlow Institute of Further Education and Training Student Council.
  - Communicates between the USI Executive team and the member organisation Students' Unions in their region
  - Assists colleges in the region with the roll out of local and national campaigns.
  - Chairs the Southern regional working group at national council

**VICE  
PRESIDENT  
FOR THE  
DUBLIN  
REGION**

- 
- Regional officer who works with the following Students' Unions: · Dublin City University Students' Union, Technological University Dublin Students' Union, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology Students' Union, National College of Ireland Students' Union, National College of Art and Design Students' Union, Trinity College Dublin Students' Union
  - Communication between the USI Executive team and the member organisation Students' Unions in their region.
  - Assists member organisations in the region with the roll out of local and national campaigns.
  - Chairs the Dublin regional working group at National Council.

AN LEAS  
UACHTARÁN  
DON  
GHAeilGE

- 
- Oifigeach Polasaí atá freagrach as an nGaeilge in AMLÉ
  - Cathaoirleach an Choiste Cultúrtha - grúpa oibre na Gaeilge in AMLÉ
  - Eagraíonn Seachtain na Gaeilge gach bliain
  - Oibríonn le heagraíochtaí Gaeilge ar chúrsaí a bhaineann le mic léinn tríú leibhéal
  - Policy officer with responsibility for all Union activity on the Irish language
  - Chairs the Coiste Culturtha - the USI Irish language Working Group
  - Runs the annual Seachtain na Gaeilge campaign
  - Works with other Irish language organisations on anything related to third level students

**THE VICE  
PRESIDENT  
FOR  
POSTGRADUATE  
AFFAIRS  
(PART-TIME)**

- Responsibility for anything related to the area of Postgraduate Matters
  - Works closely with the Vice President for Campaigns to roll out USI campaigns on Postgraduate issues.
  - Chairs the National Postgraduate Working Group
  - Leads on the USI National Postgraduate Symposium
  - Leads on the USI/SIPTU Postgraduate Charter campaign
  - Supports member organisations to build Postgraduate representative capacity within local Students' Unions and HEIs
- 
- The President of NUS-USI (representing students in Northern Ireland) is also on the USI Executive Team, but they are elected at NUS-USI Conference. See <https://nus-usi.org/> for more details

**PLEASE  
NOTE**

## WHO CAN RUN?

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Any member of USI can run; so if your college is affiliated to USI then you're good to go! The only experience you really need to run is to be a student. You are the expert on the student experience. If you want to bring that to a national scale, then USI is for you.

## WHY RUN?

- Shape the voice of the National Student movement
- Represent students across the country
  - USI has a lot of influence at Governmental level and with other national organisations
- Work in an interesting and exciting environment
  - USI is an ever changing environment with a large dynamic team. One day you could be on a campus doing voter registration, the next in a Government Departmental meeting about a sexual health campaign, the next day at a photo launch, the next writing a submission. No two days are the same!

## WHY RUN? CONT.

- 
- Gain invaluable experience on policy, campaigning, and events, at a national level
  - Work with national organisations to advocate for the rights of students
  - Personal development
    - Being a national officer allows you infinite scope to develop your skills.

## THE RULES

Currently the only rule that exists in USI elections is a spending limit of €350 on all campaign materials. There is an elections sub committee, which runs the elections, and an electoral committee which set and oversee any regulations in relation to USI elections.



## STEP 1: GETTING NOMINATED

- The first thing to do is get nominated to run by at least two Member Organisations (MOs) of USI
- This needs to be done by the President of a Students' Union.
- You need to email the President of the SU to request that they nominate you, and if they agree to nominate you then they need to email [elections@usi.ie](mailto:elections@usi.ie), with a letter on Union headed paper saying they nominate you, and include your name, email, phone number and the position you are running for
- If you are running for a regional officer position, you can only be nominated by MOs in that region.
- We have included a list of the emails of Presidents on the next page
- It is recommended that you contact Presidents beforehand, even arrange a call with some of them, to let them know you are running and what your ideas are for the position. It's always a good idea to gather other opinions on your manifesto points as well



## PRESIDENTS' EMAILS:

### DUBLIN:

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Trinity Students' Union  
president@tcdsu.org  
TU Dublin Students' Union  
president@tudublinsu.ie  
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art and  
Design SU  
presidentiadt@gmail.com  
National College of Ireland Students'  
Union  
president@ncisu.ie  
DCU Students' Union  
president@dcusu.ie  
National college of Art and Design SU  
ncadsu@gmail.com

### SOUTH:

Waterford IT Students' Union  
president@witsu.ie  
UCC Students' Union  
president@uccsu.ie  
CIT Students' Union supresident@cit.ie  
IT Tralee Students' Union  
president@ittraleesu.ie  
LIT Students' Union  
supres@student.lit.ie  
Carlow  
College Students' Union  
supres@carlowcollege.ie  
IT Carlow Students' Union  
supresident@itcarlow.ie  
Carlow  
College of Further Education\*  
cifestudentcouncil@gmail.com

\*Please note that as candidate members, Carlow  
College of Further Education cannot nominate or  
vote currently. It is still worth reaching out to them  
as a college of Further Education to see the issues  
their students are facing.

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**B M W :**

NUI Galway Students' Union

su.president@nuigalway.ie

GMIT Students' Union

supresident@gmit.ie

IT Sligo Students' Union

president@itssu.ie

Letterkenny IT Students' Union

supresident@lyit.ie

St. Angela's Students' Union

suprez@stangelas.nuigalway.ie

Athlone IT Students' Union

supres@ait.ie

Dundalk IT Students' Union

president@dkitsu.ie

Maynooth Students' Union

president@nuimsu.com

**N U S - U S I  
C O L L E G E S**

Ulster University SU

president@uusu.org

Queens University Belfast SU

su.president@qub.ac.uk

St Mary's SU supres@stmarys-

belfast.ac.uk

Stranmillis University SU

president@stran.ac.uk



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**SAMPLE  
EMAIL: FOR  
SU  
PRESIDENTS**

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FAO USI Elections Sub Committee,

I wish to nominate Ms. Josephine Soap to run for the position of President of USI in the upcoming elections.

Her email is joforpres@gmail.com and she can be contacted on 086xxxxxxx.

Your Sincerely,  
Regina Adams, President, Ballybréag  
IT Students' Union

End\*

SAMPLE  
EMAIL: FOR  
CANDIDATES  
RUNNING IN  
USI  
ELECTIONS

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Hello X,

I am writing to you this morning to request your nomination for the position of X, on the USI Executive Team. If elected, some ideas I hope to bring to the role are X Y and Z. I look forward to speaking with you all over the coming weeks, to gather your thoughts and ideas on how I can best support your Union's needs, if elected, and would love to arrange a call with you to discuss.

I'm still working on my manifesto but I will let you know when it's completed. I hope to receive your support to run in the upcoming election, and would be delighted if you would take the time to nominate me.

To nominate me, please fill in the attached document which includes my personal contact details, signed by the President and on the letter-headed paper of your organisation and email a scanned copy of the nomination document to [elections@usi.ie](mailto:elections@usi.ie) marked for the attention of USI Elections Sub-Committee (original posted or hand-delivered nominations will also be accepted).

Thank you for taking the time to read my nomination request.

END\*

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## STEP 2: WRITING A MANIFESTO:

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From there, it's a good idea to start jotting down your points about what you'd like to achieve in the position. This is usually called a manifesto, and it sets out what you'd like to achieve and work on if elected. Here are some tips for putting together a manifesto:

- Read up on the role description. You'll find plenty of information in the USI Constitution.
- Speak to the officer who is currently in the role; they'll give you a good idea of the ins and outs of the job and will be able to answer any questions.
- Search for previous manifestos online. If you facebook or google search for the positions you are running then you should pull up some results.
- Split your ideas up under sections of what the role you're running for deals with. Most of the roles are very multi-faceted, so for example a regional officer would deal with campus engagement, USI campaigns, and supporting MOs.
- Get a headshot taken. This can be done by a friend, but it's good to put a headshot on the front of your manifesto so people know your face.

THE  
ELECTION  
ITSELF

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The Election for USI takes place at USI's National Congress. This year it will take place from the **6th to the 9th of April in Knightsbrook hotel in Meath.**

Congress is the supreme governing body of the Union of Students in Ireland. It decides the policy of the union and holds the National Council, Executive Team and committees of the union to account.

Every year around Easter, the Union of Students in Ireland gathers representatives of all the member colleges together in one place to decide on the policies of the union, the future plans of the organisation and to elect the core of its Executive Team - the group of officers whose job it is to lead the whole organisation.

Each delegate at Congress represents 1,000 students. You can find out more information about congress here:

<http://congress.usi.ie/>

*Normally, if you are running as a candidate, you will go with the delegation of your MO. However, this is not always the case, and if for whatever reason you can't go with your MO Delegation then please contact [president@usi.ie](mailto:president@usi.ie)*

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## DELEGATE ENTITLEM- ENT

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Each students' union in membership can send a number of members as delegates to the Congress based on the number of members in each students' union. This will be communicated to the Students' Union President by the USI Congress Director. The voting entitlements for Congress are released one month before Congress on the 6th of March and will also be found on the USI website.

It's worth noting that colleges with a larger student population will have a larger voting entitlement.

At Congress, each students' union can submit up to five motions to be discussed by the gathering - and the decision taken by the Congress then passes into the policy of USI.



## HUSTINGS

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I CAN'T ATTEND A HUSTING?

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A husting is a meeting at which candidates in an election address potential voters. The only official USI hustings is the one that takes place on the first night of congress. However, some colleges may hold hustings at their class / student councils on their college campus, normally when they have a mandate to all vote the one way.

The Students' Union will contact you directly with all information in regards to their hustings. It is important to make the hustings if you can but don't stress if you can't make it.

Most Councils will allow you to send in a video if you can't be present there on the day.

You will receive an email with all the info about this from the Students' Union class/student council secretary.

## MANDATE AND FREE VOTE

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The only official vote for USI Elections happens at USI Congress, but some colleges may hold their own hustings before congress, to mandate their delegates how to vote. This means a vote is usually taken at Class Rep council after hearing the candidates speak and asking them a few questions, and then the delegates from that college may be requested to follow that decision when it comes to voting at Congress but that is a completely internal matter between your own delegation and USI does not get involved in any mandates/free vote discussions.

The colleges who don't have a mandate will often refer to how they are voting as a 'free vote' which means it is left up to each individual delegate to decide how they will vote. Some delegations will still have meetings before the vote at congress to discuss how they may be voting.

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## **Try meet with delegations at Congress:**

Ask the delegate leader can you grab a few minutes to chat to their delegates.

## **Use your imagination!**

Materials are allowed in USI elections, and while giving out fancy things never won an election, quirky campaign techniques are always memorable. In the past we've had candidates make little paper flags with their campaign slogan, and even someone who gave out tayto sandwiches! Be mindful if you are paying for materials that you don't go above the spending limit keep all receipts for purchases.

## **Posters**

Typically, candidates in USI elections will get posters done for the campaign, and stick these in designated areas around the hotel where congress is held. The Congress Director will make clear where you can stick posters. This helps make an impression on the delegates, as they may never have met you before, and you might not get a chance to speak to everyone before the vote.

OTHER  
CAMPAIGN  
TIPS

CURRENT  
OFFICERS  
AND THEIR  
CONTACT  
DETAILS

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## **Don't stress about spending money**

By and large, elections are won on your ideas and how you get them across. The best way to win is by talking to people and hearing what they have to say.

### **President**

Lorna Fitzpatrick  
president@usi.ie  
087 276 3941

### **Vice President for Academic Affairs**

Kevin McStravock  
academicaffairs@usi.ie  
086 816 5498

### **Vice President for Welfare**

Róisín O'Donovan  
welfare@usi.ie  
087 280 9703

### **Vice President for Campaigns**

Michelle Byrne  
campaigns@usi.ie  
086 130 3100

### **Vice President for Equality and Citizenship**

Megan Reilly  
equality@usi.ie  
086 414 9758

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CURRENT  
OFFICERS  
AND THEIR  
CONTACT  
DETAILS

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**Vice President for the Border,  
Midlands and Western Region**

Marie Lyons  
bmw@usi.ie  
087 926 8802

**Vice President for the Southern  
Region**

Darren Malone  
south@usi.ie  
086 028 4970

**Vice President for the Dublin  
Region**

Craig McHugh  
dublin@usi.ie  
086 028 4961

**Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge**

Clíodhna Ní Dhufaigh  
gaeilge@usi.ie  
0862081946

**Vice President for Postgraduate  
Affairs**

Sara Dowling  
postgrad@usi.ie  
0861303102

**NUS-USI President**

Robert Murtagh  
robert.murtagh@nistudents.org  
+447741165580

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**USI**

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**GO N-EIRÍ LEAT!**

**GOOD LUCK!**

**CONGRESS 2020**  
APRIL 6TH - 9TH

**KNIGHTSBROOK HOTEL**  
TRIM, CO. MEATH

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