

## **USI and STAND Partnership Strategy 2022-2025**

### **About USI**

The Union of Students in Ireland is the national representative body for third-level Students' Unions in Ireland. Founded in 1959, USI now represents more than 374,000 students in Further and Higher Education Colleges across the island of Ireland. The goal of USI is to work for the rights of students and a fair and equal post-secondary education system in Ireland. USI is a full member of the European Students' Union (ESU) which represents students from 46 National Students' Unions in 39 countries, and a member of Eurodoc, the European Council for Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers.

### **About STAND**

STAND is the Suas Global Citizenship Programme that brings about changes in third level students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions in relation to global justice issues.

### **Overview**

STAND and USI began their collaboration in May of 2019. It was agreed that STAND staff would be present in the USI Office on a part-time basis, that STAND staff would facilitate Student Union Training sessions and that they would attend Comhairle Náisiúnta meetings. The 10,000 Students Initiative was launched in Autumn 2019, and has since grown into the primary collaboration between STAND and USI. This strategy document formalises the collaboration between Suas's STAND Programme and USI through the 10,000 Students Initiative. Additionally, it highlights STAND's support in training Student Union officers, and outlines the roles, responsibilities, and goals for the partnership. This partnership is a component of STAND's 5-year Strategic Partnership with Irish Aid ending in 2027. It will also be reviewed in Spring 2025, keeping in line with USI Comhdháil (Congress) to review policies every three years.

### **Summary of Strategy**

This strategy is divided into 3 key areas:

- Partnership Motivation
- Working Principles
- Commitment, Roles & Responsibilities

### **Partnership Motivation**

Lead Officers: VP for Equality & Citizenship, VP for Campaigns, Regional Vice Presidents

This partnership is borne out of the mutual understanding of the importance of sustainability, the interconnectedness of local and global issues, and the role that young people must play in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Through this partnership between Suas's STAND Programme and the Union of Students in Ireland, both parties hope to:

- Reach students on third level campuses in Ireland to raise awareness and understanding about the root causes and consequences of global and social justice issues, and encourage action in support of a fairer, more sustainable world for all.
- Contribute to USI's Sustainable Development Goals Champions Programme
- Share information about STAND projects, programmes, and opportunities with student unions of third level institutions associated with the Union of Students in Ireland.
- Share resources to support the training of USI member organisations in a general sense, but more specifically to share global citizenship perspectives of sustainability, solidarity, and equality.
- Bring global activist voices and perspectives to the discussions within USI, and to make global connections to the local social justice issues addressed by both USI and STAND.

### **Working Principles**

Lead Officers: VP for Equality & Citizenship, VP for Campaigns, Regional Vice Presidents

The STAND staff and the USI Coiste Gnó (Executive Team) will ensure that their wider organisations are aware of and understand this partnership's aims and objectives. Through this partnership between Suas's STAND Programme and the Union of Students in Ireland, both parties will work to:

- Improve communication by identifying the USI VP Equality & Citizenship and a minimum of two other USI VPs who will serve as the USI Sustainability Subgroup. Therefore, remaining the main points of contact for the partnership.
- Cultivate the inclusion of STAND as a regular Lá Coiste Gnó (executive day) agenda item, hold regular full team meetings on a quarterly basis to share calendars, discuss potential collaboration, and review lessons learned from previous collaboration.
- Ensure shared projects set direct goals that are reviewed against targets accordingly.
- Seek opportunities to support each organisation and promote each other's work through an understanding of shared values and missions.
- Establish regular team meeting between STAND and the USI Sustainability subgroup with open invitation to any other Coiste Gnó members

### **Commitment, Roles & Responsibilities**

Lead Officers: VP for Equality & Citizenship, VP for Campaigns, LU don Gaeilge, Regional Vice Presidents

2 joint (Autumn & Spring) campaigns per year under 10,000 Students initiative

- STAND to develop concept
- USI to support finalisation of concept
- STAND to create materials, and coordinate with partners
- USI to distribute materials and encourage participation from Student Unions
- USI to join campaign events, and support as facilitators/hosts wherever appropriate
- USI to facilitate content of materials as Gaeilge where feasible

#### *Students' Union Training*

- USI to invite STAND to deliver trainings for Students' Union officers during Summer
- STAND to develop and deliver session on Global Citizenship, sustainability, student activism at USI Students' Union Trainings (SUT & SUT+)
- STAND to facilitate any other trainings, where possible, for Students' Unions throughout the year
- Miscellaneous support and collaboration
- Either party to be responsive to requests for facilitation, content creation, and dissemination of information when available to do so.

#### **Conclusion**

This document sets out the future direction of USI's work in Sustainable Development and Global Justice. This partnership includes regular meetings on an agreed basis between the two partners. It highlights a partnership that is committed to the sharing and collaboration of events between USI and STAND. It also acknowledges the involvement of the USI Public Relations Manager and the STAND Marketing Co-ordinator in the campaign development.