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# LEAD USI 2023

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**RUNNING FOR ELECTION**



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

# Thinking About Running?

Running for election is an incredibly exciting time - but it can also seem like a very daunting task. Whether you are thinking about running for a local election, or the national USI elections - this guide is intended to help you with every step of the process, from putting together a manifesto, to preparing a hustings speech.

## 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 thirdlevel 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

# GLOSSARY

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| MO        | Member Organisation - any students' union that is affiliated with USI is an MO |
| USI       | Union of Students in Ireland   |
| SU        | Students' Union  |
| VP        | Vice President   |
| IOT or IT | Institute of Technology  |
| TU        | Technological University   |

# Key Dates

**3rd February** - Open of Nominations for USI Coiste Gnó elections

**27th February** - Close of Nominations for USI Coiste Gnó elections

**3rd April** - Beginning of Comhdháil 2023

**3rd April** - USI Coiste Gnó Hustings at Comhdháil 2023

**4th April** - Voting takes place at Comhdháil 2023

**5th April** - Election results announced

# Key Information

## Salary

The stipend of the President is currently €30,285 annually.

The stipend of all of the other full time officers is €29,103 annually.

The stipend of the part-time VP for Postgraduate Affairs is allocated pro-rata according to the hours of work agreed for part time officers.

## Working Week

The working hours of the USI Coiste Gnó are from 09:30 to 17:30, Monday to Friday. Expenses can be claimed for additional work if you are required to work on Saturday or Sunday. USI operates a TOIL (Time Off in Lieu) Policy for additional hours worked during weekdays.

The USI Offices are in Harold's Cross, Dublin 6W. USI operates a hybrid working environment with policy officers being required to work three days a week in USI HQ. Regional officers are required to work three days a week from a campus in their region.

# Who can run?

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!

To get your name on the ballot, you will need nominations from the Presidents of **two** of USI's member organisations.

## How do I get nominations?

Email the President of the SU to send a request that they nominate you. It can be helpful to schedule a meeting to discuss what you'd like to achieve in the role.

If they agree to nominate you, 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.

## What are the rules for running for election?

The only key point is that there is a €350 spending limit for campaign materials. If you want to buy t-shirts for supporters attending Comhdháil or get posters printed out, they must fall under the €350 limit.

# Writing a Manifesto

Your manifesto is an outline of the plans you have should you be elected on to the USI Coiste Gnó. It doesn't have to be extensive, but it is a good idea to meet with MO officers and students to see what they would like to see from their Coiste Gnó and utilise this feedback in your manifesto.

Your manifesto will be publicly available on the Congress website, but it is also a good idea to share it on social media for feedback and questions from students and MO Officers.

## Tips for writing your manifesto:

- Take a look at manifestos from previous officers who ran for the position
- Talk to students and officers for ideas on what should be included in your manifesto
- Read through the USI policy file to see what kind of policy work the position you are running for is mandated to achieve
- Prioritise accessibility! A beautifully designed manifesto is nice, but having a plain text or audio version of your manifesto available ensures that all students can engage with your ideas.
- Showcase the experience you have that makes you suited to the role - this can be

You can be as creative as you want in your manifesto as it's an opportunity for you to elaborate on your goals and ideas in a way that you don't have the opportunity to do in your hustings speech!

Your manifesto can be sent to [elections@usi.ie](mailto:elections@usi.ie) to be uploaded to the Congress website for students to read.

# Hustings

Hustings are an opportunity for candidates to showcase why they are the best person for the role. You will have the opportunity to make a speech outlining your plans and aims for the role, and potential voters will have the opportunity to ask you questions.

USI's hustings take place on the first night of Comhdháil. Each candidate will have the opportunity to make a **three minute speech**, except for candidates for the position of President who will have **five minutes**.

Questions from delegates attending Comhdháil will be presubmitted and approved by the Chair of the Elections Subcommittee. All candidates will have one minute to answer each question. All questions must be general - posed to the position rather than a specific candidate.

When preparing your speech for hustings, try to focus on the key points you want to showcase from your manifesto. It can be difficult to cram a lot of information into a three minute speech, so give more time to the points you really want to elaborate on. Keeping an eye on your timing throughout the speech can be helpful, so time yourself practicing so that you have an idea of how to pace yourself.

Comhdháil hustings will be in reverse constitutional order, starting with the Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs and ending with the President. Where there is more than one candidate for a position, the candidate who's last name comes first alphabetically will speak first.

## Local Hustings

Some students' unions will also organise local hustings on campus in the lead up to Comhdháil to give candidates an opportunity to speak directly to their students. These local hustings usually take place at a Class Representative Council. The rules around timing and questions can vary depending on the member organisation, so make sure to touch base with the local MO to confirm the details ahead of the hustings.

Local hustings will usually take place in the evening, and the vast majority of local hustings will be operated in a hybrid model to allow you to call in online.

## Voting

Voting in the USI elections is done at Comhdháil by representative delegates from each of USI's Member Organisations. Each member organisation has 1 delegate for every 1,000 students in their institution (so if the college has 20,000 students, the MO would have 20 delegates). Each member organisation distributes their vote differently according to their own rules and structures. Some member organisations will allow delegates a free vote - meaning that each delegate is free to choose which delegate they vote for. Other unions will have a mandated vote, where delegates are mandated to vote a certain way. This mandate is voted on, either at a Class Rep Council or by the entire student body.

Some mandates are "winner takes all", where the candidate who wins the vote receives all of the available votes from that institution, while some mandates are split proportionally eg. An MO has 10 delegates attending Comhdháil. Candidate A receives 40% of first preference votes, while Candidate B receives 60% of first preference votes. The MO would mandate 4 of their delegates to vote for candidate A, and 6 of their delegates to vote for Candidate B.



# 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, and is the line manager for the USI Coiste Gnó
- Responsible for drafting annual budget in consultation with the Governance Committee
- Reporting work of the Union to Comhairle Náisiúnta and Comhdháil
- Chairs the Presidents' Working Group
- Responsible for supporting Member Organisations with organising Comhairle Náisiúnta meetings

**For more information about the role of President, contact Beth at [president@usi.ie](mailto:president@usi.ie)**



# VP 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 Comhairle Náisiúnta.

**For more information about the role of the VP Academic Affairs, contact Clodagh at [education@usi.ie](mailto:education@usi.ie)**



## VP for Welfare

- Responsible for the implementation of Welfare policy as decided at Comhdháil
- 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 Comhairle Náisiúnta

**For more information about the role of the VP Welfare, contact Sarah at [welfare@usi.ie](mailto:welfare@usi.ie)**



# VP 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 Comhairle Náisiúnta
- 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.

**For more information about the role of the VP Campaigns, contact Ross at [campaigns@usi.ie](mailto:campaigns@usi.ie)**



# VP for Equality & Citizenship

- 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 Comhdháil
- 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 Comhairle Náisiúnta

**For more information about the role of the VP E&C, contact Maeve at [equality@usi.ie](mailto:equality@usi.ie)**





# VP for the BMW Region

- Regional officer who works with the following Students' Unions:
  - Maynooth SU,
  - Dundalk Institute of Technology SU,
  - Technological University of the Shannon SU (Midlands)
  - ATU Galway-Mayo SU
  - ATU Sligo SU
  - ATU Donegal SU,
  - University of Galway SU,
  - St. Angela's College Sligo SU
- 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 Comhairle Náisiúnta.

**For more information about the role of the VP BMW, contact Hannah at [bmw@usi.ie](mailto:bmw@usi.ie)**



## VP for the Southern Region

- Regional officer who works with the following Students' Unions:
  - MTU Kerry SU,
  - MTU Cork SU,
  - University College Cork SU,
  - SETU SU Waterford,
  - SETU SU Carlow,
  - Technological University of the Shannon SU (Midwest)
  - Carlow College SU
- 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 Comhairle Náisiúnta

**For more information about the role of the VP South, contact Caoimhe at [south@usi.ie](mailto:south@usi.ie)**



# VP for the Dublin Region

- Regional officer who works with the following Students' Unions:
  - Dublin City University SU
  - Technological University Dublin SU
  - Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology SU
  - National College of Ireland SU,
  - National College of Art and Design SU
  - Trinity College Dublin SU
- 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 Comhairle Náisiúnta

**For more information about the role of the VP Dublin, contact Sierra at [dublin@usi.ie](mailto:dublin@usi.ie)**





# 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
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- 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

**For more information about the role of the LU don Ghaeilge, contact Orlagh at [gaeilge@usi.ie](mailto:gaeilge@usi.ie)**



# VP for Postgraduate Affairs

- 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 Postgraduate Workers' rights campaigns
- Supports member organisations to build Postgraduate representative capacity within local Students' Unions and HEIs

*This is a part-time role intended for a postgraduate student in one of USI's member organisations.*

**For more information about the role of the VP Postgraduate Affairs, contact Waqar at [postgrad@usi.ie](mailto:postgrad@usi.ie)**



# SU President Contacts

## Dublin Region

IADT Students' Union - [presidentiadt@gmail.com](mailto:presidentiadt@gmail.com)

DCU Students' Union - [president@dcusu.ie](mailto:president@dcusu.ie)

NCAD Students' Union - [ncadsu@gmail.com](mailto:ncadsu@gmail.com)

NCI Students' Union - [president@ncisu.ie](mailto:president@ncisu.ie)

TCD Students' Union - [president@tcdsu.org](mailto:president@tcdsu.org)

TU Dublin Students' Union - [president@tudublinsu.ie](mailto:president@tudublinsu.ie)

## BMW Region

ATU Galway Students' Union - [supresident@gmit.ie](mailto:supresident@gmit.ie)

ATU Sligo Students' Union - [president@itssu.ie](mailto:president@itssu.ie)

ATU Donegal Students' Union - [edward.grant@atu.ie](mailto:edward.grant@atu.ie)

DKIT Students' Union - [supresident@dkit.ie](mailto:supresident@dkit.ie)

Maynooth Students' Union - [president@msu.ie](mailto:president@msu.ie)

STACS Students' Union - [suprez@stangelas.nuigalway.ie](mailto:suprez@stangelas.nuigalway.ie)

TUS Students' Union\* - [supres@ait.ie](mailto:supres@ait.ie)

University of Galway Students' Union - [su.president@nuigalway.ie](mailto:su.president@nuigalway.ie)

*\*Note: TUS Students' Union is categorised as both the BMW Region and the Southern Region as it has campuses in both Athlone and Limerick.*

# SU President Contacts

## Southern Region

Carlow College Students' Union - [supres@carlowcollege.ie](mailto:supres@carlowcollege.ie)

MTU Cork Students' Union - [supresidentcork@su.mtu.ie](mailto:supresidentcork@su.mtu.ie)

MTU Kerry Students' Union - [president@ittraleesu.ie](mailto:president@ittraleesu.ie)

SETU Students' Union Carlow - [supresident.cw@setu.ie](mailto:supresident.cw@setu.ie)

SETU Students' Union Waterford - [supresident.wd@setu.ie](mailto:supresident.wd@setu.ie)

TUS Students' Union\* - [supres@ait.ie](mailto:supres@ait.ie)

UCC Students' Union - [president@uccsu.ie](mailto:president@uccsu.ie)

## NUS-USI Region

UU Students' Union - [president@uusu.org](mailto:president@uusu.org)

QUB Students' Union - [su.president@qub.ac.uk](mailto:su.president@qub.ac.uk)

St Mary's Students' Union - [supres@stmarysbelfast.ac.uk](mailto:supres@stmarysbelfast.ac.uk)

Stranmillis Students' Union - [president@stran.ac.uk](mailto:president@stran.ac.uk)

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# ÁD H MÓR

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BÍ I GCEANNAS  
AR AMLÉ  
2023



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