

Imperial College Union Council Report

Alex Chippy Compton, President

This year the Officer Trustee team are trialling a new style of reports. This is to provide Union Council with a high level oversight of our work and hold us to account on our goals for the year. These goals were developed from our manifestos at the Trustee residential in August.

The reports will also feature next steps however this will form a key focus of my next report due to the proximity of the two meetings.

We are always happy to answer specific questions on our reports and work or anything you think is missing. We welcome any feedback you have on our report style.

Goals

Governance & democracy review

- This year we will be re-writing our Constitution & Bye-Laws and so I am leading a democracy review to ensure effective, engaging and wide-reaching structures.
- I will be providing updates to every Council meeting on this (included as a separate report).
- Once I have received confirmation from all the members we will schedule a meeting for the end of the month to agree on scope, aims, timeline and consultation strategy.

Development of our key volunteers

- I am focussing on Constituent Union Presidents, Management Group Chairs (with Tom) and Liberation Officers (with Fintan).
- This year Constituent Union Presidents and Management Group Chairs were invited to first two days of the induction period for Officer Trustees. This allowed them to meet all the Union staff teams and I hope this has helped them identify where to go for different issues.
- This year we are trialling a CU discussion and support forum. I hope this will be a monthly meeting where CUs can come together with the Officer Trustees and discuss common issues and share good practice.

Wellbeing strategy

- Working with Fintan, we have approached College about authoring a wellbeing strategy. This has received a positive response and we are excited to undertake this project.
- We hope to bring together the wellbeing work happening all over College into one overarching strategy and hold College to account on improving the wellbeing support and culture at Imperial.
- We hope that this will also secure funding for wellbeing at Imperial which has been chronically underfunded for many years.

Understanding our membership

- In the Union's strategy, we talk about understanding our membership. We still break our membership down into measurable criteria rather than behaviours: postgraduates and undergraduates, international and home, South Kensington and non-SK. I want to break it down into groups based on interaction with the Union and behaviours: students who look for

development opportunities, students who want to socialise, students who want to compete in sports.

- This goal feeds into the governance review in making our structures more wide reaching and engaging.

Team Goals

We also developed four team goals for the year. Some clearly fall under one/two Officers' remit while others are collaboration between all of us. These will feature on specific Officer's reports where they have worked towards these goals.

Wellbeing strategy

- Please see above.

Year-round democracy

- This year we have tried to put a greater focus on Autumn Elections and are hoping for an increased turnout.
- The governance review should highlight some possible ways to increase our democracy throughout the year so it isn't just confined to the Leadership Elections.

Support & development of volunteers

- This is a team goal and we've identified a segment of our key volunteers that each Officer Trustee works with.
- Please see above for my report.

Accessibility & openness

- The website has just undergone a redesign which has changed the look and several key features such a side bar on the pages.
- Hopefully the redevelopment of many of the menus will make navigation easier for our members.
- There is still a lot of work to improve eActivities and some of the less user friendly areas of our systems (such as eVoting, Union bookings).

Operations

Operational tasks of note I have completed over the summer period are as follows:

Inductions

- The Officer Trustees took part in a two week induction followed by a 3 day residential consisting of training, handover with our predecessor and introductions to the Union and College teams we will work with over the next year.
- Over the next month, we will be offering training to all our volunteers. Many of them will have attended Officer Academy etc however we are running more sessions and also training our Academic and Wellbeing Reps as well as offering continued support for our Liberation Officers.

Wellbeing Representation Network (WBRN)

- I have worked with Fintan and the Education & Welfare team in shaping the WBRN which was launched at the start of this term.

CSP Accreditation

- We are launching a CSP accreditation scheme this year (soft launch in November) and I have been working with Tom and Matt on criteria and accreditation system.
- We hope that this will recognise clubs with robust operational procedures and have worked to create a range of metrics that embed our values while also being feasible for this year. This is something we will review at the end of this year and work with our successors to shape further.

Liberation Report

- Having taken part in the Liberation Review this summer, I have been working with Fintan and several staff members on next steps. The report will be published alongside an action plan which the Liberation Officers are helping us develop.
- This report will also feed into the governance review this year.

Citizens UK

- A paper was drafted for Council last year proposing we did not re-affiliate with Citizens UK. While this was not discussed due to cancellation of the meeting (scheduled for 13th June), it has been discussed by the outgoing and incoming Officer Trustee teams.
- Citizens UK did not provide a rebate or future discount as proposed in the Council paper and so the Union has not re-affiliated.
- I have attached the paper as an appendix for information and am happy to further discuss this decision.

As always, I am available in person and via email for any questions you may have on my report or the Union's work.

union.president@ic.ac.uk | [@ic_u_president](#) | 020 7594 8060 | IC ext: 58061

Appendix A: Affiliation with Citizens UK

Union Council: 13th June 2017

Author: Nas Andriopoulos, Union President

Seconder: Alex Chippy Compton, ICSMSU President

Background

Citizens UK (CUK) is a charity with the aim to bring communities together to campaign on issues for the common good.

CUK is divided up into chapters across the UK. Imperial College Union is currently a member organisation of West London Citizens (WLC). They have committed to a range of actions around social housing, refugee settlement and living wage.

Citizens UK charitable objectives are as follows¹:

- *to develop the capacity and skills of the members of the socially and economically disadvantaged communities of Britain and Ireland in such a way that such members are better able to identify and meet their needs and participate more fully in society;*
- *to assist by directly promoting the more effective working of local and national capacity building institutions designed to pursue that aim.*

Last year, Lucinda Sandon-Allum (Union President) and Jennie Watson (DP Welfare) brought a paper for discussion to Union Council proposing affiliation with CUK². Council agreed to affiliation, with an annual review.

We have met with a WLC's organiser to review the year and discuss possible improvements in the working relationship. These include

- Having a set OT + staff relationship manager/point of contact
 - DPW and Head of Student Voice have been identified
- Training (1 or 2 day) provided to a wider group of student volunteers
 - Liberation Officers and CU committee members identified
- A new lead organiser with experience of working with Student Unions has just joined WLC
- WLC has suggested we plug into a national campaign on sexual violence

The notion of a rebate, especially in light of the unused 6 day training, was mentioned and the organiser agreed to look into it.

-
1. Citizens UK, About Us: http://www.citizensuk.org/about_us
 2. Imperial College Union Council, 26th February 2016: https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-were-run/committees/15-16/Union_Council/1610

Union Notes

1. Current membership cost for Imperial College Union to affiliate with CUK is £5,000 per annum
2. Membership also provides Imperial College Union with a set number of spaces on CUK training (both 2-day and 6-day courses)
3. The uptake for CUK training has been limited

Union Believes

1. The training offered by CUK is not at student-friendly times for our volunteers or Officer Trustees
2. The priorities of Imperial College Union and its members are difficult to align to those of the other West London Citizens member organisations
3. Campaigns attempted this year (including a listening campaign at Hammersmith Hospital Campus) have not succeeded in their aims
4. CUK does not provide value for money to the members of Imperial College Union

Union Resolves

1. Imperial College Union will not re-affiliate unless given a substantial rebate or a future discount in membership fee
2. Union President will negotiate the possibility of an annual membership cost of £3,000 as a starting point alongside the current training provision
3. If a financial deal is reached, the Union will work with CUK to implement the previously identified improvement plan
4. Officer Trustees will explore potential external partner organisations in line with *Our Strategy 2017-20*