

**Imperial College Union
Services & Sustainability Board / 17th March 2022**

ICU Summer Ball 2022

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Purpose: To provide an update to Board on the planning of Summer Ball 2022, and changes we will be making with reference to feedback from the previous Summer Ball.

Decision(s): To note

1. Background

The Summer Ball is one of the Union's longest standing events for Imperial students. Over a number of years, the trust that students have in the Ball has dwindled due to a number of factors, but most notably: a lack of 'value for money' in the ticket; headliners that no-one knew or really wanted; and the lack of student engagement and involvement in the planning and delivery of the Ball.

This event was most recently run in 2019, and the operations team that ran the Summer Ball completed a survey afterwards and the results of this survey were not good. The headline figures to point out are:

Please rate the ball's value for money

| Answer | Percentage | Count |
|------------|------------|-------|
| Good Value | 3.94% | 5 |
| Ok Value | 22.83% | 29 |
| Poor Value | 73.23% | 93 |
| Total | 100% | 127 |

Would you attend a future summer ball based on this year's experience?

| Answer | Percentage | Count |
|--------|------------|-------|
| Yes | 44.44% | 56 |
| No | 55.56% | 70 |
| Total | 100% | 126 |

The open-ended questions to the end of the report also show a consistent mention of it either needing to be made cheaper or for more to be included within the ticket.

Summer Ball 2020

During the AY 2019/20 there was a discussion around the future of the Summer Ball at Imperial College Union. There was a debate between the Senior Management and the Officer Trustees around the key aspects of the Summer Ball (i.e. where it should occur) and the Board decided the direction for the Summer Ball should be in line with the Officer Trustees' guidance. My predecessor (FiFi) then planned the Summer Ball 2020 with a student events consultation group around her to decide the creative direction for the Summer Ball. Although we were unable to deliver this Ball due to COVID, anecdotally from students we heard that the things included in the ticket price felt exceedingly better value for money than previous years, and this is down to the involvement of key students in the creative planning process.

2. Summer Ball 2022 Focuses

We will be aiming for the following to be included in the ticket as part of the planning for Summer Ball 2022 (subject to approval, and budget constraints):

- A popular, known headliner
- Drink on arrival
- Free drinks
- Free food included
- Fireworks display (returned to previous longer length)
- Fairground Rides
- Main Stage outside on Dangoor Plaza (so, as many people can see the headliner as possible)
- Other attractions (i.e. Silent Disco, or games room)

It is also worth noting, the Summer Ball has previously been viewed as an alcohol-focused event, and whilst this certainly has been the case (and for a large portion of our students they would like this to continue being the case), we will be focusing on ensuring that we make this event as inclusive as possible.

To ensure this, we will be looking to do the following:

- Making spaces that are targeted at being alcohol-free or non-alcohol focused
- Reserving a portion of tickets to be allocated to students who would typically not be able to afford to attend the event
- Ensuring we have plenty of dietary and allergen alternative options for food and drinks

3. Risk & Risk Management

As part of the event planning process, full risk assessments will be completed for all operational / H&S risks, which will be overseen by the ICU Facilities, Health & Safety Managers and the relevant Imperial College Teams. The main risks prior to the event are around financial loss due to ticket sales or cancellation (most likely due to COVID-19).

To mitigate these risks, we:

- Are developing a comprehensive marketing and sales plan to support ticket sales
- May offer the opportunity for 2020 and 2021 graduates to purchase tickets
- Will ensure contracts with suppliers include COVID-19 cancellation clauses that do not penalise us
- Will take out even cancellation insurance that covers future lockdowns / restrictions
- Will not make financial commitments until we need to, in order to minimal any value at risk

A full budget, plan and financial risk assessment will be submitted to the Finance, Audit & Risk Subcommittee in March 2022.