

**Imperial College Union  
Board of Trustees / 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

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Purpose: To approve the ICU Principles of Social Engagement, to begin effect 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

Decision(s): To approve

### **1. Context**

These principles were written initially by the DPFS and Robert Scully following concerns over ICU's lack of foundation to reject engagements by CSPs with certain companies, enforce caveats in engagement contracts, or to justify our own (dis)engagements. The purpose is to provide a values-based set of principles, inspired by the principles of corporate social responsibility, which can be used to begin evaluating our relationship with third parties. The paper also clearly outlines how to escalate concerns regarding third parties, and ensures we are transparent with our engagements by providing an annual report.

These principles will not impact any current engagements, as ICU engagements are generally kept within one academic year. Looking at ICU's personal engagements over the last three years, it is also unlikely these principles would have resulted in us disengaging from those organisations. Impacted CSPs including Chemical Engineering Society and Geology Society have already been engaged in the development of these principles and are supportive.

### **2. Next Steps**

If the principles are approved, below outlines the operational work to follow:

- A short procedure put in place to clearly outline expectations to CSPs in order to follow these principles. This will include further detail on sufficient steps for exceptions.
- The activities team will ensure forms for events and sponsorships allow data to be collected easily for student-group engagement. A similar process should be used in the representation team for campaigns and representation networks.
- The Commercials team will work on an advertising policy for within their team.
- Long-term, there is work to be done on procurement overall. The university has only recently begun an investigation into their own procurement policy and processes.

## Imperial College Union Principles of Socially Responsible Engagement

Approved: July 2023  
Last Revised: July 2023  
Next Review Date: August 2026  
Owner(s): Board of Trustees

### 1. Introduction

Imperial College Union (ICU) recognises that we have a social responsibility towards not just the immediate ICU community, but to society and the environment at large. This responsibility lies within our own activity, and the activities of those we engage with. Relationships with third parties entered into by ICU should be considered by the following principles to ensure they support ICU's mission, strategic aims, and are consistent with ICU's values. This document outlines the principles these considerations should take, and is the first step towards creating a shared, strategic approach for ICU's engagements.

### 2. ICU Mission, Vision, and Values

The mission of ICU is to:

- Advance the education and welfare of students for the public benefit by promoting the education interests and welfare of students at Imperial College London during their course of study.
- Be the recognised representative channels between students, Imperial College London, and any other external bodies.
- Provide social, cultural, sporting, and recreational activities and forums for the personal development of its students.

ICU is also a values-based organisation and is led by its values and strategy. Legally, ICU is a democratic charity and must follow the laws and regulations which govern UK charity organisations. ICU is also a membership organisation which exists under the Education Act 1994.

### 3. Scope

These principles apply to all relationships with third parties entered into by ICU, including by our student groups, ICU-affiliated campaign groups, and representation structures. They apply irrespective of income source or relationship with the third party, and have a particular focus on:

- Receipt of cash and/or contra sponsorships.
- Receipt of philanthropic income and/or other gifts.
- Commercial partnering.
- Procurement and supplier relationships.

## 4. Principles

Relationships with third parties should support ICU's mission and strategic aims and be consistent with the overall objectives of ICU.

The third party should demonstrate an interest in social responsibility, outlined by the core principles below:

- **Integrity:** As ICU's anchor value, all organisations we engage with should act with integrity. This means holding themselves accountable for the activities they do and consequential impacts they may have; being transparent on their decision-making processes and activities; and ensuring all day-to-day decisions reflect their organisational mission.
- **Respect for stakeholder interests:** Stakeholders include consumers of products and members of organisations, but also others indirectly impacted by the organisational activities. Organisations should maintain fair operating practices with stakeholders and maintain their responsibilities for consumers' issues.
- **Respect for the rule of law:** Organisations should follow and enforce the law of the country or countries they operate within.
- **Respect for international norms of behaviour:** Organisations should strive to achieve international norms of behaviour, which can be found within organisations such as the United Nations and International Labour Organization.
- **Respect for human rights:** Organisations should strive to align with the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in the work they do, and organisations they support and/or work with. They should work to protect people from abuse, discrimination, and exploitation, regardless of race, gender, language, religion, national origin, or other status.
- **Respect for the environment:** Organisations should be working to minimise their negative impacts on the environment and ensure their resource consumption is sustainable. Organisations should be vocal about stakeholders making changes to benefit the environment.

Relationships should not:

- Compromise ICU's status as an independent organisation.
- Require ICU to deviate from its normal procurement and contracting procedures.
- Create material conflicts of interest, or material damage including financial and reputational to ICU.
- Arise, in whole or in part, from illegal activity.
- Significantly deter others from supporting or working with ICU, or significantly harm ICU's relationships with other third parties.

ICU will strive to not have relationships with third parties directly involved in the below:

- Production of fossil fuels; strong affiliations with producers of fossil fuels; and production of significant greenhouse gas emissions with no strategy for Net Zero.

- Production of landmines, cluster bombs, nuclear weapons, and conventional weapons intended for non-recreational purposes.
- Violations of international conventions and norms as outlined by the United Nations and International Labour Convention, especially in the areas of human rights, infrastructure practises, and climate change.

We do recognise that our core aim is to benefit the student experience, and certain engagements which conflict with the above may take priority due to the relationship the industry has with a student’s academic development. These exceptions may be made so long as the relationship clearly distinguishes itself from the list above, and remains in line with ICU’s mission and objectives.

## 5. Escalating concerns

ICU recognises that we may not have all the necessary information when beginning engagements to recognise risks to the principles outlined above. Therefore, any member of the ICU community can escalate concerns regarding any engagements with the appropriate member of staff as listed below.

Concerns should include evidence of the activity believed to breach these principles. Concerns will be considered by the immediate team and escalated where necessary up to the Board of Trustees. If it is believed the third party is in breach of our principles, any relevant contract will be ended at the next opportunity.

<b>Concerns</b>	<b>ICU Point of Contact</b>	<b>Escalation Process</b>
ICU’s marketing, content, website, and HR.	Director of Support Services	1. Support Services Directorate. 2. Management Committee. 3. Board of Trustees.
ICU’s commercial services, including venues, retail, and external marketing partnerships.	Director of Commercial Services	1. Commercial Services Directorate. 2. Management Committee. 3. Board of Trustees.
A student-led group.	Director of Membership Services	1. CSP Committee. 2. Clubs, Societies, and Projects Board. 3. Union Council. 4. Board of Trustees.
A student-led campaign or representation network.	Director of Membership Services	1. Campaign or Network Representatives, with input from Membership Services Directorate. 2. Union Council. 3. Board of Trustees.

## 6. Reporting third party relationships.

An annual list of third-parties the Union has engaged with will be made available on the ICU website at the end of each academic year.