Motions before USI Comhdháil 2022

11 March 2022

This document contains the new motions duly proposed to USI Comhdháil 2022. Please notify any errors before 16 March 2022 to: <u>congress@usi.ie</u>

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CA 1 Constitutional Amendments to the role of Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge

Proposed by the Irish Language Committee

5.11.3 reads

The LU/Gaeilge shall be Chairperson of the Irish Language Committee and shall oversee its work. The function of this Committee is to support the LU/Gaeilge in developing, implementing and planning the Union's Irish language campaign and policies.,

Remove this above section and replace with

The LU/Gaeilge shall be Chairperson of the Gaeilge Working Group whose main function is to communicate needs from a local level, hold the LU/Gaeilge accountable, and implementing and developing Irish language policies and positions in the Union.

All other references to the Irish Language committee shall change to the Gaeilge Working Group

CA 2 Rewriting Basic Principles of USI

UCC Students' Union

Remove Article 3.4 and replace with:

USI regards the defense and promotion of all democratic and human rights as a core goal of the organisation, and therefore USI is an anti-imperialist organisation.

CA 3 LU don Ghaeilge

Proposed by USI Vice President for the Dublin Region

Remove: Article 5.1.9 and replace with:

5.1.9 The Vice President for the Irish Language, who shall present themself as An Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge (LU/Gaeilge) in the daily conduct of their office.

EQ 1 Equality Events Advisory Groups

Proposed by the VP Southern Region

Comhdháil Recognises:

The VP Equality and Citizenship organises many events every year including but not limited to EMpower, Pink Training, Women Lead, Power of Disability, Mature Student Seminar etc. These events are organised to support, mobilise, empower and engage with students within these events.

Comhdháil acknowledges

The VP Equality and Citizenship may not be a member of the community that the event is aimed towards. This can make organising the events difficult for the VP when ensuring that the events are effective.

Comhdháil Mandates

The VP Equality and Citizenship to set up advisory groups for every Equality Event. These groups should be populated with members of the community that the event is for

EQ 2 EMpower

Proposed by The Vice President for Equality & Citizenship

Comhdháil Notes

The importance of recognising and celebrating voices from ethnically diverse communities in Ireland. Over several decades, Irish institutions have witnessed an increase in people of colour and those from Ethnic Minority background enrolling in institutions across the country. This will continue to rise.

Comhdháil Notes with concern

That students from ethnic minority backgrounds can be underrepresented in positions of leadership and representation. This can include, students' union positions, class representatives, clubs, and societies committee positions etc.

Comhdháil Recognises

The importance of safe spaces for students of colour and ethnic minority students within their journey through third level education in predominantly white and settled institutions. These spaces allow for them to organise, create, and come together as a community in what can sometimes be an isolating environment.

Comhdháil applauds

The success of Pink Training, Women Lead, the conference for students with disabilities, and similar events in the promoting of minority students running for leadership positions. These events have shaped future leaders of Ireland.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship to organise an event called EMPower. The aim of this event will be to encourage students of colour and ethnic minorities to take up leadership positions in their institutions, community, and professional lives.

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship should endeavour, that the event:

Provides a safe space closed to ethnic minority students, where possible.

Incorporates aspects of culture and social life for ethnic minority students to engage in. Is organised in partnership with people of colour and ethnic minorities to ensure the event is tailored to its respective target audience.

EQ 3 SUSI Proof of Estrangement

Proposed by Southern Region WG

Comhdháil Notes:

Student Universal Support Ireland is a grant system that aims to help bridge the barriers to education for students from a lower socio-economic background. The SUSI maintenance grant has helped thousands of students access education, however there are still some barriers.

Comhdháil Recognises:

Currently to prove estrangement students are required to have/provide documentation that can include a court order, a letter from a social worker or from TUSLA. This documentation has proven to be difficult to secure from students across the country, leaving them ineligible to apply for SUSI without submitting records from their parents/guardians.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates:

The VP Equality and Citizenship and VP Welfare in conjunction with the VP Academic Affairs to work with SUSI and TUSLA to investigate other avenues to prove estrangement for students.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The Coiste Gnó members working on this should aim to begin lobbying prior to the commencement of semester one

EQ 4 Pink Training

Proposed by Equality & Citizenship Working Group

Comhdháil Notes

Pink Training is an annual event ran by the USI annually that brings together members of the LGBTQI+ Community and allies to empower, explore and educate. Pink Training has played a critical role in establishing a safe space for student activism and change. Furthermore, Pink Training has paved the way for hundreds of delegates each year, to experience a place like no other in Ireland; a space where they can truly be themselves.

Comhdháil applauds

The response of USI's Pink Training event to critical issues of time that required strong student voices to shift narratives of the LGBTQI+ community. This encompassed the promotion of safe sex, tackling the rise in HIV cases, promoting anti-bullying measures in schools, elevating Trans rights and campaigning for legislative change. This work and impact of Pink Training has been imperative for the queer movement in Ireland in campaigning for social justice and equality for all members of the LGBTQI+ community.

Comhdháil Recognises

Pink Training is organised by the VP Equality and Citizenship each year and is a huge undertaking for the officer. Currently there is no document in existence that explains how the VP Equality and Citizenship should run Pink Training. This may cause potential issues regarding a range of factors such as, but not limited to, the continuity of planning, facilitator vetting, facilitator payments, delegate feedback and contribution.

Comhdháil Mandates

The VP Equality and Citizenship and the Coiste Gnó to continue to organise the annual USI Pink Training.

This event should endeavour to include sessions that tackle nuanced LGBTQI+ perspectives such as race, body positivity, disability, drug harm reduction and other extended topics deemed relevant.

The location of this training should be agreed upon each year no later than August and should not be held in the same region for more than three consecutive years.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The VP Equality and Citizenship and any other Coiste Gnó member involved in the organising of Pink Training to produce an Event Planning Document after the training each year.

This document should include how to organise the Training, factoring in costs associated with the training, information on facilitators of the training, feedback from the training and any other information, the organisers feel necessary.

This document should be produced within three months of the Training and should be passed over to the incoming VP Equality and Citizenship each year.

EQ 5 T Fund

TU Dublin SU

Congress Notes With Concern:

That according to TENI, 78% of trans people in the UK and Ireland have thought about ending their lives and 40% have attempted suicide. For many people, beginning and continuing social transition brings significant relief, however college is filled with financial stresses and for many transgender students, name changes and other transition expenses are not an option, even though they are life-saving.

Congress Commends:

NUI Galway and other MOs for the introduction of the 'T fund' for social transition, aiding students financially with elements of social transition which may include gender affirming items, such as makeup, and dysphoria relieving items like chest binders.

Congress Also Notes:

That the USI has a proud history of fundraising for various causes, but more recently does not fundraise annually for charity.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

The VP Equality & Citizenship to develop a guidance strategy, based on best practice models, on how to establish a local fund, which USI will then circulate to all member organisations.

Congress Further Mandates

The VP Equality & Citizenship to run a yearly campaign and work with relevant departments and ministers to introduce funding for all HEI's to be able to provide a T Fund for their trans students.

Congress Therefore Repeals: 2020 EQ (NC) 2TFUND

EQ 6 Trans Healthcare

Maynooth Students' Union

Congress Notes:

Trans and Nonbinary people outreach to the National Gender Service to access genderaffirming medical services.

Congress Notes with regret:

The psychiatric-diagnostic model adopted by the National Gender Service is outdated, denies informed and consenting trans and nonbinary people access to its medical services, and does not provide them with sufficient care preceding their medical and/or social transition.

Congress further notes with regret:

Transgender and Nonbinary people do not receive sufficient support when accessing mental health services, a medical transition, and primary care services that are sensitive to their experiences. By extension, Nonbinary people are not legally recognized under the 2015 Gender Recognition Act.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

The Vice President for Equality & Citizenship to lobby the Minister for Health to ensure the National Gender Service implements Version 8 of the WPATH Standard of Care and that such services can be provided at a local level.

Congress Further Mandates:

The Vice President for Equality & Citizenship to lobby the Minister for Justice to revise the Gender Recognition Act to include the legal recognition of nonbinary as a gender."

EQ 7 Reproductive Justice & Abortion Rights

Proposed by Equality & Citizenship Working Group

Comhdháil Acknowledges with pride

That on 25th May 2018, the Irish Electorate voted by a landslide in favour of removing the 8th Amendment (Ireland's constitutional ban on abortion). Following this, on 22nd October 2019, abortion was decriminalized in Northern Ireland. These are both historical moments in Irish history that many students and young people across Ireland played a role in.

Comhdháil Notes

That even after the recent victories of the repeal of the 8th Amendment in the Republic and decriminalization in the North, there is continued opposition to abortion access by many antichoice groups throughout Ireland.

Comhdháil Further Notes with Concern

That despite these monumental changes in legislation, abortion access is still heavily limited across Ireland. 371 people travelled from the North and 194 travelled from the Republic of Ireland to England for abortion care during the height of the pandemic.

Due to a lack of commissioned abortion services in the North, abortion access is only currently provided for up to 10 weeks', through early medical abortion (EMA). Therefore, many pregnant people are still being forced to travel to Great Britain for Healthcare.

If Northern Irish residents wish to access abortion services in the Republic of Ireland, they are required to pay to access care privately and must comply with the mandatory three-day waiting period.

In the Republic of Ireland, only 1/10 GPs and 10/19 Maternity Hospitals currently provide abortion care. Combined with the medically unnecessary 3 day waiting period and strict 12-week limit, the small number of providers across the country also results in people from the Republic of Ireland travelling for abortion care.

Comhdháil Believes

Individuals who make the decision to terminate a pregnancy should be supported and cared for in their local healthcare system, rather than disempowered and isolated by having to travel elsewhere to do so.

Access to reproductive healthcare is a student welfare issue. The lack of access to abortion services across the island of Ireland can significantly impact the personal and academic lives of students with crisis pregnancies. The inaccessibility of safe and legal abortion in Northern Ireland places an undue burden on students in an already stressful situation.

Abortion should be governed by the same robust regulatory and ethical frameworks as all other medical procedures.

Abortion reform should be designed in a manner which is inclusive of women, trans men, nonbinary, and gender fluid people.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

The Vice President for Equality & Citizenship, in solidarity with NUS-USI, to continue to campaign for accessible reproductive healthcare and the removal of barriers to abortion access across the island of Ireland.

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship should support relevant campaigns and organisations in the fight to 'Free, Safe, Legal and Local' abortion care.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

That the Vice President for Equality & Citizenship endeavours to support the decriminalisation of abortion across the island of Ireland and actively engage with NUS-USI to ensure our solidarity in the North is as effective as possible.

EQ 8 Use of Name on Third Level Certificates

UCC Students' Union

Comhdháil Notes:

As per current policy of Higher Education Institutions in Ireland, certificates are awarded to students upon graduation with the students' legal name.

Comhdháil Also Notes:

This system of using the legal name may be particularly harmful for non-binary, trans, and students with a gender beyond the binary of male and female. Particularly if a student is in/will be in the process of changing their name legally, and then after the change is made, the name on their certificate does not match their legal name.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

This also extends to students who may have divorced parents, a name in Irish spelling, or a non-western name, and the name that they wish to have may be on their Higher Education Institution's records as being misspelled or incorrect. This can be morally and emotionally harmful if the student does not identify with their given name, or at least how it is spelled on the Higher Education Institution's databases.

Comhdháil Believes:

That while attending/upon graduating from a Higher Education Institutions, students should be given the choice on the name that is used on their graduating certificate. This includes (but not limited to); the spelling of the name (both forename and surname), the use of certain characters (eg. fadas on vowels), the use of non-english characters, etc.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Vice President for Welfare work with all relevant parties in the Higher Education Sector with an aim towards this option being implemented across all Higher Education Institutions."

EQ 9 Free access to period products and contraception in Ireland

Proposed by WITSU

Congress Notes

In a recent study it was found that women in Ireland spend on average €120 annually on period products including the cost of painkillers and an additional €120 annually on contraception.

Congress also notes

In the Budget 2022, the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, announced that women in Ireland, ranging from the age of 17-25, can avail of free contraceptives from August 2022.

Congress further notes

However women on average spend 40 years of their lives menstruating and in a lifetime spend over €4,840 on period products and contraceptives. This announcement by the minister hinders women and adds extra cost to the already extortionate cost of living in Ireland today.

Congress Therefore Mandates

The USI Welfare officer to continue to lobby the Government and the Minister for Health to introduce free and accessible period products for all women in Ireland.

Congress Further Mandates

The USI Coiste to lobby the Government and the Minister of Health to broaden the range of age to avail of free contraception in Ireland.

Congress repeals 20 EQ NC 3

CZN 1 Student Cyclist Initiative

Proposed by USI Vice President for the Dublin Region

CONGRESS NOTES

The merits of cycling as an alternative to other carbon intensive modes of transport. Cycling also promotes improved physical and mental well-being.

CONGRESS CELEBRATES

Improved cycling infrastructure nationwide making it safer and more attractive for citizens to commute via cycling.

CONGRESS ALSO RECOGNISES

Government's commitment to incentivising cycling through significant investment in the sector, e.g. National Cycle Policy Framework, Budget 2022, Climate Action Plan 2021.

CONGRESS REGRETS

That no scheme exists for students to offset the expense of buying a bike and necessary accessories as it can deter students from cycling to college.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES

The USI Coiste Gnó to lobby the government to target student cyclists in future initiatives via the establishment of "Cycle to College" scheme, subsidised City Bikes or otherwise. *CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES*

The USI Coiste Gnó to continue lobbying for improved cycle networks, particularly in rural areas.

CZN 2 HEI Divestment from Fossil Fuel Industry

Proposed by the Vice President for the Dublin Region

Comhdháil Notes

Fossil fuel companies were responsible for 71% of global carbon emissions between 1988 and 2017. Since 2010 climate-related disasters across the world have displaced 21.5 million people annually.

Comhdháil Believes

The fossil fuel industry, by extracting, processing, promoting, and facilitating the use of, selling, and profiting from fossil fuels, as well as by having a major influence on government policy, is driving climate change and its catastrophic impacts.

That university commitments to tackling climate change - such as carbon neutral / net zero strategies - should extend to their investment portfolios and policies.

THEREFORE, Comhdháil Mandates

The USI President and USI Vice President for Equality & Citizenship to undertake research into Higher Education Institute's (HEI) existing investment portfolios and investments in the fossil fuel industry.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The Vice President for Campaigns, in conjunction with Regional Vice Presidents, to develop a strategy for a campaign highlighting the extent of the links between existing HEI investment portfolios and the fossil fuel industry, as well the potential benefit of divestment.

Comhdháil Also Mandates

The USI Coiste Gnó to liase closely with special interest groups in the development of this campaign

CZN 3 Third Level Eco-Action Forum

Proposed by the Equality & Citizenship Working Group

Comhdháil Recognises

the important role young people and students have played in the fight against global warming. Climate change is here. As the impact of climate change intensifies over the coming few years, it is the children and young people of today who will face the worst effects. Young people across the globe have taken to the streets to protest the lack of action on the climate crisis by Governments across the globe. This sparked a global movement of school-age students demanding greater action from governments to fight climate change. Now millions are marching to demonstrate their support.

Comhdháil Notes

Governments across the globe are not taking action to fulfil the Paris agreement. Across the island of Ireland, the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Assembly continue to ignore

their obligations and role in combating climate change. The Climate Action (Amendment) Bill 2020 aims to pursue climate neutrality by 2050 but does not have to achieve it, and the carbon budgets do not have to be consistent with the 2050 objective.

In February 2020, the Northern Ireland Assembly declared a climate emergency. Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK that does not have its own climate legislation, although it does contribute to wider UK targets on emissions reductions and has a Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-2024.

Comhdháil Further Notes with disappointment

The environmental/sustainability movement is largely made up of white, middle to upper class people. Much of the mainstream messaging around fighting climate change focuses entirely on personal responsibility. While this is an important element of societal change it often leads to elitism. The most necessary and effective changes (e.g., insulating a house for energy efficiency), are out of the reach of many, particularly those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Working class voices are under-represented, their needs unaddressed, and often feel unwelcome in the movement.

BIPOC activists have repeatedly expressed discomfort within the sustainability movement. Racism and colonialism's contribution to climate change has long been ignored. The "third world" nations already feeling the effects have contributed very little to climate change, and their plight is ignored by international media. Additionally, the sustainability movement often doesn't understand the needs of BIPOC activists and fails to make a welcoming space for these voices.

People with disabilities have a particularly high stake in fighting climate change. Rising temperatures and biodiversity loss mean increased natural disasters, in which disabled persons are more vulnerable. Furthermore, these changes are linked to pandemics. The UK Office of National Statistics revealed 60% of their Covid deaths were people with disabilities. The concerns of disabled activists need to enter the mainstream.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship and Vice President for Campaigns to develop a forum to centralise third level sustainability activism. The forum's purpose is to unite Students Union, Green Campus, environmental societies and third level institutions in pursuing systemic change. It will be an opportunity to coordinate efforts, strengthen a national movement, share knowledge and network.

The forum should launch in the first semester of the 2022/23 academic year. Prior to the launch of the forum, careful planning must be done to consult possible partner organisations (e.g. Eco-UNESCO) and to ensure that BIPOC, disabled and socio-economically disadvantaged activists are central.

Comhdháil therefore repeals 2021 CZN 4

CZN 4 Sustainability in Third Level Education

Proposed by: CMLOÉG

Comhdháil Notes:

Sustainability is described as the process and activities that society takes to avoid the exhaustion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

Society's actions drive climate change. This last decade is believed to be the hottest in human history, with specific weather events being linked to climate change. The effects of such are

diseases, droughts, severe weather events and the threats it has on plants, animals and humans. However, we cannot afford to be hopeless and there are many actions we can take while we still have time to implement them.

Comhdháil Believes:

That third level institutions and Students' Unions should:

- Include sustainability modules and courses in the curriculum, where possible.
- Fund research into sustainability.
- Use recycled materials on campus i.e. recycled paper for printing.
- Offer more sustainable food choices on campus and offer other initiatives such as student pantrys to minimise food waste.
- Move toward banning single use plastic on campus but improving waste segregation and recycling when initiating this.
- Increase the amount of online resources in libraries, instead of purchasing hard copies of books.
- Lobby against construction plans that are more harmful for the environment than beneficial for the third level institution, its students and the wider community.
- Save green spaces on campus and expand on them to promote biodiversity in the institution.
- Set up a green procurement policy that needs to be implemented when the University is carrying out projects and third-party contractures are hired to carry out work i.e. services on campus.
- Promote sustainable modes of transport throughout the year for staff and students i.e. promote public transport to and from the third level institution, exams if they are off campus and field trips. Set up bike-rental schemes or partner with companies that do and set up more electric charging ports on campus.
- USI and MO's should try to make all events as carbon neutral as possible.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship to raise this with the Minister for Higher Education and the Minister for the Environment, Climate & Communications and to lobby for sustainability to be a key area third level institutions focus on with the Higher Level Authorities. The Regional Officers should also work with their MO's to develop this on a local level.

NA 1 Higher Education Funding Campaign

Proposed by: Campaigns Working Group

Comhdháil Notes that:

The USI has spent over a decade campaigning for the reduction of the Student Contribution Charge.

Comhdháil commends:

The work of the Coiste Gnó and previous Coiste Gnó teams on campaigns for publicly funded education including; Cost of College, Education for All, Break the Barriers, etc.

Comhdháil Believes that:

The yearly brand change of a higher education funding campaign where the messaging remains wholly the same is detrimental to student engagement with the campaign.

Comhdháil Believes that:

A long running campaign would be more beneficial and would increase student participation in campaign actions.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The VP for Campaigns and USI President to work towards continuing the Cost of College campaign, rather than rebranding the national Higher Education Funding Campaign.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The VP for Campaigns to present an updated strategy paper with this longevity in mind to Comhairle Náisiúnta for approval.

Comhdháil repeals: NA 19 -10

NOTE: IF NA 19-10 is extended by Congress, this Motion will not be debated and will automatically fall

NA 2 Motion to Oppose the Cultural Death of Dublin

Trinity College Dublin Students' Union

This motion requires a two-thirds plus one majority to pass

Comhdháil Notes with regret

The recent announcement of the closure of Trinity's Science Gallery, Chapters Bookstore and other many other cultural resources in Dublin.

Comhdháil Further Notes

Resources for students as well as the public are being torn down in favour of building more hotels, despite the fact that we are in a housing crisis as well as a cultural crisis. These resources include libraries, museums, bars, nightclubs, and more.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

The Coiste Gnó to adopt an official stance supporting the #StopKillingDublin campaign.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The VP Campaigns to work with the VP Dublin and external stakeholders to develop a campaign strategy that includes direct action, to be presented to Comhairle Náisiúnta, aimed at ensuring the preservation of cultural resources in Dublin.

NA 3 Electoral Reform

Proposed by: Campaigns Working Group

Comhdháil Notes that:

Automatic voter registration does not exist in Ireland.

Comhdháil Further Notes that:

The current system of Seanad voting leaves the majority of students and graduates without a vote, despite many attempts to reform this system.

Comhdháil Believes that:

Automatic voter registration, and a democratically elected Seanad would increase voter participation among young people and facilitate better political engagement . *Comhdháil Mandates:*

The VP Equality and Citizenship and the VP Campaigns to develop a long running electoral reform campaign to which includes but is not limited to;

- votes at 16
- automatic voter registration
- the establishment of an electoral commission

- A democratically elected Seanad where all citizens have the right to vote
- The removal of the 11 Seanad seats nominated by An Taoiseach
- The introduction of the secret ballot for all Seanad voting

Comhdháil repeals: 2021 NA 2 2020 NA 3 NA (NC) 19 - 7

NA 4 Anti-War Motion

Proposed by: Trinity College Dublin Students' Union on behalf of the Equality & Citizenship Working Group

Congress Notes

That Ireland is considered to be a neutral country, yet the US military presence in Shannon, EU militarisation developments and the threat to world peace has accelerated in the last few years.

Congress Notes with Concern

That Institutions are spending student money on facilitating the war industry through unethical investments.

Congress acknowledges

The work being done by the Anti-War Movement, the Peace and Neutrality Alliance (PANA) and other organisations. However, some organisations may have biases in their approach that may perpetuate the current military industrial complex, hindering neutrality.

Congress Mandates

The USI Coiste Gnó to take a stance that Ireland should remain a neutral country and support organisations working towards peace and neutrality. In addition to this, the VP Equality & Citizenship should reflect on biases that may exist within these organisations.

Congress Further Mandates

The VP for Equality and Citizenship, where applicable, to support MOs in lobbying their institutions to divest from the arms-industry.

NA 5 Parental Leave Implementation Review

Proposed by USI Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs

Comhdháil Notes

Many external PhD funding bodies allocate paid parental leave for their postgraduate researchers. However, issues may exist where the tax-exempt status of PhD researchers means allocated funding cannot be provided through Higher Education Institutions. This is due to the fact that Universities are not legally allowed to pay a de-registered student under the current framework.

Comhdháil Further Notes

Local arrangements can be implemented, but crucially these remedies sidestep the existing issue. An effective payment release mechanism for postgraduate students on parental leave is urgently needed.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

VPPGA and the Coiste Gnó to lobby through governmental channels for a review of the payment allocation scheme for parental leave for postgraduate researchers per institution to ensure that provided funding can be released effectively.

NA 6 Public Transport Infrastructure

Proposed by VP for the BMW Region

Congress Notes:

The declining quality of public transport and lack of accessibility to public transport in certain regions of Ireland, particularly in the more rural parts of Ireland.

Congress Further notes:

The importance of public transport in accessing third level education.

The benefits public transport has on the environment with less people using individual vehicles *Congress Mandates:*

The Regional officers to set up a consultation Group with local MOs to identify areas of improvement in the public transport infrastructure, this would include cycle lanes, rail, coach and greenways, and assist them in lobbying on a local level for better and improved transport services.

IA 1 Motion on vaccine equity

DCUSU

Congress celebrates

The easing of public health restrictions that have allowed students to return to in-person lectures and a full social life

Congress Notes with concern

How this is not a reality shared in most countries, particularly in the Global South and the continent of Africa where fewer vaccines have been administered due to unavailability and cost factors

Congress Recognises

How there are over 100 factories in the African continent that would be able to produce COVID-19 and other life-saving vaccines and ensure students in those countries could access vaccines

Congress Therefore Mandates

The VP for Equality & Citizenship to lobby the Minister for International Development and government to call for a TRIPS waiver on COVID-19 vaccines and funding of the ACT-A accelerator,

The VP should also lobby the minister to ensure Ireland meets its target of 0.7% of Gross National Income is spent on Official Development Aid to meet the Sustainable Development Goals

Congress also mandates

The VP for Equality & Citizenship to work with student health groups such as Students4VaccineEquity on vaccine and medicine equity

IA 2 Anti-War & Expansionism

Maynooth Students' Union

This motion requires a two-thirds plus one majority to pass

Congress Notes with Concern:

The recent invasion of the sovereign, independent and democratic nation of Ukraine by Russia, a separate and distinct territory, political entity, and nation and the humanitarian crisis that has arisen as a result.

Congress Affirms:

The statement made recently by the European Students' Union (ESU) where they stated a clear position of "no to war and expansionism, yes to peace and the protection of the human and social right to study in a peaceful context"

Congress Believes:

That while the world's focus is currently on Ukraine, there are other humanitarian crises occurring including, but not limited to, events in both Palestine and Yemen and we have seen motions on such crises in the past.

Congress Further Believes:

That if the Union of Students in Ireland formally adopted an Anti-War and Expansionism position, the Irish Student Movement (Local and National) will be able to effectively mobilise and stand in solidarity against current and future crises such as these, unified as one under the USI.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

The Union of Students in Ireland to adopt an "Anti-War and Expansionism," position.

IA 3 Ukraine Aid

Proposed by the VP for the BMW region

Congress Condemns:

The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian federation.

The attempt to colonise by Russia to overthrow a democratic government of a sovereign state. *Congress Recognises:*

The Ukrainians right to independence and self-governance.

The huge generosity of the Irish community in donating to causes to help the Ukrainian population.

That many people in Ukraine currently require and will require assistance from foreign governments and charitable organisations.

Congress Notes:

The calls from many different charitable organisations for support in fundraising for humanitarian supplies to assist people in Ukraine.

Congress Mandates:

USI Coiste Gnó to organise and coordinate a campaign with local unions to help raise funds for humanitarian supplies for the Ukrainian people.

IA 4 International Student VISA Waiver Scheme

Proposed by Queen's Students' Union

Congress Notes:

The number of international students studying on the island of Ireland continues to increase International students contribute enormously to student life and should not experience any undue or unfair restrictions on their lives while studying The Common Travel Area (CTA) does not apply to international students who do not hold UK or Irish citizenship

Many international students studying in Northern Ireland / north of Ireland face visa-based restrictions on travel within the Irish state.

The current immigration system requires many international students to apply for short-term visas to attend events / activities within the Irish state, which is onerous, overly bureaucratic, time consuming, and limits participation in student life.

Congress Believes:

International students should not face additional barriers to travel or to participation in opportunities on the island of Ireland.

International students studying in Northern Ireland / north of Ireland should be able to travel without restriction on the island to participate in educational, social and student experience activities.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

The USI Executive Team to secure the implementation of a travel visa waiver - or visa exemption - system within the Irish state for all international students registered as studying in a further or higher education institution in Northern Ireland / north of Ireland.

GAE 5 Gaeilge Groups in USI

Proposed by the Irish Language Committee

Note: If IL 19-5 passes this motion will fall

Comhdháil Recognises:

That the Irish Language Committee / Gaeilge Working Group takes place at each Comhairle Náisiúnta but the LUdG also chairs An Coiste Cultúrtha and the NUS-USI Irish Language Taskforce.

Comhdháil acknowledges:

That the Committee/ Working Group is a constitutional requirement and is attended by predominantly full-time officers. An Coiste Cultúrtha was created when the LUdG role was part-time, and the NUS-USI Irish Language Taskforce was created to better co-ordinate campaigns on various campuses and to better support those organising those campaigns.

Comhdháil further acknowledges:

That the work of these organisations has changed, and the vacuum in which they were created has been filled by long standing campaigns, fully developed working relationships and additional support from external organisations such as Conradh na Gaeilge, An Dream Dearg, trade unions and USI. These spaces are used primarily for updates, as the work happens somewhere else.

Therefore, Comhdháil Mandates:

That the Irish Language Committee / Gaeilge Working Group continue to operate as it is intended, while the NUS-USI Irish Language Taskforce and An Coiste Cultúrtha will cease to operate.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

That the LUdG work with each MO to identify the main challenges they are facing and help them establish local Coistí Cultúrtha/Meitheal Mac Léinn/Irish Language Taskforces/Grúpa Gníomhaí Gaeilge.

Comhdháil strongly encourages:

Each MO register for the Gníomhaí Gaeilge scheme where they will be set up with a mentor who will work one-on-one with them to set and achieve a number of goals in relation to the Irish language in their Union, their Cumann Gaelach or on an individual level, and have the chance to have this work recognised at the end of the year.

Comhdháil repeals: IL 19 – 5

NOTE: IF IL 19-5 is extended by Congress, this Motion will not be debated and will automatically fall.

WEL 6 Creation of a workshop to identify domestic abuse and

red flags

UCC Students' Union

Comhdháil Notes with concern:

That domestic violence cases are rising at an alarming rate since the beginning of the pandemic with Ireland reporting a 24% increase since 2020 alone.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

That the creation of a workshop based off the model of the SafeTalk model could be beneficial in helping people recognize the signs of abuse in their own relationship while also providing tools on how to start a conversation with someone you are concerned about, how to start a conversation with someone to ask for help as well as providing information on how to seek help and get out of the relationship safely.

Comhdháil recognizes:

The work USI, Students' Unions, Rape Crisis Centers and Networks have been doing over the decades to drive forward cultural change through sexual health awareness campaigns, consent education via consent workshops, offering disclosure training, coordinating rallies and protests to stand in solidarity with survivors and lobbying for policy development, both on a local and national level.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates:

The Vice President for Welfare and the Vice President for Equality and Citizenship to coordinate a workshop like the SafeTalk workshops in conjunction with any relevant organisations to roll out nationwide."

WEL 7 Lower the age of HPV Checks in Ireland

Proposed by WITSU

Congress Notes

In Ireland today the recommended age that a woman can avail of the HPV Screening in Ireland is 25 years of age. Furthermore, women are only required to get tested every 3 years between the ages of 25-29.

Congress also notes

HSE has found that HPV infection rate is more common in late teenagers and early 20's, younger than the recommended time women can avail of the screening services. There is clear evidence that cervical cancer can be prevented through early intervention by availing of regular screenings, PAP tests and HPV Tests.

Congress further notes

The age that young people are engaging in sexual intercourse is much younger than the age of 25, Therefore the mandatory age of 25 for screenings should be lowered to the age of consent. *Congress Therefore Believes*

The age of screening for HPV and Cervix screenings should be lowered to the age of consent and that women who are sexual active have access to screening in a non-judgemental way.

That these screening should be accessible to all and there should be no discriminatory with these screenings between public and private sector.

Congress Mandates

That the USI Coiste Gnó lobby the health services and the Minister for Health to ensure that the standards of women's health in Ireland is being spotlighted and actions are made.

WEL 8 Investments in STI Clinics in the South East

Proposed by WITSU

Congress Notes

In recent years there has been a notable decline in the accessibility of STI Clinics available in the South East in Ireland and in particular Waterford.

Congress also notes

The cost of private STI tests in Ireland now range from €160- €300. This is an astronomical cost on the average person but for student's this means these tests are totally unaffordable and inaccessible.

Congress Therefore Mandates

The USI Southern Regional Officer and The USI Welfare Officer to assist local MO's to lobby the Government and local Health Services to increase the accessibility of STI Clinics in the South East of Ireland.

WEL 9 Community Action Tenants Union

UCC Students' Union

Comhdháil Notes:

Community Action Tenants Union (CATU) Ireland is a union for communities and tenants, that is renters, council tenants, mortgage holders and people in emergency or precarious living situations. Over the past two years CATU has grown hugely as a union, successfully resisting evictions, defending the rights of its members, highlighting dereliction and the exploitation of landlords, and raising class consciousness amongst its membership and the wider population.

Comhdháil Also Notes:

Students make up a significant proportion of the population of renters across Ireland, and the housing crisis and access to safe, affordable and adequate accommodation is one of the most pressing issues for students today. Public services and community infrastructure are also critical to supporting students and the areas they are living in.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

The USI Executive, and in particular the VP Campaigns and VP Welfare, are already mandated to work with and support the establishment and growth of tenants unions. However, there is a need for more direct engagement with tenants unions through information sharing, supporting direct action and encouraging students to join tenants unions.

Comhdháil Believes:

The knowledge, experience and resources from CATU, as well as their strength as an active tenants union, could have huge benefits to student tenants and the student union movement as a whole, and vice versa.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The Vice President for Campaigns to investigate the feasibility of developing a partnership agreement between USI and CATU, similar to that of the SIPTU-USI agreement, with the aim of supporting and strengthening both unions, facilitating joining campaigns and actions, and providing students with support as tenants. If the Vice President for Campaigns concludes that

such a partnership is feasible then they should go about developing such an agreement with the support of the USI Executive.

GAE 1 Ranganna Gaeilge d'Oifigí lán aimseartha

Proposed by CMLOÉG

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil / Congress Notes

Go bhfuil spéis ag méadú i leibhéal na Gaeilge a fhorbairt i measc mic léinn.

That there is a growing interest for developing the level of Irish among students.

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil comh maith / Congress further notes

Go mbeadh Gaeilge líofa ag oifigí lán aimseartha áirithe a thagann isteach amach anseo. That certain elected full time officers may already have fluent Irish.

Creideann an Chomhdháil/ Congress believes

Go bhfuil géarghá le seirbhísí dhátheangach ag an gcomhaltas

That it is important that bilingual services are provided by the union

Mar sin, sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil/ Therefore, Congress mandates

Na naoi n-oifigigh lán-aimseartha ar an choiste gnó chun freastal ar ranganna Gaeilge le linn a dtraenáil. D'fhéadfaidh freastal ar réimse ranganna ó ranganna bhunúsacha go ranganna athnuachana.

The nine full time sabbatical officers to attend Irish classes during their training. The training may range from basic Irish language classes to refresher classes.

GAE 2 Scéim Teanga 2022

Proposed by Irish Language Committee

AITHNÍONN AN CHOMHDHÁIL

An tábhacht a bhaineann le scéim teanga a bheith ag Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn leis an nGaeilge a chur chun cinn agus í a bheith chomhtháthú in obair laethúil an Aontais. *CREIDEANN AN CHOMHDHÁIL:* Gur cheart uasdátú rialta a dhéanamh ar Scéim Teanga an Aontais chun teacht leis na hathruithe rialta a tharlaíonn san Aontas. Ba cheart go mbeadh an Ghaeilge mar chuid nádúrtha d'aon obair a dhéanann AMLÉ go háirithe in aon fheachtas nó imeacht de chuid an Aontais.

SAINORDAÍONN AN CHOMHDHÁIL: Gur cheart an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge agus Uachtarán AMLÉ Scéim Teanga AMLÉ 2022 a chur i bhfeidhm agus bheith cinnte go bhfuil an Ghaeilge mar chuid d'obair laethúil an Aontais.

CHOMH MAITH LEIS SIN, SAINORDAÍONN AN CHOMHDHÁIL: Go ndéanfaidh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge athbhreithniú ar an Scéim ar a laghad gach dara bliain chun mbeadh sé ag teacht le haon san Aontas nó ó thaobh reachtaíocht an Stáit de.

CEADAÍONN AN CHOMHDHÁIL: An Scéim Teanga 2022.

AISGHAIREANN AN CHOMHDHÁIL:

20 GAE 2

Comhdháil Notes:

The importance of USI having an Irish Language Scheme in order to promote the language through its integration in the everyday work of the Union.

Comhdháil Believes:

That any USI Irish language scheme should be regularly updated in line with any major changes which occur in the Union. Irish should be a natural part of any work USI does, especially events or campaigns run by the Union.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge and the USI President to implement USI's Irish Language Scheme 2022 to ensure Irish is seen as a central part of the Union's day to day work.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES:

The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to review and update the scheme at least every two years to comply with any changes to the Union or to State legislation regarding the language. *Comhdháil APPROVES:* The Scéim Teanga 2022. *Comhdháil REPEALS:* 20 GAE 2

Scéim Teanga 2022

Scéim Teanga Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn 2022 Union of Students in Ireland Irish Language Scheme 2022

Meáin Chumarsáide agus Poiblíocht

- Tá sé mar dhualgas ag Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge (LU don Ghaeilge) aon iarratas ó na meáin Ghaeilge a ghlacadh ar son Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn (AMLÉ)
- San áit nach féidir leis an Leas-Uachtarán labhairt leis na meáin, roghnófar ionadaí ó Choiste Gnó AMLÉ nó cheann de na hAontais áitiúla le labhairt leis na meáin Ghaeilge.
- Déanfaidh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge agus an Oifigeach Polasaí leasmhar cruinniú faisnéise leis an ionadaí sula labhraíonn siad leis na meáin.
- Cuirfear preasráitis trí Ghaeilge chuig na meáin Ghaeilge maidir le himeachtaí nó feachtais Ghaeilge an aontais más féidir.

Media and Publications

- It is the responsibility of the Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge (LU don Ghaeilge) to deal with any request from Irish language media on behalf of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).
- Where the LU don Ghaeilge is not able to fulfil media requests, a representative will be chosen either from the USI Executive Team or from a Member Organisation (MO) to speak to Irish language media.
- The LU don Ghaeilge or a relevant member of the Executive Team will conduct a briefing with the chosen representative before they speak to the media.
- Where possible, Irish language press releases will be sent to Irish language media in regards to campaigns or events run by USI.

Feachtais an Aontais

- Ba cheart d'Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn ar a laghad, an príomh-theideal de gach feachtas a aistriú go Gaeilge, agus ba cheart an dá theanga (Béarla agus Gaeilge) a chur ar phostaeir an fheachtais, ar ábhar an fheachtais, agus ar éadaí nó éarraí eile an fheachtais ar aon mhéid lena chéile.
- Ba cheart an Ghaeilge agus an Béarla a bheith ar aon mhéid lena chéile in aon lógó nua a chruthaítear le haghaidh feachtas de chuid AMLÉ.
- Ba cheart go mbeadh 35% d'earraí a chruthaítear le haghaidh fheachtais AMLÉ a bheith ar fail I nGaeilge amháin do gach balleagraíocht.
- Ba cheart don Choiste Gnó iarracht a dhéanamh ócáid Gaeilge nó aoichainteoir le Gaeilge a tharraingt isteach in aon imeacht nó feachtas de chuid AMLÉ.
- Ba cheart d'Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn, trí obair an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge, ar a laghad feachtas Gaeilge amháin a chur ar siúl Ó Thuaidh (i bpáirt le NUS-USI), agus i gCeantar Gaeltachta, ionas gur féidir leis an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge freastal ar phobail theanga éagsúla.

USI Campaigns

- USI should, at least, translate the main title of every campaign to Irish, and both languages (English and Irish) should appear on campaign posters, campaign materials, and on campaign clothes and other items in equal size.
- Irish and English should appear in equal size on any logo created for a USI campaign.
- 35% of all materials made for USI campaigns should be available solely in Irish to each MO.
- The Executive Team should endeavour to include one Irish language event or one Irish language guest speaker as part of any USI campaign or event.
- USI should, through the work of the Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge, run at least one Irish Language campaign in the North of Ireland (working with NUS-USI) and in a Gaeltacht area, so that the Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge can attend to differing language communities.

Aistriúcháin

 Tá comhaontú idir AMLÉ agus Dréimire (seirbhís aistriúcháin Conradh na Gaeilge) maidir le haistriúcháin na heagraíochta. Mar sin, ullmhaítear an téacs atá le bheith aistrithe in aon cáipéis amháin agus seoladh é chuig an Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge, nó duine eile ainmnithe, chun seoladh go Dréimire ar a laghad trí lá sula bhfuil sé de dhíth.

Translation

• There is an agreement between USI and Dréimire (Conradh na Gaeilge) regarding translation for the Union. Therefore, the text needing translated is collated into one document and sent to the Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge, or another nominated person, to send to Dréimire at least three days before it is needed.

Úsáid na Gaeilge san Aontas

- Beidh leagan ceart de theideal na nOifigeach ar fáil trí Ghaeilge agus curtha leis na teidil Bhéarla ar aon mhéid lena chéile aon áit a mbíonn siad le feiceáil ar nós i ríomphoist, ar líne, ar phostaeir, ar litreacha srl.
- Ba cheart go ndéanfaidh Coiste Gnó AMLÉ iarracht úsáid a bhaint as an nGaeilge ag beannú nó ag críochnú ríomhphoist, nó tríd oráide. Cabhróidh an LU don Ghaeilge leo an méid seo a dhéanamh.
- Beidh duais bhliaintiúil ar fáil ag Comhdháil AMLÉ chun úsáid na Gaeilge agus iarrachtaí chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn a aithint i measc na mballeagraíochtaí. Bronnfar an duais seo ar an toscaire nó toscaireacht a bhaineann úsáid as an Ghaeilge go rialta le linn na Comhdhála. Socróidh an LU don Ghaeilge ar an toiscaire nó toiscearacht.
- Beidh duais bhliaintiúil ar fáil ag an Chomhairle Náisiúnta deireanach chun iarrachtaí duine amháin as balleagraíocht amháin (atá mar chuid den Chomhairle Náisiúnta) a aithint maidir le cur chun cinn pearsanta in úsáid nó cur chun cinn na Gaeilge. Socróidh an LU don Ghaeilge ar an fhaighteoir.

Use of Irish Language in USI

- The correct Irish Language version of Officers' titles will be provided, and shall appear in the same size with the English language versions that are to be seen online, on posters, letters, and emails.
- Members of the Executive Team should try and use Irish when greeting and signing off in emails, or throughout speeches. The LU don Ghaeilge will help them to achieve this.

- An annual prize will be awarded at Congress to recognise the use of Irish and attempts to promote the Irish Language within member organisations. This will be presented to the delegate or delegation that uses Irish regularly during the Congress. The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge will decide on the delegate or delegation.
- An annual prize will be presented at the last National Council of the year to recognise the efforts of one person in a member organisation (who is a member of National Council) as regards the use or promotion of the Irish Language. The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge will decide the recipient.

Tacaíocht do Bhalleagraíochtaí

- Cuideoidh an LU don Ghaeilge le balleagraíochtaí a scéimeanna teanga féin a chruthú nó uasdátú a dhéanamh ar an scéim reatha atá acu. Cuidieodh an LU don Ghaeilge lleo an scéim a chur i bhfeidhm.
- San áit nach bhfuil Cumann Gaelach nó Oifigeach na Gaeilge ag balleagraíocht, cuirfidh an LU don Ghaeilge acmhainní ar fáil don bhalleagraíocht le feachtais nó imeachtaí trí Ghaeilge a reáchtáil ar champas.
- San áit a bhfuil obair aistriúcháin ar bun ag balleagraíocht, tabharfaidh an Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge eolas ar acmhainní, cosúil le sonraí teagmhála do seirbhísí aistriúcháin, eolas ar costais, spriocdhátaí etc.
- Más cuí agus más féidir, cuideoidh an LU don Ghaeilge le balleagraíochtaí Cumann Gaelach a chruthú nó Oifigeach na Gaeilge a thoghadh dóibh.

Support for Member Organisations

- The LU don Ghaeilge will support MOs in creating their own language schemes, or updating any existing schemes they may have. The LU don Ghaeilge will assist them in implementing the scheme.
- Where there is no Irish Society or Irish Language Officer in an MO, the LU don Ghaeilge will provide resources to the MO in order to run Irish Language events or campaigns on campus.
- Where an MO is carrying out translation work, the Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge will provide information on resources, such as contact details for translation services and information on costs, notice required etc.
- Where appropriate and where possible, the LU don Ghaeilge will help to elect Irish Language Officers and/or set up an Irish Language society for them.

GAE 3 Use of Irish Language in County Names

Proposed by CMLOÉG

Comhdháil Recognises

the original place names of our towns, villages and counties north and south, place names which have a greater meaning in their original form.

Comhdháil regrets

that most of our original place names were turned into nonsensical gibberish words as part of colonial anglicisation.

Comhdháil believes

that we lost part of the heritage and culture of our towns and villages as new colonial names were forced upon them.

Comhdháil applauds

other decolonised nations who are reclaiming and changing back to their indigenous place names, such as Mumbai instead of Bombay in India or the former country of Burma changing their name back to Myanmar.

Comhdháil also applauds

other organisations such as the GAA who encourage the use of our county names in Irish. *Comhdháil believes*

that proactive measures should be taken over time to reclaim the prominence of our Irish language place names.

Comhdháil Mandates

USI Coiste Gnó to proactively use the Irish language versions of county names as much as possible when referring directly to counties in order to help normalise their use. This mandate would apply to press releases, letters, submissions and social media, while excluding specific names of third level colleges and MOs.

WEL 1 Sexual Harassment Policies in HEIs

Proposed by: CMLOÉG

Congress Notes

That there are major downfalls in university sexual harassment policy documents, as well as a high number of students reporting sexual harassment or violence (34% - over 1,100 students, according to a national survey). The USI must take a zero-tolerance approach to gender based violence, rape, sexual assault and intimate partner abuse.

Congress further understands

Students who are failed by their university policy have no course for appeal and often deal with the severe consequences of this failure in isolation. The disciplinary process for cases of sexual harassment should not be developed on an ad-hoc basis by individual universities, nor should cases of sexual harassment be assimilated into university's standard disciplinary process that deals with cases of plagiarism, drinking etc. Furthermore, there must be oversight and transparency regarding the implementation of sexual harassment policy.

Congress Therefore Mandates

That it shall be the position of USI to recommend the implementation of national standards regarding university sexual harassment policy, developed with the input of those working in the fields of trauma informed care, sexual violence, women's rights and minority rights. USI shall recommend that these standards should consider the following, amongst more in consultation with these groups:

- Minimum standards of training for all parties involved in conducting disciplinary procedures including first contacts, investigators and disciplinary committee members.
- Special accommodations must be outlined for students taking cases of sexual harassment which consider, how many times a complaining student must recount their experience of abuse, whether a complaining student can have someone speak on their behalf, whether the complaining student must face their accused, giving fair warning to the complaining student of exactly when the accused will be notified of the case against them and so on.
- A support worker should be assigned to assist students who are taking a complaint through the disciplinary process. This role of the worker should include helping students to write and edit complaints and appeals; assisting students to compile supporting documentation; accompanying students to disciplinary hearings; assisting students in communicating with the disciplinary committee and appeals board; and keeping in touch with students to inform them of each step in the process. All support workers must receive adequate training.

- Students making complaints of sexual and gender-based violence should be entitled to submit all relevant evidence for consideration. A lack of corroborating evidence is a major reason for cases to fail, students who have witnesses of their assaults are not allowed to have this evidence considered at any point in the disciplinary proceeding.
- There should be no time limit on taking cases of sexual harassment/ violence beyond the requirement that all parties remain students/ staff of the university
- Policy on sexual harassment should not contain sections on false complaints nor should they include a threat of retribution for complaints that lack evidence.
- Complaining students must be kept informed of any and all updates to their case. The disciplinary committee should be in regular contact with the complainant, take on board any concerns regarding the handling of the case, make a genuine effort to provide any extra accommodation that is requested and reply to any communications from complainants in a timely manner.
- The reasonable length of time that a case of sexual harassment should be dealt within must be outlined. Where there are delays, this should be justified by an objective reason and this reason should be clearly communicated to the complainant.
- These standards should be made available to all complaining students as soon as they register a complaint
- A permanent member of staff, separate from the disciplinary committee, should be tasked with overseeing the implementation of policy and ensuring that standards are met. Reports should be issued to a body external to the university.
- Where the handling of a sexual harassment complaint falls below best practice, the complaining student should have an option to register a complaint regarding this to the university and/or a body external to the university.
- Aggregate data regarding the number of cases taken in a university, the portion of successful/ unsuccessful cases, the time taken to conclude cases, the number of complaints made regarding the process, the number of cases taken by students against staff, the number of rejected appeals and so on should be made available to students.

WEL 2 Prescription Costs

Proposed by CMLOÉG

Comhdháil Notes:

The cost of living in Ireland continues to rise. Inflation is an estimated 5%+ this year.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

Students primarily work in low-paid, minimum wage labour. Students are adversely affected by illness costs, emergency costs, and high-cost medicines and healthcare.

Comhdháil Believes:

Universities should allocate funding to lower prescription costs to students via the on-campus pharmacy, if applicable, in line with medical card holder prescription charges (€1.50 per item). Furthermore, the government should provide all students with medical cards.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The USI Coiste Gnó raise this with the Minister for Higher Education. The USI President and the Vice President for Welfare should push for medical cards and prescription funding from Higher Level Authorities and make affordable healthcare a more prominent aspect of their mantra and objectives overall."

WEL 3 Establishment of an Anti-Spiking Task Force

IT Sligo Students' Union

Congress Notes

That a very serious and worrying development is infringing on students safety across Irelandstudents being 'spiked' whilst out socially.

Spiking is a crime and carries up to a 10 year prison sentence.

Congress Further Notes

That 'spiking' has found its way into the fabric of student social life across Ireland.

Congress Believes

That all actions at our disposal should be taken to help combat this worrying threat to student safety.

Congress Further Believes

That the Union of Students' Ireland, in collaboration with MO's should take a proactive approach to this issue, rather than just a reactive one.

Congress Mandates

That the Vice President for Welfare establishes an Anti Spiking Task Force, which allows MO Sabbatical officers to become members of. This task force will take a proactive approach in trying to combat spiking in Ireland, but also act as an emergency response team during unforeseen or additional developments in this area of concern. This task force will collaborate with local and national, relevant organisations.

WEL 4 National Stalking Awareness Campaign

IT Sligo Students' Union

Congress Notes

The suffering that is caused by many victims of stalking in Ireland.

Congress Further Notes

Many studies suggest that most cases of stalking occur between the ages of 18 and 24 years old, directly coinciding with the typical age demographic of students of third level education.

Congress Recognises

The continuous work that many organisations, including Stalking Ireland and others are doing to create awareness and combat this area of concern within Ireland

Congress Further Recognises

Currently (March 2022), Stalking is not recognised in current legislation- the work of Senator Lisa Chambers, Eve McDowell, Una Ring and others to create the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Bill (Stalking Bill), will hopefully result in Stalking being recognised by law in the near future.

Congress Mandates

The Vice President for Welfare rolls out, in collaboration with the Campaigns Working Group, a national informational and awareness campaign for all students regarding Stalking. This campaign will collaborate with local and national campaigns where appropriate. This campaign will potentially coincide with the 2018 WEL 12: Abusive Relationships, Sexual Violence & Harassment campaign if applicable.

WEL 5 Public Diagnostic Services

Proposed by USI VP Welfare

Congress Notes:

There is a distinct lack of publicly funded diagnostic services accessible to students who may need support for potential neurodivergencies. Currently students who are seeking diagnostic services for ADHD are forced to enroll in the private medical industry, which is often financially inaccessible for students, or be faced with long waiting lists.

Congress Mandates:

The USI Coiste Gnó to lobby for increased publicly funded accessible diagnostic services that are accessible to students, and to keep this in mind when developing submissions (e.g. the prebudget submission).

Congress also Mandates:

The VP Welfare and VP E&C to develop a resource pack for MOs of publicly funded diagnostic and disability services accessible to students that is to be reviewed and updated at the beginning of each semester.

WEL 6 Accommodation Crisis

Proposed by USI President

Comhdháil Regrets:

That the worsening student accommodation crisis is preventing access to third level education. *Comhdháil Notes:*

That the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the already existing financial hardships students experience and has intensified the fall-out from the national accommodation crisis.

Comhdháil Believes:

That Government must take urgent and immediate action to address the student accommodation crisis and believes the crisis should be deemed an emergency.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The President and Vice President for Campaigns to lobby the Ministers for FHERIS and Housing to develop an up to date student accommodation strategy that is reflective of the actions needed to alleviate the stress and pressure placed on students.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The President and Vice President for Campaigns to lobby the Ministers for FHERIS and Housing to develop tangible and effective short-term and medium-term goals around student accommodation to ensure every student can access third level education. In addition, the President should demand that both Ministers prioritise the continuity of the Interdepartmental Working Group on student accommodation.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The Vice President for Campaigns to review and amend the USI Student Accommodation Strategy 2019 to ensure it is up to date and fully reflective of the current student accommodation crisis. Amendments provided should be no later than crossover Comhairle Náisiúnta 2023

WEL 7 REFLECT - SUPPORTING STUDENTS' UNION OFFICERS

Proposed by Welfare Working Group

CONGRESS NOTES:

That Students' Union Training (SUT) and Students' Union Top-Up Training (SUT+) are extremely beneficial and useful to Students' Union Officers before the academic term begins. Sessions delivered during these training days allow Students' Union Officers to receive detailed knowledge on topics relating to their briefs, gain insight around potential challenges that may arise and focus on what they would like to achieve in the year.

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN:

That Students' Union Officers work in extremely stressful, highly pressurized and intense working conditions to adapt and react to the emerging issues around them.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES WITH CONCERN

That due to the nature of the workload many Students' Union Officers are at risk of experiencing burnout or a loss of motivation.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

USI should facilitate and enable Students' Union Officers to work at their best capacity and feel supported by offering tailored training wherever deemed necessary.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES:

The Vice President for Welfare with the support of the Regional Officers, to organise an event, in person or online, at the start of semester two including the following topics, but not limited to; motivation, leadership, goal setting and re-prioritizing manifesto policies, self-care and wellbeing. The structure of the event should be planned in agreement with Welfare Working Group.

This repeals: 2021 UO 3 REFLECT - SUPPORTING STUDENTS' UNION OFFICERS

WEL 8 Night-Time Safety

Proposed by the VP Welfare

Congress Notes

The night-time industry is an integral part of the student experience. Unfortunately, the nighttime industry in Ireland is in need of urgent reform at a governmental level to ensure that those engaging and participating in the industry are safe and are able to enjoy themselves. Congress also notes

In late 2021, there was a clear rise in the number of cases relating to spiking, including the worrying trend of 'needle spiking' within the Irish night-time industry.

Congress also notes:

The slow return of the nitelink services in Dublin following the easing of restrictions (and a lack of services all together elsewhere), a service which many students rely on to get home after standard public transport options have ceased. This has resulted in an increased demand on the taxi industry, and an increased number of people attempting to get home at the same time, a clear barrier to keeping our population safe.

Congress Acknowledges

The incredible work done by MOs and external organisations to ensure that students engaging with the night-time industry in any capacity are safe.

Congress Mandates

The VP for Welfare to engage with relevant stakeholders in the night-time industry nationally (inc. N.Ire) working to ensure the safety of patrons, and to continuously explore potential partnerships with new organisations.

Congress also Mandates

The USI Coiste Gnó to lobby the Government to introduce further supports to protect students engaging with the night-time industry, including but not limited to: further public transport supports outside of traditional hours, a review of legislation surrounding opening hours, further protection for students working in the night time industry

WEL 9 Drug Harm Reduction and the Decriminalization of Drugs Proposed by the USI Vice President for Welfare

Congress Notes

In July 2015, USI National Council formally adopted a stance that called for USI to support a call for decriminalisation of drugs, with a view to taking a similar approach to the one in place in Portugal. Following the adoption of this stance, the VP Equality and Citizenship made a submission to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality as part of their Drugs Policy Review process. In 2016, USI Congress mandated the Coiste Gnó to lobby for decriminalisation, and in 2018, Coiste Gnó had developed connections with external expert groups to promote and produce information surrounding the use of drugs with a harm reduction focus and to promote decriminalisation models. Since 2018, the VP for Welfare has continued to engage with relevant stakeholders and endeavoured to ensure that any work being carried out by the coiste Gnó referencing drugs has a harm reduction centred approach.

Congress Notes

College is a time when many students are exposed to drugs. For many students, this exposure can happen at an even younger age. There is currently very little information being given to students at second or third level about drug consumption or risks. There is a culture of fear amongst wider society around talking about drugs in an informed and responsible manner.

Congress Also Notes

That if a student gets a conviction for personal use, this can have lifelong implications. It can prevent a student from accessing a visa to certain countries, a job which requires Garda vetting, certain types of insurance, and can impede them from availing of further education or training. A criminal conviction also limits an individual's chances of social mobility, which results in them becoming dependent on the state.

Congress Further Notes

On July 1st 2001, Portugal decriminalised drug use, acquisition and possession of illicit drugs when conducted for personal use as part of a comprehensive new policy. This quantity of personal use amounted to up to 10 days' supply for personal use. The policy also included a significant expansion in drug treatment, including methadone maintenance, to help dependent users get away from injecting heroin.

Congress Believes

There is a need for health professionals, parents and educators to acknowledge the fact that young people often engage in drug use, and at the very least will be exposed to drug use at some point in their lives. Drug use cannot be tackled by policy measures which are only aimed at controlling the supply of drugs. It is futile to only have supply reduction strategies in place of more cost-effective and evidence based investments in harm- reduction and education.

Congress Mandates

The coiste Gnó to lobby for the decriminalisation of drugs in line with the Portuguese Model. USI coiste Gnó should also lobby for investment into treatment and health facilities along with education about drug use and risk for young adults and those of school age.

Congress Further Mandates

The VP Welfare, and VP Campaigns (with the aid of the coiste gn,àö,â•), to run information campaigns for students to educate them of the need for this reform and on safe drug use.

Congress Further Mandates

The VP Welfare to provide appropriate information and supports to MOs to best understand these issues, and to promote such campaigns in their own unions, and to appropriate bodies in their own institutions.

This repeals: WEL 19-2 DECRIMINALISATION OF DRUGS

NOTE: IF WEL 19-2 is extended by Congress, this Motion will not be debated and will automatically fall

AA 1 Accessing Third Level Education Through Sports

Proposed by the VP for the BMW Region

Congress Notes:

The importance of sports as a pastime in student life and everyday life.

The value student participation in sport has on the reputation of third level institutes. The continuous work done by athletes in order to perform, at peak performance, during the academic year.

Congress Mandates:

The USI Coiste Gnó to prepare a position paper on recognising sporting abilities in CAO applications.

AA 2 Travel Allowance for Placement Students

TU Dublin SU

Congress Notes:

That many students must complete a mandatory placement as part of their studies. These placements can be upwards of 800 hours which can equate to 12-14 weeks. For most students their placements are not paid positions, and, where there are payments, the payment is pittance.

Congress Further Notes:

That for some students accommodation for placement is also not included and students need to pay out of their own pocket for suitable accommodation for them to live in during their placement. In some situations, placements might be across the country or even abroad. Leaving some students in great financial difficulty.

Congress Recognises:

The recommendations made by the McHugh Report in 2021.

Congress Further Recognises:

The USI Placement and Work-Based Learning Strategy 2021-2024, and the USI Submission to Longer Term Review of Student Nurse & Midwife Matters, and the motion Summer Time Placement 2021AA5.

Congress Mandates:

A placement subcommittee chaired by the VP for the Academic Affairs to be set up with student representatives from any course which requires a mandatory placement including but not limited to teaching, social care, nursing & midwifery, allied health sciences and more.

Congress Further Mandates:

The VP Campaigns to run a campaign based on their input and to build relationships with trade unions and to run an annual campaign based on this feedback.

AA 3 Open Access Policy

Maynooth Students' Union

Congress Notes:

That the Irish Libraries Association (ILA) has warned of an electronic content crisis facing libraries and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The ILA has said "We are deeply concerned about the rising costs and unfair licensing conditions for such content"

Congress Believes:

Access to education is a fundamental right and with the rise in misinformation it is imperative that all people should have access to research, especially those funded through public investment and/or conducted through public institutions for the public good.

Congress Further Believes:

That the soaring subscription costs that students and libraries are facingcreate a further barrier to education and takes good quality and enlightening material out of the hands of ordinary people and students.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

The Vice President for Academic Affairs to lobby the government to take swift action to combat the extortionate subscription costs.

Congress Further Mandates:

The Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs, alongside the Vice President for Academic Affairs, to organise a campaign to highlight this issue and encourage postgraduate students and academics to opt to make their work publicly available.

AA 4 International and Postgraduate Fees:

TU Dublin SU

Congress Notes:

That the cost for individual postgraduate courses and courses for non-EU students are dictated by the institution delivering the course.

Congress further Notes:

That these students pay far greater fees than undergraduate EU students, with significant variance across the sector in terms of what these students pay. Due to the significant financial pressure placed on students, greater transparency from institutions on the setting of international and postgraduate fees, and how this money is used by institutions is needed.

Congress Regrets:

That whilst there is guidance for how undergraduate fees are set, there is no such guidance for how fees are set for postgraduate courses and international students.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

USI President, Vice President for Equality and Citizenship and Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs with the support of the Regional Vice Presidents to conduct a review into the frequency and percentage fee increases for International and Postgraduate students in all member organisations, to be presented Comhairle Náisiúnta no later than March 2023.

Congress Further Mandates:

The USI President to Lobby the Minister for Further & Higher education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Higher Education Authority to create a national framework to standardise how fees are set, and how often they can be increased for these student cohorts.

Congress Therefore Repeals: 2021 AA3

AA 5 Creative Student Representation

Proposed by the Academic Affairs Working Group

Comhdháil Notes

Creative arts students are facing the intersecting crises of the underfunding of both the arts and higher education. As well as this, the unique needs of creative arts students often go unconsidered in high level discussions around higher education funding.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

The number of students in the creative arts and entering the workforce is increasing each year, with funding for arts staying relatively similar. There is a growing difficulty in accessing grants or funding and the Arts Council funding is not to available to undergraduate students.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

Students in Creative Arts courses are required to spend significant amounts on additional course costs in software and material fees.

Comhdháil Believes

There is a need for informed discussions within USI, as well as interdepartmental communications to ensure that these students are not continually disadvantaged by a lack of collaboration between the Department of FHEIRS and the Department of TCAGSM.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates:

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Campaigns to coordinate an annual campaign seeking the following.

- Additional funding to cover material costs in all Higher Education Institutions
- Introduction of Arts Council funding for ungraduated artists to avail of outside of term time
- Allowing current creative arts students to avail of the Universal Basic Income pilot scheme for artists
- Increased mental health funding for art and design schools
- An end to the disparity between the funding for creative arts courses in comparison to more traditional courses.
- Allocation of funding to cover the costs of industry standard technology.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The creation of a Creative Arts subcommittee that tackles issues that are exclusively faced by Creative Arts students. This subcommittee will consist of the VP for Academic Affairs, VP for Campaigns, at least one representative from each MO that specialises in Creative Arts, and any other student representatives - freelance artist.

Comhdháil ALSO MANDATES:

The Vice President for Academic Affairs to provide targeted support to member organisations with creative arts courses to promote and ensure representation of students at a local level

AA 6 STUDY ABROAD & ERASMUS ACCESSIBILITY

Proposed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs

Comhdháil Notes

International exchange opportunities for students continue to grow, with a significant number of students studying abroad during their degree. However, there can be significant social, physical and financial barrierspreventing students from availing of these opportunities.

Comhdháil Believes

There are great benefits for students engaging in study abroad programmes.

Comhdháil Mandates

The USI President and Vice President for Campaigns to lobby for the increased funding of student exchange programmes and availability of grants.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The Vice President for Academic Affairs to lead to work with, and lobby the European Students' Union (ESU) to provide general resources for participating Erasmus+ institutions (e.g. info on accommodation, finance, transport links) and to investigate flaws in the current Erasmus+ system.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship and Vice President for Academic Affairs to work with member organisation representatives to ensure their Higher Education Institution clearly communicates the available supports and physicalaccessibility of their partner institutions and to push for HEI's to continually lobbying for improved accessibility for students with disabilities in their partner institutions.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The Vice President for Academic Affairs to support MO officers in lobbying for the standardisation of application processes and grade conversion tables in HEI's across the country.

AA 7 StudentSurvey.ie

Proposed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs

Comhdháil Notes

The StudentSurvey.ie is well respected and recognised across Irish Higher Education Institutions having been launched in 2013, and the Postgraduate Research survey in 2018, following years of lobbying from USI. The survey was created to ensure the gathering of empirical data from students in colleges across the country.

Comhdháil Further Notes

The USI and Students' Unions have worked to ensure the StudentSurvey.ie is recognised and engaged with by students, and are often the main driving force behind promoting the survey, using their own human and financial resources.

StudentSurvey.ie data should be readily available and accessible to student representatives to allow them to examine the findingsand seek ways to action them through their institutional processes. The expectation or burden of data analysis should not be placed upon student representatives. USI and StudentSurvey.ie should aid Student Representatives to advocate for their role in strategy and decision making, using the findings of the survey.

Comhdháil Notes WITH CONCERN

The success of this valuable national initiative hinges on the power of the data generated to bring about positive, meaningfuland long-lasting impactin the participating institutions. Despite

significant efforts of student representatives and rising response rates, collaboration between student representatives and institutions is not always facilitated and sabbatical officers in most cases, do not have access to the institutional data. Students often do not understand the importance of the StudentSurvey.ie and as a result, some HEI's struggle with poor response rates.

Comhdháil Believes THAT

If students are empowered to understand the available data, and how this can facilitate change within their institution, they are more likely to engage in the survey.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

The Vice President for Academic Affairs to complete a review, with the support of the Regional Vice Presidents, to present to the StudentSurvey.ie Steering group no later than June 2023, which includes;

How member organisations work in partnershipand collaboration with their institution on the promotion of the survey with a view to continually increase institutional response rates and address any barriers to student engagement with the survey

Good practice recommendations on the role of Students' Unions, including ways in which the StudentSurvey.ie data can be viewed, distributed, and engaged with by students and staff in partnership

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The Vice President for Academic Affairs to promote the availability of accessible and relevant reports and resources following the analysis of data each year as a member of the StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

Comhdháil Also Manddates

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Campaigns to co-ordinate a briefing session with the StudentSurvey.ie Project Manager for all officers, prior to the launch of field work each year, to inform on the StudentSurvey.ie processes and idea share for promotional opportunities. Also, to support MO's to work in partnership with their registrar or designated nominee, throughout the fieldwork period, return of results and analysis. The Vice President for Academic Affairs to facilitate a training session, following the publication of results, to support officers' ability to engage with the results and recognise the possible strategic actions arising from the survey findings. This should include the provision of a template for an institutional action plan arising from the findings of the survey for officers to utilise and crossover to their successors each year

AA 8 CONNECTING CREATIVE ARTS STUDENTS

Proposed By Creatives Working Group

Comhdháil Notes:

Within many of the USI MOs there are Creative Arts courses that are underrepresented locally, as well as nationally, and offer unique issues to their students. Networking and support within the Creative Arts is essential for progression and further development.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

Graduates from Creative Arts courses tend to have fewer employment opportunities available in their field. There is a lack of information directly available to creative arts students about specific financial supports available to them.

Comhdháil Recognises:

The need for support and promotion of such an event for creative arts students in all MOs.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The VP for Academic Affairs, VP Campaigns and regional officers to organise a one-day support and networking event for Creative Arts students to discuss and educate artists on issues such as, internships, international opportunities, funding grants. This event should also provide information on tax and finances.

AA 9 EXAMINATION BEST PRACTICE

Proposed by the Academic Affairs Working Group

Comhdháil Notes

Following the swift transition to online learning during the pandemic, we saw the flexibility of the sector and assessment practices.

Comhdháil Believes

The accommodations made available should where possible, stay in place to support students with disabilities, caregivers, those completing part-time work etc.

Comhdháil Mandates

The Vice President for Academic Affairs to support officers in lobbying for the expansion of deferrals, flexible repeat scheduling and any other accomodations.

Comhdháil Mandates

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Welfare to conduct a review, in collaboration with member organisations on HEI policies and procedures including, but not limited to exam scheduling, repeats, illness support, extensions and provision of feedback, with the intention of creating a best practice framework for assessment in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders.

AA 10 Postgraduate Students Strategy

PROPOSED BY VICE-PRESIDENT FOR POSTGRADUATE AFFAIRS

Congress Notes:

The existing postgraduate students strategy is due to expire at Congress 2021.

Congress further notes:

The significant changes that have occurred in the Postgraduate portfolio over the last three years and the need for wider consultation in the development of USI's Postgraduate Strategy going forward.

Congress Mandates:

The VP for Postgraduate Affairs to work alongside the Postgraduate Working Group to create an updated strategy document to be presented to national council no later than June 2021.

UO 1 Amendments to the USI Constitution for Regionalisation

Proposed by the USI President

Comhdháil Notes:

That the organisation's constitution governs the ethos and operations of the entire organisation. It is imperative that the constitution is up to date, accurate and reflects the spirit of the organisation.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

Institutes of Technologies are merging to become Technological Universities across the island of Ireland, spanning cross-county campuses, and larger student bodies. In addition,

Technological Universities (TUs) have unique needs. Students' Unions are merging as a result of the creation of TUs, requiring a huge amount of resourcing, experience and advice.

Comhdháil Notes with concern:

That while the current USI Regional Officers are absolutely integral to providing local MO support, their roles are not tailored to fit USI's requirements from member organisations when it comes to Technological Universities, and will not be able to represent all TUs coming down the line. One example of this is the Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands and Midwest, which spans across two different regions.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The President and Vice Presidents for the Regions to set up of a Constitutional Review Working Group to have a full review of the composition of the Coiste Gnó, role descriptions, schedules etc. This review should be completed no later than the December Comhairle Náisiúnta of 2023. *Comhdháil Further Mandates:*

The USI President and Vice President for the Regions to collaborate and co-ordinate their engagement with member organisations until a new constitutional amendment comes into effect.

Comhdháil repeals: 2021 UO 13, 20 UO 6

UO 2 Trade Union Partnerships

Proposed by: Campaigns Working Group

Comhdháil Notes that:

That there is a need for students to become aware of their rights as workers and interns, no matter what sector they are working in.

Comhdháil welcomes:

The SIPTU-USI Partnership, renewed in 2019, as a means for furthering the work of USI on workers rights.

Comhdháil Believes that:

The USI needs to actively seek out similar levels of partnership with trade unions that represent student workers who are not represented by the work of SIPTU; including creative arts students, student nurses and midwives, student media interns, etc.

Comhdháil Further Notes that:

Partnership with trade unions plays a vital role in allowing the USI Coiste Gnó access to knowledge and resources surrounding workers rights.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The VP for Campaigns to advocate for elected Students' Union officers and their staff to become members of a union.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The USI Vice President for Campaigns and USI Coiste Gnó to actively seek out partnerships with trade unions that represent the different sectors of student workers and interns, and to provide updates on these partnerships to Comhairle Náisiúnta

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The VP for Campaigns to develop a position paper outlining the USI perspective on workers' rights across the multiple sectors of the students they represent. This position paper should be informed by students, students' union officers and trade unions.

Comhdháil repeals: UO 19 -21

20 NA (NC) 7

NOTE: IF UO 19-21 is extended by Congress, this Motion will not be debated and will automatically fall

UO 3 International World Days Standardised Calendar **TU Dublin SU**

Congress Notes:

That there are certain dates that USI & MO's mark or celebrate each year. Such as World Mental Health Day, Trans Day of Remembrance, and International Women's Day.

Congress Further Notes:

That it would be beneficial to both USI and MO's if there was a standardised calendar for all to work from on a yearly basis.

Congress Mandates:

The VP Equality & Citizenship and VP Welfare to compile a calendar of such days to be circulated to MO's before August 31st each year.

UO 4 USI and STAND Partnership Strategy 2022-2025

Proposed by the Vice President for Equality & Citizenship

Comhdháil Notes

At thebeginning of STAND and USI's 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 Students' Union Training sessions and that they would attend Comhairle Náisiúnta meetings.

Comhdháil acknowledges

The partnership between STAND and USI 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.

Comhdháil applauds

The 10,000Students Initiative which was launched in Autumn 2019 and has since grown into the primary collaboration between STAND and USI.

This initiative highlights the detrimental effects of climate change, the battles of social injustices, economic disadvantages, and political uncertainties. It therefore challenges third level students across Ireland to come together and act for a better world.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

The adoption of the USI and STAND Partnership Strategy 2022-2025

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 10,000Students Initiative. Additionally, it highlightsSTAND'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 USImember 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 L,àö¬∞ 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 10,000Students 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.

UO 5 Coiste Gnó Plans of Work

Proposed by: VP Campaigns

Comhdháil Notes that:

The Coiste Gnó provides a plan of work to Comhairle Náisiúnta at the beginning of the first semester, outlining the work that the Coiste Gnó member hopes to achieve during their term.

Comhdháil Regrets that:

These plans of work are often prepared without consultation with other USI officers and do not accurately reflect the cooperative nature of the work done within the organisation.

Comhdháil Believes that:

The USI Coiste Gnó plans of work are a beneficial way of holding officers to account during their term and should be reflective of the collaborative work of the Coiste Gn,àö,â•.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The USI President to work with the Coiste Gnó to provide an overall team plan of work to be presented to Comhairle Náisiúnta, outlining any work that will take place across more than one remit.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The USI President to provide Plan of Work updates to each Comhairle Náisiúnta alongside updates provided in the Policy File Tracker.

UO 6 SU Autonomy

Proposed by Presidents' Working Group

Comhdháil Notes:

That Students' Union autonomy has been compromised by higher education institutions for a number of years. It is unacceptable that some Students' Unions have had their funding withdrawn by their HEI which in turn has prevented many unions from operating to the best of their ability.

Comhdháil Notes with concern:

The attempts of higher education institutions to censor some students' unions, and encroach on their freedom of association.

Comhdháil strongly believes:

That Students' Unions should have the right to fully self-govern and self-direct union finances and governance structures and be free from interference from outside bodies.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The USI President to ensure the continuity of the recently established Students' Union Autonomy working group with member organisations. The President should also collate information on the national picture of Students' Unions around the country which can be used to share best practices including, but not limited to funding allocations, internal and external governance structures, Students' Union composition, number of union staff, relationship with HEIs etc

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The USI President and Coiste Gnó to devise a guidance document on the pillars of Students' Union autonomy in consultation with member organisations and key stakeholders. In addition, the Coiste Gnó should work with and lobby the Minister for FHERIS to implement legislation defining Students' Unions.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The USI President to lobby the Minister for FHERIS and HEA to agree on an oversight body that monitors funding allocations from higher education institutions to Students' Unions and has a procedure in place to deal with any disputes.

Comhdháil repeals: 17 UO1

UO 7 Training Days

Proposed by Presidents' Working Group

Comhdháil Notes:

That the role of Students' Union Presidents and Deputy Presidents is incredibly vast, dynamic and reactive. USI must ensure that Presidents and Deputy Presidents are as best equipped and supported as they can be to lead their Students' Unions as effectively as possible.

Comhdháil Further Notes:

That many merged Students' Unions and Students' Unions with satellite campuses have officers with specific or portfolio responsibilities on their campuses that may be additional to all other officers.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The USI President and Deputy President to organise Presidents' & Deputies day no later than August 31st each year.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The USI President and Deputy President to consult with member organisations on the trainings they would like provided.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The USI President and Deputy President to include sessions for those officers with specific or portfolio responsibilities on their campuses.

Comhdháil repeals: 2021 UO NC 4

UO 8 USI Mandated Training

Proposed by Dublin Region Working Group

CONGRESS NOTES

Through training, sabbatical and part-time officers are equipped with crucial skills that enable them to best represent students.

CONGRESS COMMENDS

The existence of current mandated trainings on the USI policy file.

HOWEVER, CONGRESS ALSO NOTES

That existing mandates are spread across the policy file and it is therefore difficult to hold relevant USI Officers to account.

CONGRESS BELIEVES

Mandated trainings would be better consolidated into a single mandate.

THEREFORE, CONGRESS MANDATES

Members of the USI Coiste Gnó (outlined in []) to provide training on the following issues to fully prepare officers for their work;

- Lobbying [VP for Equality and Citizenship]
- Casework [VP for Academic Affairs and VP for Welfare]
- Bystander Intervention [VP for Welfare]
- Governance [USI President]
- Media Training [VP for Campaigns]
- Part-Time Officer Training [USI Regional Officers]
- Postgraduate Affairs [VP for Postgraduate Affairs]
- Suicide Prevention [VP for Welfare]
- Anti-Racism Training [VP For Equality and Citizenship]

- Personal Development Training [USI Regional Officers]
- Students' Union Staff Training [USI President]

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES

The USI Coiste Gnó to provide further training on the following;

- Disclosure Training [VP for Welfare]
- Union Finances [USI President]
- Freedom of Information Requests [USI President]
- Crisis Response Training [VP for Welfare]

Repeals:

- 2021 NC 5 on Casework
- 2021 UO 1 on Lobbying
- 2021 UO 5 on Bystander Intervention
- UO 19 2 on Governance
- UO 19 8 on Media Training
- UO 19 16 on PTOs
- 2021 AA NC 1 Postgraduate Follow Up Training
- 20 AA 8 Postgraduate Representative Training
- 20 WEL 8 Mental Health and Casework Training For Students' Unions Officers
- 21 UO NC 1 Regional Leadership and Personal Development Training
- 15 UO 3 Students' Union Staff Training

NOTE: IF UO 19-2 or UO 19-16 are extended by Congress, this Motion will not be debated and will automatically fall

UO 9 USI Awareness Campaign

Proposed by TU Dublin SU

Congress Notes:

That the student movement has been at the forefront of social change with significant involvement of USI.

Congress Regrets:

That many students who are not directly involved with their union or USI are often unaware of who USI are and what they do for students. This is resulting in poor engagement from students with USI events and activities.

Congress Believes:

That a widespread awareness campaign has the potential to increase awareness of USI and therefore increase the reach and engagement of campaigns and activities.

Congress Mandates:

The VP Campaigns and the Regional VP's to create a working group to develop an awareness campaign about USI with Member Organisations from each region.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

That the awareness campaign be rolled out in person and online by USI in conjunction with all relevant MO's in October of the academic year.

UO 10 ESU Participation

Proposed by VP South

Comhdháil Notes:

USI are members of the European Students' Union. This membership allows USI to have a vital role in shaping international policies and informing national and local policies with international best practice.

Comhdháil Recognises:

Each year two USI Coiste Gnó members are assigned ESU Lead and Support. These officers attend European Student Conventions and Board Meetings on behalf of USI. Normally, the two officers can also bring a delegation with them to the events. The delegation represents USI and speaks on many topics pertaining to students.

Comhdháil Acknowledges:

Some Member Organisations may have difficulties with participating in ESU events due to the costs (Flights, Registration Fees etc) associated with participation.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The USI President to propose the two Coiste Gnó officers who are Lead and Support on ESU to Comhairle Náisiúnta by the second meeting of Comhairle Náisiúnta each year. These Officers must have a proficiency in social, academic and equality issues facing students. They shall be tasked with providing a comprehensive information session for Students' Union Officers on the European Students Union at SUT each year.

Comhdháil Further Mandates:

The Coiste Gnó Lead and Support for ESU to co-ordinate a delegation, selected from Comhairle Náisiúnta participants, to each ESU event (Board Meetings, Student Conventions etc) where possible. Each delegation shall provide a detailed report on the event they have attended, which shall be circulated to Comhairle Náisiúnta at the following meeting.

Comhdháil also Mandates:

The Coiste Gnó Lead and Support for ESU to investigate funding opportunities to cover the associated costs with attending ESU events.

Comhdháil Therefore Repeals: 20 AA1

UO 11 Regional Officers

Proposed by USI Vice President for the Dublin Region

CONGRESS NOTES

The benefit of having Regional Officers on campus and the experience and direction Regional Officers can give to local member organisations.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES

Local Student Councillor/Class Rep Council meetings are the beating heart of local unions and attendees typically represent a cohort of the student population that are most engaged in union activity.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES

Vice Presidents for the Regions be obligated to attend local union council meetings, provided they are given a minimum of 3 days' notice, or otherwise send their apologies in advance. *CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES*

The Vice Presidents for the Regions to visit MO's a minimum of four times per semester.

Repeals:

UO 19 7 Regional Officers

UO 12 Support Sessions for Officers

Proposed by VP Welfare

CONGRESS NOTES

The extreme stress that officers face on a daily basis as a result of their roles, as a result of the various forms of casework they may face and alongside futher stress as a result of pressure put on them by their HEI, students and external organisations.

CONGRESS ALSO NOTES

That officers often must rely on self-coping mechanisms due to the lack of tailored concrete supports in place for them.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES

That although working groups or spaces at NC can be useful to debrief, a Coiste Gnó member may not be adequately equipped to lead a facilitation session to help officers explore issues they have faced in their roles.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES

The VP Welfare and the VP Academic Affairs to organize regular debriefing sessions, in order to best help officers. Debriefing sessions should be lead by an appropriately skilled facilitator (where it is inappropriate for a Coiste Gnó member to lead), and also encompass coping skills that officers can use in self-care exercises. These are to include, but not be limited to: Casework debrief sessions, anger redirection sessions, andgeneral informal spaces for officers to discuss their issues and stresses.

This repeals

WEL 19 15 CASEWORK DEBRIEFING PROVISION

NOTE: IF WEL 19-15 is extended by Congress, this Motion will not be debated and will automatically fall.

UO 13 Motion on Unionisation Stance **DCUSU**

Congress Notes

USI may wish to work alongside companies throughout the year based on shared interests or common goals. This can sometimes take the form of a partnership agreement between the employer and the USI which identifies their common interests and objectives. USI voted through UO5 USI Commercial Strategy last year, and this motion would add to that strategy.

Congress Further Notes

USI has engaged increasingly with commercial organisations for sponsorship of USI events and support for venue hire, catering and materials.

Congress supports and encourages

USI in seeking sponsorship in order to reduce costs and add value to events for members. *Congress Understands*

Congress Understands

That the ability to seek out and secure sponsorship offers varies depending on the project involved and the financial benefit offered and is regularly time-sensitive.

Congress Mandates

The USI President and VP Campaigns to create a policy regarding commercial partnerships, following consultation with MO sabbatical officers and the USI Officer board. This policy would cover how partnerships are sought out, agreed upon, and the length of time they are active for.

Congress Further Mandates

The USI VP for campaigns to ensure that consideration is given to the stance and record on unionisation and/or opposition of unionisation of any companies or employers who may be directly or indirectly promoted through USI channels, including but not limited to social media channels, newsletters, accommodation/hotel providers event sponsorship and competition prizes.

UO 14 USI Accountability

Maynooth Students' Union

Congress Notes:

After Congress, it is one of the roles of Comhairle Náisiúnta to hold USI officers accountable. *Congress Believes:*

That as a democratic organisation accountable to its members, it is important that Comhairle Náisiúnta is empowered to hold officers accountable to the full extent of its ability and knowledge. Therefore, it is imperative they understand how meetings of Comhairle Náisiúnta are run

Congress Further Believes:

That without Officer Reports being voted on, Comhairle Náisiúnta cannot effectively hold USI Officers accountable as there are no repercussions. A structure by which reports are passed or rejected would ultimately increase the accountability of both Comhairle Náisiúnta and USI Officers.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

The USI President to conduct a review of the accountability process, specifically officer reports, with a view to implementing a system of Comhairle Náisiúnta voting on them, with the appropriate structures in place if a report should be rejected.

Congress Further Mandates:

The USI President to ensure the circulation of standing orders to all members of Comhairle Náisiúntabefore the first national council of any given year

UO 15 MO Support Directory

Maynooth Students' Union

Congress Notes:

USI was established to represent the students of Ireland but also to support local Member Organisations in their time of need and provide expertise and experience to make them stronger.

Congress further notes:

USI is made up of Member Organisations who not only face a variety of challenges but all have varying levels of resources and supports to meet those challenges.

Congress Believes:

That MO Presidents should be able to turn to their national union for support and guidance. *Congress Further Believes:*

That even USI officers are not always equipped to support officers as they may be new to the job however should have some form of institutional knowledge they can turn to.

Congress Therefore Mandates:

The USI President to compile and maintain a directory of various supports (including but not limited to people, resources, information etc.)in different areas (including but not limited to Autonomy, Welfare, Human Resources, Legal etc.) in order to be able to assist MO's in their time of need.

UO 16 Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs

Proposed by USI Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs

COMHDHÁIL NOTES

The importance of USI Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs (VPPGA) is that they represent over all postgraduate students across the island of Ireland.

COMHDHÁIL REGRETS

The existing workload for the VPPGA is onerous as the VPPGA must sit on/chair numerous working groups, boards and committees and carry out many administrative tasks within a 16-hour working week.

COMHDHÁIL BELIEVES

It is necessary to explore all options when revising the postgraduate role, some of which include but is not limited to;

-Three part-time VPPGAs; one postgraduate taught representative, one postgraduate research representative and one postgraduate engagement representative to visit HEIs. These roles would represent both postgraduate student cohorts whilst supporting engagement, reduce isolation for the VPPGA in their work and allow for collaboration.

COMHDHÁIL THEREFORE MANDATES

The Union of Students in Ireland Coiste Gnó to conduct a strategic review of the VPPGA role before opening of nominations for Comhdháil 2023/24.

COMHDHÁIL FURTHER MANDATES

The USI VPPGA and Regional Officers to work together in consultation with MOs, postgraduate representatives and part time officers to review best practices to support part time officers.

COMHDHÁIL FURTHER MANDATES

The USI VPPGA to consult with Eurodoc on best practices of the postgraduate role and/or part time officer role in European Student Unions

COMHDHÁIL FURTHER MANDATES

The USI Coiste Gnó to review finances and/or secure/seek funding to remedy the added costs of restructuring the role.

Repeals:

2021 AA 13 AMENDING POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS STRATEGY

UO 17 ELECTION SUPPORTS

Proposed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs

Comhdháil Notes

Member organisations run two major sets of elections each year, for class representatives and sabbatical officership elections.

Comhdháil Believes

Thetransition to online elections has improved the accessibility of many elections, but has also resulted in officers having less hands-on experience in orchestrating elections, including counting votes.

Comhdháil Mandates

The USI Regional Vice Presidents to gather information on when, and how each member organisation conducts their elections each year and to coordinate with the Vice President for Academic Affairs inmaking best practice recommendations available to all member organisations.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The USI president with the support of the Regional Vice Presidents to collate a 'Returning Officer database' for those involved or previously involved in the student movement with a knowledge of voting systems to support member organisations with their elections.

Comhdháil Also Mandates

The USI President and Vice President for Academic Affairs to arrange Election Training prior to September of each year on including Electoral Commissions and election regulations, Referenda and Voting Systems and count procedure such as single transfer voting This training should also include support for election process reviews, resolving issues such as tie-breaking and the re-open nominations.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The USI President and Vice President for Academic Affairs to create a glossary of key terms and explanations for member organisations based on their requirements and training each year, including but not limited to the following;

- Constituency/Electorate
- Ballots, Secret, Online/Paper
- Quotas
- Proportional Representation

UO 18 Accessibility of USI Events: Rotation of CN

Proposed by Presidents' Working Group

Comhdháil Believes:

USI events should be as accessible and accommodating as possible.

Comhdháil Notes:

That is can sometimes be difficult for member organisations to attend all USI events in person based on the locations that are chosen.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates:

That Comhairle Náisiúnta will take place on a rotational basis in each of the four different regions. Where a member organisation can no longer host a Comhairle Náisiúnta, flexibility should be allowed to re-arrange Comhairle Náisiúnta going ahead in person.

Comhdháil Mandates:

The USI President to agree with Presidents' Working Group on the locations of Comhairle Náisiúnta for the year, no later than the second Comhairle Náisiúnta in August.

UO 19 Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs

Proposed by USI Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs

Comhdháil Notes

The benefit of the Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs (VPPGA) attending committee boards and working groups connected to postgraduate education, research and innovation.

Comhdháil Further Notes

The benefit of developing and retaining relationships with a variety of stakeholders. *Comhdháil Therefore Mandates*

The VPPGA Affairs to attend the following committees, boards and working groups as often as is possible to represent the postgraduate student voice.

Boards and Committees

- National Framework for Doctoral Education Advisory Forum (HEA)
- Research Graduate Education Committee
- Eurodoc
- PGR Student Survey

Working Groups

- PGR Student Survey Editorial Working Group
- Tracking our Researchers Working Group
- Career Profiling Working Group
- Postgraduate Student Engagement Working Group

Stakeholders

- National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP).
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).
- Irish Research Council (IRC).
- Science Foundation Ireland (SFI).
- Department Further and Higher Education Research Innovation and Science (DFHERIS).
- Irish University Association (IUA).
- Technological Higher Education Association (THEA).
- Enterprise Ireland (EI).
- Teagasc Research
- SIPTU
- Higher Education Authority (HEA).
- Higher Education Authority Statistics Department

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The VPPGA reviews and is up to date with reports on postgraduate affairs to support the postgraduate student voice.

Links for reference.

PGR Student Survey https://studentsurvey.ie/reports

Postgraduate Engagement https://studentengagement.ie/resources/postgraduate-student-engagement/

European Universities Reports https://eua.eu/resources/publications.html

Postgraduate Experience https://postgraduatestudentexperience.com/

Student Engagement https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/

UO 20 Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs and Coiste Gnó

Proposed by USI Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs

Comhdháil Notes

There is a disparity in the stipend rates received by Postgraduate Research Students. *Comhdháil Further Notes*

That the cost of living is rising whilst stipends remain relatively stagnant and are not fit for purpose.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

That Coiste Gnó to lobby for the creation of a National Minimum Stipend Rate.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

That this objective be pursued with the ambition of paring the National Minimum Stipend Rate to the cost of living.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The Coiste Gnó to send out a stipend survey yearly to research postgraduate students to determine stipends nationally.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The Coiste Gnó to carry out a comparative study on the stipend rate from year to year to determine if the actions taken by the Coiste Gnó, VPPGA and DFHERIS are addressing the disparities.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The Coiste Gnó to report the comparative results back to the HEA Research Graduate Education Committee and the National Forum for Doctoral Education Advisory Forum. *Please refer to Postgraduate Student Survey 2022: https://usi.ie/postgraduate-student-survey-*2022/

Repeals:

AA 19 - 4 THE CREATION OF NATIONAL MINIMUM STIPEND RATE.

UO 21 Postgraduate Research Student Stipends

Proposed By The Vice President For Postgraduate Affairs

Congress Recognises

That the stipend rates received by Postgraduate Research Students varies dramatically. CONGRESS FURTHER RECOGNISES

That the cost of living is rising whilst stipends remain relatively stagnant.

Congress Mandates

That USI Officer Board lobby for the creation of a National Minimum Stipend Rate.

Congress Further Mandates

That this objective be pursued with the ambition of paring the National Minimum Stipend Rate to the cost of living.

UO 22 Regional Officers

Proposed by USI Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs

Comhdháil Notes

The benefits of the Regional Officers working closely with the Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs (VPPGA).

Comhdháil Further Notes

The VPPGA role is a part-time policy officer role and developing engagement amongst postgraduates can be difficult given the limited amount of time and resources.

Comhdháil Therefore Mandates

The Vice President for the Regions to compile a contact list of all postgraduate officers and any officers interested in postgraduate affairs no later than 31st October each year.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

The Vice Presidents for the Regions to work with local member organisations, postgraduate officers and officers interested in postgraduate affairs to develop engagement between USI and the member organisations.

UO 23 USI Strategic Review & Strategic Plan 2023-2028

Proposed By National College Of Ireland Students' Union

Comhdháil Notes

That as per UO 19-1, the cyclical nature of student representation often leads to an annual change in direction and shifts in priority as new Officers begin their term which is not conducive to long term organisational development or gathering momentum on key issues that the student movement contends with. Setting out a strategic plan which outlines a clear vision for the development of the USI as well as its Member Organisations is integral to the future growth and strength of our combined national voice.

Comhdháil Further Notes

As per UO 19-5, USI has not undertaken a strategic review of the organisation since 1999. In 2015, USI adopted a Union Development Strategy 2015 - 2020, which outlines a vision and strategy for developing not only Students' Unions but also USI as an organisation but this is the last time such a plan was set out and a full strategic review is crucial to inform any strategic plan development.

Comhdháil Believes

That in order for the full potential of USI to be realised, we must adopt a long term vision for the organisation that future iterations of the Coiste Gnó and MO's can use to help guide their actions and ensure that we build, year on year, on the incredible work done by Officers within USI.

Comhdháil Mandates

The USI President to carry out a comprehensive strategic review of USI encompassing all areas of the organisation including but not limited to governance, finance, democracy, political lobbying and campaigns to be brought before December Comhairle Náisiúnta 2022. This review should be carried out in conjunction with an external consultant and in consideration and consultation of the thoughts and views of USI Member Organisations.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

That upon the completion of this strategic review, it helps to form the basis of the development of a strategic plan for USI to be presented and ratified at Comhdháil 2023. The USI President should publish an annual report on the progress of this strategic plan at Comhdháil each year for the duration of the plan.

Comhdháil Further Mandates

A working group of Comhairle Náisiúnta be established to oversee and inform the full development and implementation of both the strategic review and strategic plan.

UO 24 Progress Reports On Mandates

Proposed By National College Of Ireland Students' Union

Comhdháil notes:

USI Coiste Gnó can be mandated to take on a large number of motions and it is not realistic to complete all of these mandates in one year.

Comhdháil recognizes:

The hard work being put in by the Coiste Gnó to complete a large number of motions and progress a multitude of these at any given time.

Comhdháil further recognizes:

The need for an efficient and clear way of tracking the current status of all mandates.

Comhdháil mandates:

That the Coiste Gnó submit a policy tracker as part of their reports to Comhairle Náisiúnta so MO's can see the current status of all mandates currently on the policy handbook.