



Union of Students in Ireland
Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn

SIERRA MÜLLER-OWENS

For USI VP Dublin Region

#GoForSMO



Who is SMO?

Hi everyone! My name is Sierra Müller-Owens, I'm a recent Law & Political Science graduate from Trinity and the **current Welfare & Equality Officer at Trinity College Dublin Students' Union!** I'm running to be your next **USI VP for the Dublin Region.** A major part of my current job is casework; helping individual students find support and care within and outside of the college community.

I'm hoping to bring the same fastidiousness and empathy to my role in the Dublin region as I'm required to have as a casework officer.

Although my name is long, my ideas are quite simple. My priority is putting students first every day. As an international, working, disabled student and a casework officer in TCDSU, **I've seen the many ways that colleges and governments forget about the everyday struggles of students.**

I will ensure that students are always the first priority on the regional and national level by **opposing luxury purpose built student accommodation and demanding more affordable and frequent transportation.** I will also put students first on the ground by empowering you with policy knowledge and **visiting your campuses as frequently as I can.**

Sierra x

My Experience!

My experience in a students' union started when I was in **3rd year as a class representative** for my course. I was very invested in the policy aspect of the role but also worked on local issues like getting extensions for my constituency.

I was then elected **Gender Equality Officer** in my final year of college where I spent most of my time working on campaigns. I **ran the first fully online Women's Week** at TCDSU and also started a campaign to offer free period products to students. This included applying for a grant, purchasing tampons, pads, and menstrual cups and continuously restocking period products.

My experience as a **Welfare and Equality Officer** includes casework where I've seen the individual struggles that students in Dublin face. I'm now prepared to **address the structural issues that are prevalent in our community** using everything I've learned! I've also had a lot of experience running campaigns like Rainbow Week, Women's Week, Disability Awareness Week, College Awareness Week and Empowerment Month. I also sit on a plethora of college committees like Equality Committee, Student Life, University Board and Capitulations.

Achievements

- Implemented the **TCDSU Transition Fund**.
- Created an **International Student and ASAP Scholar Fund**.
- Worked on the reintroduction of in person student life.
- **Secured funding for a year of free menstrual cups, tampons and pads on campus.**
- Nominated for **Welfare campaign of the year** at SAAI.
- Nominated for class representative of the year at TCDSU.
- **TCD Dean's Award** for Volunteering for my work as Gender Equality Officer.
- Did my job!

Community

Emergency Accommodation

- Through my casework, I have found the most prevalent issue that students face is the lack of emergency accommodation. If a student is evicted, kicked out of digs, living in a precarious or dangerous situation, there are few emergency options available in Dublin. I will work with Member Organisations to create a region wide strategy on securing free rooms on campus and in private accommodation.

Buddy system for sabbatical officers

- Regional bonding can be overwhelming as a new sabbatical officer and close relationships can take a long time to develop in big groups. I will create smaller groups or pairs that will be given the opportunity to create stronger bonds.

Part Time Officer Alliances

- Part time officers with similar positions will be given the opportunity to connect with other officers in the region.

Open communication

- With UCDSU, Griffith College, RCSI, and other HEIs in the Dublin Region.
- Although not members of USI, I believe it's important to have relationships and communication with their student leaders.

Empowerment

Include part time officers and class representatives in USI policy creation.

- USI Cohmdháil (Congress) is a great opportunity for full time students to engage with USI policy but I will offer opportunities throughout the year for students to engage in national policy creation.

Create a policy handbook for part time officers and class representatives and distribute it in early autumn.

- I will create a policy handbook over the summer for part time officers to allow for campaigns and policy work to begin before the first class rep council. I will also run several workshops with class reps and part time officers to review and answer any questions about USI policy.

I will offer advice and hands on help for campaigns and during campaign weeks.

- As a sabbatical officer who has run several campaign weeks, I see how important it is to offer support and show up in any way that I can. Whether it be attending protests or brainstorming questions for a Sexy Quiz, I'll always be there to offer help.

Advocacy

Affordable Transport and expanding 24 hour buses.

- Public transport can cost as much as the entire monthly SUSI maintenance grant. I will fight for lower student transport costs that reflect the financial burden of students. In my home country of Germany, students are entitled to free public transport in the region that they study and I will strive to fight for the same here on a national level (budget) and a regional level (Dublin City Council).
- It's incredibly important for the safety and betterment of the student experience that the 24 hour bus services are increased since they are the most affordable way for students to get home safely after a night out.
- The Metro Link should prioritise commuting students and should there be any future local area consultations, I will attend.

I will oppose any [luxury] purpose built student accommodation proposed in Dublin.

- It's that simple! We want affordable and state funded student accommodation. Any privately owned and luxury accommodation will be vocally opposed by me

I will visit main campuses and campus branches.

- The experiences of students at different parts of campuses can vary greatly. I will visit all areas of campuses like Merino, St. Patrick's campus, All Hallows, research hospitals and all TUD campuses.

Sustainable relationships with food donors.

- I would like to assist in making strong relationships between Member Organisations with food banks and restaurants and food shops.

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