



Managing Director

Candidate Information Pack



Welcome

from our Student Leaders

Thank you for your interest in becoming our next Managing Director at Imperial College Union.

We exist to make a positive impact on the experiences and outcomes of all Imperial College students from all backgrounds, and we're looking for a new MD that will help us deliver that mission.

Imperial College is an outstanding University and we're proud and privileged that we've had the opportunity to study here. As student leaders, we're also committed to making the experience for future students even better – by providing amazing opportunities for students and by challenging the College to be even better.

With over 380 clubs, societies and projects we have some of the most engaged students and student leaders across the UK. We have a strong relationship with the College and have been on an exciting and positive journey of change and improvement over the last 3-years. We're looking for a new Managing Director that will build on those foundations and work well with elected officers to help us be the kind of students' union that our members need and deserve.

You'll need to be an empowering and supportive leader that is able to champion equality, diversity and inclusion. You'll also be able to mentor and challenge us, as student officers, to help us have the biggest impact possible during our time in the Union.

We think this is an amazing opportunity to build the best students' union in the UK. We hope you do too!

Lloyd James and Hayley Wong
(outgoing and incoming Presidents)

Welcome from the Board

Help continue our journey to become an outstanding students' union.

There is no doubt that significant progress has been made over the last few years, with Imperial College Union continuing on its journey towards becoming a genuinely outstanding and impactful charity. Having faced some historical challenges as an organisation, we are now nearing the completion of our 3-year turnaround and 'back to basics' strategy.

Our outgoing Managing Director has done an excellent job, working with our elected officers, of stabilising the Union and laying the foundations for us to build on. We have a very healthy and stable financial model. We have a warm and constructive relationship with the College and we've started to build a strong staff team and culture.

We're now looking for a new MD to continue that journey. The successful candidate will develop and deliver our next strategy and will further embed a high-performance culture across the Union.

You will help to maintain our excellent relationship with the College, whilst empowering our elected student leaders to represent the voice of students. You'll be prepared to commit to our long-term development and have the ability to nurture a culture of trust. You will also need to bring a clear understanding of good practice in the Higher Education, Voluntary and/or Students' Union sectors.

This is a unique opportunity to lead an organisation that has an exciting future ahead, in a fantastic location, within a world-class institution. We really hope you'll want to join our passionate student leaders, dedicated staff team and supportive trustee board on our journey to become an exceptional students' union.

Jill Finney and Stephen Richardson
(outgoing and incoming Chair of Trustees)

Welcome from the College

The relationship between the College and the Students' Union is crucial to our success as an institution, and we have worked together to build a positive and engaged relationship focussed on ensuring a world-leading student experience.

Imperial College is committed to delivering an education that is research-led, student-centred, evidence-based, inclusive and diverse, outward-looking and technology enhanced. Students are important in helping us to achieve this ambition, and Imperial College Union plays a critical role in shaping the College's approach to teaching and learning.

We have been fortunate to have effective student officers at Imperial, and I'm impressed by their commitment, enthusiasm and engaged approach to their roles. I and other colleagues place significant importance on the relationship with the student officers and the Managing Director of the Union. We have an open and constructive relationship, and meet regularly to discuss both current issues and strategic aims.

The Union is now in the process of appointing its next Managing Director. I hope that it will be someone that understands how best to support students in voicing their views, continues to develop the Union as a strong organisation and further enhances its contribution to the student experience.

We will continue to support our students' union. The annual 'block grant' funding for ICU is now £2.6m, enabling it to deliver its core mission. We also work collaboratively over a wide range of areas, such as sport and academic representation, to make best use of our respective strengths and resources.

Now is a great time for a new Managing Director to build on the excellent foundation that the Union has in place, so that our students continue to benefit and get the best from their experience at this world class University.

Prof. Ian Walmsley FRS
Provost Imperial College, London



About Us

About Imperial College Union

Imperial College Union is one of the oldest students' unions in the UK. We are a registered charity and our purpose is to make a positive impact on the experiences and outcomes of all Imperial College students from all backgrounds. We are a separate legal entity, and are independent, from the College. However, we work together in close partnership and we receive annual funding from the College through our block grant.

There is so much that makes Imperial College Union special. We're based in an historic campus environment in a bustling, beautiful part of London. Imperial students are some of the highest performing and most dedicated students in the world. They are hugely committed to their university education and want to get the most from their experience. This means they are incredibly engaged and keen to participate in the opportunities and activities we offer.

We're a values-driven organisation and care about doing things the right way. The core values that drive and shape our work are that: we act with **integrity**; we are **democratic** in our approach; we are **inclusive** in everything that we do; we are **accountable** for our work; and we are **ambitious** in what we want to achieve.

We are student-centred and place our students and student leaders at the heart of everything we do. Day-to-day leadership of the Students' Union is a shared endeavour between our elected Officer Trustees and senior staff team, headed by the Managing Director.

Beyond 'Back to Basics'

Like all organisations, we have spent much of the last 2-years responding to the challenges created by the pandemic. But we have also used this time to reflect on the inner workings of our organisation, trends within the higher education sector and the needs of our members.

Working with Imperial students, we identified areas in which we need to improve in order to become a more effective organisation. We have made significant progress against these areas already and are incredibly excited about the opportunities our changes have brought, and will bring, for students.

Our ['back to basics' strategy](#) has guided our organisation over the last two years. Throughout that time we've undertaken significant work to:

- **Stabilise** our finances and put in place a new, sustainable financial model;
- **Reorganise** our structure and staffing to ensure the right resources to deliver for students;
- **Build** a stronger culture;
- **Improve** our systems, processes and planning to bring more focus to our work.

We are now reaching the end of this 'back to basics' phase (August 2023) and will be looking to a new Managing Director to lead us through the development, launch and delivery of our next strategy. This next strategic phase will help us to build on the solid foundations we now have to deliver the kind of impact and experience that our students need and expect.

What we do

We run a diverse set of services, activities and support networks for Imperial students, including:

- **Student representation** - We empower a network of student leaders and academic representatives to champion the voice of students and ensure every student gets the best possible experience at Imperial.
- **Student Advice Centre** - We run an independent and confidential advice service providing support on a broad range of academic and non-academic issues. This provides a safety net for many students who need support.
- **Clubs, societies and projects** - We support Imperial students to set up and manage over 380 different groups facilitating connections between students and ensuring they feel a sense of belonging during their time at Imperial.
- **Student media** - Imperial students volunteer their time to a number of different media groups including the Felix newspaper and we provide training, guidance and support to ensure they get the most from their experience.
- **Events and venues** - We provide events and activities within our different spaces, offering students the chance to study together, socialise and make lasting friendships during their time at university.

[Find out more about our phenomenal range of student opportunities](#)





How we're run

Democratic, Student-Led, Professional

Board of Trustees

Our Board of Trustees is the most senior governing body at Imperial College Union. The Board is responsible for providing strategic direction, ensuring that we're meeting our charitable aims and working in line with our mission, vision and values. Membership of the Board comprises a combination of current Imperial students who are elected, students appointed to ensure the Board represents our diverse student body and Lay (external) Trustees.

The makeup of our Board changes annually, as new students are elected to representative roles. This leads to great diversity of thinking and broad life experiences among Board members, which is paramount to creating energetic, discursive meetings. Lay Trustees are appointed based on their skills, experience and what value they can bring to the Board.

Finances

As a charity, the Union is not run for profit. However, we aim for a financial surplus each year so that we can build healthy reserves. This ensures we always have enough cushion to preserve the quality of our services and staffing, and that we can weather periods of instability. Everything that is earned by the Union is recycled back into the services we provide. Our annual income, in a business as usual year, is around £11m.

This income is made up of an annual block grant from the College of c.£2.6m, our commercial operations including bars, restaurants, shops, and lettings, and sales and sponsorship partnerships with external organisations who will pay to reach our students through advertising or enriching experiences.

We have recently developed a strong financial model whereby our block grant covers the delivery of all our core, charitable activity, and therefore we are not reliant on generating significant commercial surpluses to fund core activity. Instead, we can use commercial profits to invest in our facilities or one-off projects.

Union Council

Our Union Council represents the voice of students to set the policy of the Union through bringing together student leaders from across all of our activities including Officer Trustees, Constituent Unions and Liberation Teams (amongst others) to provide political leadership. It does this by passing policies, mandating student leaders to carry out certain actions or campaigns, and by holding student leaders accountable.

Constitution

The Union is governed by a small set of important documents, setting out fundamental principles such as our charitable nature, membership, leadership structure, and key partnerships.

[Read our governing documents](#)

People

Our Officer Trustees

Our Officer Trustees (or Sabbatical Officers) play a key leadership role in the Union and are elected every year in our cross-campus Leadership Elections. They take a year out of their studies and work full-time, with a focus on making the Union and Imperial College even better.

The Officer Trustees work hard to improve the student voice for all students at Imperial by representing students to the College, for example attending key College committees, advocating on behalf of students and leading campaigns. Each Officer Trustee also works on their own projects as laid out in their goals for the year, working to improve every area of student life.



Our Staff Team

Our senior leadership team is made up of the Managing Director and three Directors (one currently vacant) - all working closely with our Officer Trustees. They are supported by a team of around 50 career staff who help ensure that we can make a positive impact on the experiences and outcomes of all Imperial College students from all backgrounds.

We also employ over 200 student staff who work across our services in part-time roles whilst they study. We're passionate about providing employment opportunities to Imperial students, enabling them to support their studies and gain valuable employability and leadership skills at the same time.

[Find out more about our staff team](#)

About Imperial College

What makes us different?

Imperial College is a global top ten university with a world-class reputation in science, engineering, business and medicine. As the UK's only university focusing entirely on science, engineering, medicine and business, Imperial is truly unique, and is known around the world for its innovation, excellence and employability.

With its main campus in South Kensington, the College is in an idyllic Central London spot, just a short walk from the Natural History Museum and Hyde Park. The Students' Union building itself is next door to the Royal Albert Hall.

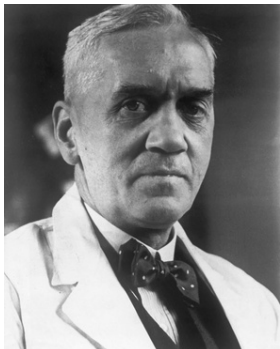
The College's has an outstanding reputation for research that makes a demonstrable economic and social impact, and over the last 2-years has played a key role in the fight against Covid, both in advising the UK government and vaccine development.

We are incredibly proud of the close partnership between the Union and the College, whilst retaining our ability to advocate on behalf of students and we feel there is a good mutual understanding of our roles and of the importance of student voice. Our elected leaders are actively listened to, and the Managing Director is seen as part of the network of senior College staff. We value our close working relationship with the College and the new MD will play a vital role in helping to maintain and further strengthen this.

Imperial College - Notable People from our Past



Dame Margaret Turner-Warwick
Thoracic specialist and the first woman president of the Royal College of Physicians



Alexander Fleming
Microbiologist famous for the discovery of Penicillin



Daphne Frances Jackson
The first female physics professor in the UK



Roger Bannister
Neurologist and Athlete, running the first sub-4 minute mile



Brian May
Astrophysicist and Lead Guitarist of Rock band, Queen

Working at ICU

Welcome to the team

Your Benefits

As well as a highly competitive salary of between £85k to £90k, working at the Students' Union means you'll be part of an exciting and progressive environment. Whilst the Union is fully independent, all of our staff (including the MD) are on Imperial College employment contracts meaning that you will gain access to a fantastic range of benefits including:

- Membership of the USS pension scheme with employer contributions of **21.6%**
- **39 to 40 days'** annual leave per year including bank holidays and Christmas closure
- Additional Holiday Leave scheme allowing you to buy **up to 10 extra days** holiday
- **Free eye tests** and well-person screenings
- Discounted membership of the College's **state of the art gym** and sports facilities
- Access to **Confident Care**, a 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme
- **Enhanced** maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave in line with College provision
- A comprehensive range of training and **development** opportunities including access to the College's full People and Organisational Development Programme

We think Imperial College Union is a truly brilliant place to work. Our student members really appreciate our talented and dedicated team, and our staff love it here too.

But don't just take our word for it. Here's what some of our colleagues had to say in our 2022 Employee Engagement Survey...

“

The best thing about working at ICU is the team. Everyone is lovely, respectful, kind & caring.

”

“

ICU has a great culture where everyone is passionate about their jobs and the atmosphere is friendly. The SMTs are supportive and care about staff's personal development. The leaders have set a clear goal that we know what to expect by following the Back to Basics plan. I have seen great changes since I started and I am positive about the outcome in a year's time.

”

A young woman with blonde hair is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is lying on her stomach inside a large, red, inflatable tunnel structure. The tunnel has several arches, and she is positioned in the middle of one. The background is slightly blurred, showing other parts of the inflatable structure and some outdoor setting.

Inclusion & Diversity

ICU's Commitment

An inclusive approach

One of our core values is inclusivity and we strive to ensure that everyone is valued, included and supported in our diverse communities by creating an environment where everyone is able to bring to their work the fullness of their lived experience, made of up the many unique influences that shape who they are.

We respect everyone's individual identity and celebrate difference, and therefore welcome applications from all candidates; irrespective of age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Creating a more diverse team

We are committed to creating a fairer, more equal, more inclusive and more diverse team, and we know that both disabled and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff members are currently under-represented within the Union. We're in the process of developing a new EDI strategy to drive forward our future EDI work and plans and our hope is to attract a diverse range of candidates for this fantastic opportunity.

Our Guaranteed interview scheme

We recognise that some candidates from marginalised backgrounds will have faced additional barriers throughout their careers and when applying for new roles. We are committed to taking positive action to expand the diversity of our team, by offering guaranteed interviews for candidates from BAME backgrounds and disabled candidates.

If you meet the minimum criteria for a role and identify as disabled or from a BAME background, you can opt into our guaranteed interview scheme. It is important to note that this scheme guarantees a longlist interview for applicants from these groups who meet the minimum criteria and tell us that they'd like to be considered under the scheme. The selection decision at each interview stage will be based on the most suitable candidate, regardless of any protected characteristic(s).

About the role

Managing Director

Job Title	Managing Director
Responsible to	The Board of Trustees, via the Union President and Chair of the Board
Salary	£85,000 to £90,000 p.a.
Hours of work	35 hours per week, plus additional hours as necessary
Direct Reports	Director of Membership Services, Director of Finance and Resources, Director of Marketing and Communications, and Governance and Democracy Coordinator (Overall responsibility for c.60 permanent and c. 150 casual staff)
Strategic Relationships	Elected Officers, Trustees, Senior College staff, Senior Managers of other students' unions, suppliers, representatives of the local community including associated institutes
Financial Responsibility	£11m income

Role Purpose

Imperial College Union is a dynamic organisation which requires an inspirational leader who can provide value to our members, deliver a challenging mission and live our values.

The Managing Director takes overall responsibility for the performance, management, development and sustainability of the Union. Working collaboratively with student leaders, they lead the strategic planning process and take accountability for the delivery of organisational plans that advances the Union's long-term vision to provide the best possible student experience.

The post holder also carefully manages the interface between democratic, governance and operational aspects of the Union's work ensuring the delivery of our mission. We have consciously chosen the job title Managing Director because, whilst unusual in the Voluntary Sector, the role is genuinely one of co-leadership and co-creation with our Officer Trustees. As a democratic organisation; the post-holder is accountable to, and chief advisor to, the Trustees, including the Union President, on all matters pertaining to the Union. Authority and direction is delegated from the Union's Trustees.

About the role

Managing Director

Responsibilities

1. Strategic Management and Leadership

Work closely with the elected officers and Senior Leadership Team to deliver leadership, vision and strategic direction in line with our democratic structures.

Develop, implement, monitor and regularly review a strategic plan for the Union that meets the vision and values of the Union, ensuring that stakeholders are involved, as appropriate, in the development of the strategic plan.

Ensure the development and implementation of annual operating plans with suitable KPIs to ensure accountability.

Provide inspirational and visible leadership to the Union's staff, creating a student-focused, accountable and high-performing team.

Proactively promote the interests, brand and reputation of the Union both internally and externally.

Ensure effective research and analysis into students' needs, market trends, and current issues to inform and guide the strategic direction and growth of the organisation.

Review and ensure the development of services for members at other campuses of the College as appropriate.

Report on trends and external issues within the HE and Charity sectors, providing analysis on these issues and to make relevant recommendations to the Board of Trustees, considering the Union's strengths and weaknesses.

2. Leading Good Governance

Work with the Board of Trustees, particularly the Chair of the Board and the Union President, to ensure the Union's Governance arrangements are compliant, effective and robust.

Act as Company Secretary to the Board of Trustees ensuring the Board is provided with timely and accurate information from which to make decisions including advice relating to the governance of the Union, the long-term strategy and their duties under relevant legislation.

Ensure regular reviews of the Union's Governance arrangements and an annual appraisal of the Board's effectiveness, attendance and skills requirements.

Coordinate, in conjunction with the Director of Membership Services, a comprehensive induction programme for the incoming Officers and Trustees each year and to ensure Trustees receive the ongoing training, development and support required to be fully effective.

Inspire and support the elected officers to review, implement and improve governance and democracy, ensuring that students are at the heart of the Union and our activities.

Working with the Director of Membership Services, ensure that the Union's elections take place and that they are fair and democratic.

About the role

Managing Director

3. People Management

Own, develop and promote a positive and inclusive culture within the Union, and between staff and officers, and to ensure that staff engagement and morale are developed and maintained.

Ensure that resourcing and staffing levels are adequate to meet the needs of the Union and its members and to ensure that the management structure is efficient and effective.

Ensure effective communication with staff and ensure that key stakeholders are aware of the Union's strategic goals, mission, vision and values.

Ensure the development of effective people management practices and policies, aiming always to attract, motivate and retain the best possible staff.

Provide leadership, performance management, direction and coaching for Direct Reports.

4. Financial and Commercial Management

Maintain oversight and scrutiny of the Union's financial performance and ensure strong management systems that enable us to be financially sustainable and robust for the future.

Ensure that the Union has a suitable budget which reflects our strategy and resources and that this is actively monitored and managed.

Drive maximum value from the Union's financial resources for the benefit of our membership.

Seek new opportunities to realise ways to diversify income sources to support new projects for the benefit of students.

Ensure that the Union has a viable business plan, finance and commercial strategy, maximising financial sustainability.

Working with the Director of Finance and Resources, prepare and present the Union's funding submission to the College and pursue opportunities to secure long-term funding stability.

5. Service Delivery

Monitor standards and provide sustainable continuous improvement to services, ensuring value for, and wellbeing of, the membership.

Ensure that customer expectations, throughout the Union, are exceeded whenever possible.

Ensure the strategic development of the Union's services, utilising benchmarking and the identification of best practice and through encouragement of creativity and innovation.

Ensure that students and/or student leaders are engaged in the design and delivery of services and that their views are reflected in the strategic and operational plans of the Union.

Ensure the Union conducts comprehensive market research covering all areas of operation and develops comprehensive marketing plans for each of our services/outlets.

About the role

Managing Director

6. Compliance and Risk

Be responsible for risk management in relation to the operation of the organisation in line with current legislation and ensure the Union's strategic risk register is maintained and approved by the Board.

Be ultimately accountable for the Health and Safety of those engaged with the Union including maintenance of an effective Health and Safety policy and practices.

Ensure that the Union is compliant with all relevant legislation and statutory requirements.

7. Ethical and Environmental Management

Provide leadership on ethical and environmental issues and to co-ordinate the Union's work on ethical and environmental management.

Promote the highest standards of ethical and environmental behaviour, ensuring that the Union is endeavouring to reduce its adverse impact upon the planet.

8. Other Duties

Abide by the Union Constitution, policies and procedures at all times.

Undertake other tasks and responsibilities, compatible with the level and nature of the post, as required by the Chair of the Board of Trustees and Union President from time to time.

Attend appropriate meetings and training as and when required by the Union.

About you

Person Specification

Qualifications and Experience

- A track record of leading a dynamic and complex organisation to achieve outstanding performance.
- Developing, implementing and evaluating organisation-wide strategic plans.
- Creating empowering inclusive services that remove barriers to engagement.
- Evidence of ongoing personal and professional development.
- Overseeing charity regulatory practices and driving good governance standards (*desirable*).

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Able to demonstrate inspirational leadership, and to network and collaborate effectively, building high-quality stakeholder partnerships.
- A strong understanding of the higher education sector, and the key trends, issues and national policy impacting students and students' unions.
- Able to think clearly and strategically - being able to intellectually engage, support and challenge talented students and student leaders.
- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to negotiate and influence others to shape the future.
- Excellent written skills including report writing for Union and College committees and Boards.
- Effective coaching skills, with a supportive approach to empowering others, creating high performing teams and leading people through uncertainty and change.
- Strong financial and commercial acumen with the ability to use financial information and analyse risk to inform strategic decision-making.

Values and Behaviours

- Comfortable operating within a highly distributed leadership model where strategic direction is co-owned, and solutions are co-created, with elected student leaders.
- Passionate about working in a democratic environment that is led by students.
- Committed to the values of the Union.
- Passionate about equity, diversity and inclusion and able to champion these through an inclusive leadership style.



If you think you have what it takes to be our next Managing Director, but aren't sure you meet every point on the person specification, please still get in touch. We'd love to chat about what you could bring to ICU.

How to Apply

Key Dates and Information

The closing date for applications is 12noon on Monday 15th August 2022

Please reserve the following dates in your diary when you apply:

- **Closing date:** Monday 15th August
- **Long list interviews** (remote): Wednesday 24th or Friday 26th August
- **Final stage interviews** (in-person): Thursday 8th September

To apply, please [click here to complete our online application form](#). As part of the online application you will be asked to complete answers to the following three questions:

- What are the key aspects of your experience and career to date that make you an outstanding candidate for this role?
- What will be the main considerations in developing our next strategic plan, especially given the context of building on our 'back to basics' strategy? Provide examples to demonstrate your experience of strategy development and implementation.
- How do you champion equity, diversity and inclusion through your leadership? Please give examples of the outcomes and impact you have had through this.

You will also be asked to submit your CV and complete some diversity monitoring information.

For an initial, informal discussion about the role, please contact:

[Louise Speksnyder - louise@atkinsonhrconsulting.co.uk](mailto:louise@atkinsonhrconsulting.co.uk)

Conversations with the Trustees or current Managing Director can also be arranged through discussion with Atkinson HR Consulting.

We want to support you to do your best during the application process, so please do get in touch with any questions you may have. Additionally, if you have a disability, mental health condition or any other additional needs (such as dyslexia, autism or anxiety), please do let us know so we can tailor the process to suit you.

We hope to welcome you to Imperial College Union for an in-person, final interview and will cover reasonable travel expenses.

