Name of Project:

POSTGRADUATE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Brief Description of Project

A project to produce a Postgraduate Engagement Strategy.

The strategy will include a set of strategic objectives and an accompanying action plan to improve and increase engagement of Postgraduates with Imperial College Union, and enable the Union to enhance the Postgraduate experience at Imperial College.

The project will commission and conduct research as appropriate to inform the development of the strategy, will liaise with key stakeholders during the project, and will ensure that the recommendations in the final report become part of the Union's broad strategic aims for 2016-2020.

Key Personnel

Project Champion *Chief advisor and Strategic Lead for project – must be a Senior Manager or Trustee*	Joe Cooper, Managing Director, ICU Sue Gibson, Director, Graduate School
Project Leader *Responsibility for driving the project*	Andrew Keenan, Education & Welfare Manager
Technical Adviser *Normally an external consultant/company and / or a member of College staff as necessary*	Not considered necessary
Project Team *List all Individuals who will be responsible for delivering elements of the project (other than the Project Champion and Project Leader)*	Nida Mahmud, GSU President Tom Wheeler, ICU President Pascal Loose, Deputy President (Education) Shakira Hylton, Marketing & Communications Manager Caroline Hargreaves, Senior Teaching Fellow & GSU Liaison, Graduate School

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Brief Description of Project

1. **Summarise the Background of the project, how it builds on previous work and why it is important and how it links to Imperial College Union's Strategy, Vision Mission and Values**

   The College's postgraduate provision continues to grow as a proportion of the student body. Currently, Postgraduates comprise 45% of the student body, with growth in taught postgraduate provision expected to result in over 50% of our members being Postgraduates within the next half-decade.

   Both the College and the Union need to develop their provision for students in a manner that ensures the experience of all students is demonstrably first-class. Like many students' unions, the core of ICU's activity tends to be more closely aligned to the requirements and preferences of Undergraduate students than Postgraduate; therefore the expansion of the Postgraduate population poses challenges for the Union in terms of service provision and the management of effective representation structures.

   The lack of homogeneity in terms of the requirements of Postgraduate students is a complicating factor. We (the Union and College) do not need only one approach to increase engagement with Postgraduate students; in fact, we need a range of approaches and objectives that address the needs and preferences of a diverse number of smaller groups within the broader 'Postgraduate' category.

   Within the strategic theme "Enhancing the Student Experience", we have set an objective to develop and publish a Postgraduate Student Engagement Strategy, which will address these issues and set clear, measurable objectives for the Union and its work with its Postgraduate members. This Strategy will demonstrate all four of our Values (*Excellent*, *Inclusive*, *Democratic* and *Innovative*), build upon the existing 2013-16 Plan and our strong relationship with the College, and will in turn inform the 2016-2020 Plan and beyond.

2. **List the aims of the project (broad) and the objectives (specific) of the project. Objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based)**

   The aim of the project is to produce a Postgraduate Engagement Strategy as a result of research and engagement with our members and stakeholders.

   The specific objectives are as follows:

a. To define and outline the crucial elements of Postgraduate student experiences with the College, including academic representation, welfare & pastoral care services, engagement with Union services, engagement with Union democracy, and the provision of social activities, events and other services.

b. To define and outline the relative roles of College (and the Graduate School, faculties and departments) and the Union (including the Graduate Students' Union) in devising, delivering and communicating the above aspects.

c. To define and describe distinct subsets of the Postgraduate student population, to better define and understand the needs and requirements of these groups, using characteristics such as study type & intensity, family situation, age, gender, ethnicity, faculty, department, course, campus, previous institutions, and origin.

d. To develop a clear action plan that addresses the needs of each defined group of students based on the requirements ascertained for each group and the current levels of engagement.

e. To make recommendations on the Union's representative and democratic structures, including the structure of the Graduate Students' Union.

f. To issue an interim report with draft budget recommendations in time for the budgeting process for 2015/16.

3. **Outline the outcomes and benefits that the project will bring to the organisation and stakeholders**

a. A strategic plan document and action plans, to guide the work of Imperial College Union and its Graduate Students' Union, as well as the Graduate School and the wider College

b. Clear consensus between Imperial College Union, the Graduate Students' Union and the Graduate School as to priority areas and visions of success – 'what success looks like'.

c. Improved Postgraduate awareness and satisfaction regarding the Academic Representation Network, welfare & liberation work, advice provision, activities, commercial services and student development opportunities offered by Imperial College Union, including a set of success metrics.

    d. Improved levels of Postgraduate engagement in the above Union services and activities, including a set of success metrics.

    e. Improved institutional scores and feedback in Postgraduate-specific surveys such as PRES and PTES.

4. **Define the boundaries of the project, by outlining what the project will not cover**

The project will not cover issues directly related to the academic experience of Postgraduate students - for example, the quality of coursework given to taught postgraduates, or of supervision given to doctoral research postgraduates.

However, the project team may make recommendations to College on such topics if they arise as a byproduct of the engagement research.

The project must be signed off at this point by Director Group before any project is commissioned and further work commences. Please ensure all preceding sections have been completed and use any following sections that may be useful in approving the project.

Initial Approval	
Project Champion *Joe Cooper* *Sue Gibson*	
Project Leader *Andrew Keenan*	
Managing Director *Joe Cooper*	

Implementation Schedule

*Outline the important steps and tasks in the project, define who has responsibility for each task and detail which steps are contingent on the completion of previous tasks. Highlight which dates lie on the critical path of the project (i.e. if the deadline is missed, the overall defined timeframe of the project cannot be met and project completion will slip). Expand the section if necessary to list all important tasks. **The Implementation Schedule is essentially a task based list, whereas the following Milestones section should concentrate more on the key main milestones to be achieved within the task list and the Milestones section should also detail the review process which needs to be undertaken to ensure the Implementation Schedule is on schedule.***

Task/Activity	Earliest Start Date	Latest Finish Date	Outputs *(clearly indicate reports and deliverables)*	Milestone Number *(Indicate which milestone in the next section, if any, this relates to)*	Responsibility	Contingent Upon *(indicate if commencement of this task is dependent on another)*
PIP agreed by Project Team	05/12/14	10/12/14	Project Implementation Plan		AK	N/A
PIP presented to Leadership Team / SMT	11/12/14	23/12/14	PIP Agreed		AK	
PIP presented to GSU Committee	15/12/14	15/01/15	PIP Agreed		AK/NM	
PIP presented to Graduate School leadership	15/12/14	15/01/15	PIP Agreed		AK/NM	
PIP presented to Union Council	13/01/15	10/02/15	PIP Agreed		PL	
Project plan agreed by Trustee Board	15/01/15	15/01/15	PIP Noted		AK/JC	
Detailed research plan drafted	10/12/14	30/01/2015	Research brief (for internal use)		AK/NM	

and agreed by Project Team, Graduate School, Leadership Team						
Communications plan drafted and agreed by Project Team	10/12/14	30/01/15	Communications plan (for internal use)		SH/AK	
Research methods implemented	26/01/15	16/04/15	Draft research outcomes and recommendations		AK	
Communications plan implemented	26/01/15	16/04/15	Engagement with membership		SH	
Draft research outcomes and recommendations circulated to Project Team, key stakeholders	09/03/15	19/05/15	Agreement on outcomes		AK	
Draft Strategy and Plan circulated to decision-makers	01/05/15	12/05/15	Approval of draft		AK	
PG Strategy and Action Plan agreed by Council, GSU, GS	12/05/15	12/05/15	Adoption of PG Strategy		TW/NM	
PG Strategy and Action Plan incorporated into final Operating Plan and Budget 2015/16	01/06/15	18/06/15	Embedding of Strategy in Operating Plan and Budget		AK/JC	
Six-month evaluation against success metrics	01/11/15	20/12/15	Progress report against OP and success metrics		AK	

Key Milestones

*Outline the key milestones in the project, define who has responsibility for each milestone and the deadline for completion, and outline which milestones are contingent on the completion of previous milestones. Highlight which milestones lie on the critical path of the project (i.e. if the deadline is missed it the overall defined timeframe of the project cannot be met and project completion will slip). Expand the section if necessary to list all important milestones. **The following Milestones section should concentrate on the key main milestones to be achieved within the Implementation Schedule tasks listed above, plus the Milestones section should also detail the review process which needs to be undertaken to ensure the Implementation Schedule is on track.***

Milestone	Responsibility	Deadline	Critical Date	Contingent Upon
Project Implementation Plan agreed by stakeholders	AK	December 2014		
Research and communications briefs agreed	AK/SH	January 2015		Stakeholder support
Draft outcomes circulated, including budgetary and structure recommendations	AK	March-April 2015	Start of 2015/16 budgeting formation process	Stakeholder engagement
Final PG Strategy and Action Plan draft circulated	AK	May 2015	Union Council - 19 May	
Final PG Strategy and Action Plan agreed	AK	June 2015	Trustee Board – 18 June	
Evaluation at defined periods	AK	December 2015	First Trustee Board of 2016	Embedding strategy in Operating Plan/Budget

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Technical Details

For IT projects please outline the technical requirements. Outline who will be responsible for the installation, configuration and maintenance of each area. Use the subheadings suggested below, but amend and expand the table as necessary

This project is not expected to have any technical requirements.

External Suppliers

Outline the details of any external suppliers involved with the project (including any College departments). Outline the diligence procedure that needs to be undertaken:- this may include site visits to other users of a proposed system, client references, financial statements of the supplier etc., Outline the specific deliverables that the supplier are responsible for, and outline their commitments in terms of ongoing support during and after the project. ***Repeat each section for each supplier***

This project is not expected to have any external suppliers

Non-Capital Expenditure

Description of Item	Total Cost	Month/Year of Expenditure

Financial Information – Internal

Outline all the internal resources required to complete the project, including staff time, rooms, computer networks etc. Please quantify these in cost terms where possible.

Resources	Cost
Staffing	
Physical Resources	
Other (please specify)	

Stakeholder Information

List all the key stakeholder groups and individuals who will be interested in the project outcomes, will be affected by them, or whose support or approval is essential. Assess their importance and outline how these relationships will be managed in terms of communication, reporting and the management of expectations, and who will be responsible for this.

Stakeholder	Important (low, medium, high)	Approach	Responsibility
Graduate Students' Union Committee	High	Presentation of project upon launch Regular updates on Project progress to GSU meetings	Andrew Keenan Nida Mahmud
Postgraduate membership	High	Explanation of project online Regular updates Direct engagement	Andrew Keenan Nida Mahmud Shakira Hylton
Graduate School leadership	High	Presentation of project upon launch Regular updates	Andrew Keenan Nida Mahmud Caroline Hargreaves
Board of Trustees	Medium	Explanation of project Brief update on progress	Andrew Keenan
ICU Council	Medium	Explanation of progress Brief update on progress	Tom Wheeler

Project Outputs

List all the tangible deliverables (such as reports, functional systems and usage statistics) that will be generated at each stage of the project. Who will be responsible for ensuring they are produced and when will they emerge?

Output (e.g. interim progress report)	Produced by (e.g. Project Manager)	Received by (e.g. SMT or Board)	Responsibility
Research brief *January 2015*	AK/NM	PT	AK
Communications plan *January 2015*	AK/SH	PT	SH
Interim report for Board away day *March 2015*	AK	TB	AK
Interim update for Council *March 2015*	AK	UC	TW
Interim report for budgeting process *April 2015*	AK	SMT	AK
Postgraduate Engagement Strategy *June 2015*	AK	Multiple	AK
Postgraduate Engagement Strategy Action Plan *June 2015*	AK	Multiple	AK
Postgraduate Engagement Strategy Success Metrics *June 2015*	AK	Multiple	AK
Postgraduate Engagement Strategy Evaluation Report *November 2015*	AK	Multiple	AK

Marketing Considerations

List any Marketing support that is needed in relation to the project implementation, launch and ongoing support, with deadline dates included.

Marketing Support	Deadline	Person Responsible
Communications Plan	Begins 26/01/15	Shakira Hylton
Online presence	Begins 26/01/15	Shakira Hylton/Andrew Keenan
Engagement via social media and emails	Begins 26/01/15	Shakira Hylton
Advertisement for focus groups and direct engagement	Begins 26/01/15	Shakira Hylton/Andrew Keenan

Risk Analysis

List any factors that could present a risk to the project's success or any risks to Imperial College Union posed by the project. Assess their likelihood and severity and how you would prevent them happening or manage them effectively. Use the topic headings suggested below as a guide and add other topic headings as necessary.

Risk Heading	Probability (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Score (P x S)	Action to Prevent/Manage Risk
Lack of engagement from PG membership	4	5	20	Continual active engagement, by segment, with continual monitoring
Lack of engagement from Graduate School	2	4	8	Continual engagement and encouragement of 'ownership' of project, with one identified contact person
Lack of publicity capacity	2	5	10	Advance planning
Failure to take part in budgeting process for 2015/16	2	5	10	Delivery of interim report for Budgeting treated as critical output, progress monitored by project champion.
Rejection of proposed strategy by decision-makers	2	5	10	Continual engagement of decision-makers in project, to ensure ownership and buy-in

Evaluation Plan

Outline how the quality of the project outputs and the overall success of the project will be measured and monitored.

Success Criteria	Measure of Success	Responsibility	Reported to	Expected Output Date
Approval of PIP by decision-makers (Board, Council, Graduate School)	Minuted approval	AK	JC	January 2015
Incorporation of draft proposals into early stages of budgeting process	Proposals funded in budget drafts	AK	JC	May 2015
Approval of Strategy, Action Plan and Success Metrics by decision-makers (Board, Council, Graduate School)	Minuted approval	AK	JC	June 2015

Sustainability Plan

Explain how the outputs of the project will become integrated into the organisation, how knowledge and learning will be shared and who will take responsibility for ongoing support and development.

Project Output	Sustainability Plan	Responsibility	Reporting Timeframe
Postgraduate Engagement Strategy 2015-2018	Built into ICU Strategy 2016-2019	Joe Cooper Andrew Keenan Board of Trustees	Drafting of next ICU Strategy
Postgraduate Engagement Strategy Action Plan 2015/16	Built into ICU Operating Plan 2015/16	Joe Cooper Andrew Keenan SMT	July 2015
Postgraduate Engagement Strategy Action Plan 2015/16	Built into ICU Budget 2015/16	Joe Cooper Andrew Keenan SMT	July 2015

Approval

The project must be approved by the signature below of ALL listed people, including the Union President if applicable, and a copy of the signed approval should be submitted the Project Champion and Project Leader, BEFORE the project commences. Regular (one page) progress reports must be submitted to Senior Management Team – regularity outlined below.

Project Leader Andrew Keenan	
Senior Manager TBC	
Managing Director Joe Cooper	
Union President Tom Wheeler	
Reporting Regularity to the Senior Management Team	Monthly