

Imperial College Union Council Report

Nas Andriopoulos, President

Since the last Council, progress has been made on my core manifesto pledges but I have also spent significant amount of time supporting many smaller initiatives and managing day-to-day running of the Union. Time is set aside over the quieter Easter break to make progress on the larger projects.

White City

In line with my manifesto pledge, I have been in discussions with members of College to support bringing information about the White City development to the wider student and staff community. This will involve a series of presentations to Council, Board of Trustees and wider town-hall meetings. The Union will also assist in circulating information via our online channels. By providing our students with up to date information on White City we hope that we will be able to foresee potential problems, be able to distil fundamental needs of students for services at the new campus and, in turn, shape the South development at this early stage.

In more immediate terms I have represented students at College meetings for the provision of services at the Molecular Science Research Hub, which is due to be occupied by Chemistry Researchers (including PGT/R students and final year UGs) next year. We are actively pushing for a central hot-desk area for use by College Support Services and the Union to provide a one-stop-shop for students on the campus. Other asks include private rooms for breast-feeding, interfaith rooms and rooms for the Union Advice Centre and College Counselling to utilise. Focus has also been given to the café/food facilities, early year provision and social spaces.

Private Housing Talk & Rent Guarantor Scheme

Work on finalising and implementing the Rent Guarantor Scheme has continued this term and culminated with the launch of the scheme at this year's Private Housing Talk in the Great Hall. As well as explaining how students, especially international students, could benefit from using the scheme James Cox and I were able to share some tips on finding accommodation in London.

For more information on the scheme: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/campus-life/accommodation/private-accommodation/rent-guarantor-scheme/>

Budget Renegotiation

We are starting the beginning of renegotiating the Union's Block Grant from College for the next three years. We are hoping to achieve an increase in funding to allow longer-term reserve planning and underpin the aims set out in *Our Strategy*, including direct funding for CSPs, welfare services and expanding our reach to less engaged groups.

Women @ Imperial

I am proud to have been part of the organising committee, along with Rachel, of this year's Women@Imperial celebrations. These involved an exhibition in the main entrance of College, a panel discussion with Imperial Business Partners and the launch of "*Women At Imperial College: Past, Present and Future*" authored by the College archivist Anne Barratt. The launch also featured the Imperielles and a moving speech by Rachel on her experiences, both of which I would like to thank for their efforts. Attention has already turned to next year, which is likely to take the form of a wider diversity week.

Democracy Review Progress

The democracy review has now been agreed with the Governance Committee of the Board of Trustees, and a full terms of reference will be circulated to the members of the steering committee for comment within the next two weeks. Conversations with College about the interface of the Union and College's disciplinary procedures have already begun and the Council Reform group will be meeting in the near future.

It is expected that progress will accelerate over the Easter period and into the final term.

Citizens UK

I continue to participate in and monitor our activity with West London Citizens. As per my previous reports, I am still undecided about the current matching between our two organisations. On one hand, it does provide us with a valuable forum with which to connect with some community groups, on the other hand our priorities do not always align. I recognise that Citizens are always more active in years when there are elections and a longer trial period would help give a fairer long-term assessment of our joint capabilities. However, this recommendation would be contingent on Citizens carrying over our outstanding training allocation into the next year as well as putting in measures to ensure the working relationship is more productive in future. We will meet with their representatives in due course to discuss whether the affiliation can be made to work for Imperial College Union before bringing a formal recommendation to the next Council.

I would like to thank Alex "Chippy" Compton, President-elect, for her counsel on this matter.

Wellbeing Reps

Progress is being made in developing the proposal for Wellbeing Representatives to be elected in most courses next Autumn. Working closely with Luke, EJ and the Education & Welfare team, we are about to begin consultation via focus groups. If you would like to take part, please get in contact with either myself or Luke.

Other events/projects:

- **Careers Service** – Following the paper passing Council last term, I have met separately with both Eric Suen and the careers service. We are in the process of arranging a joint meeting to look at what practical measures can be put in place to manage and meet student demand for the service at peak times in the year. At various College committees, I have been a fierce advocate for expanding the budget of student support services.
- **Library Air Conditioning** – This received formal & final sign off from College Council.
- **College Council Away Day** – This focused on the grand plan for College's estates in the long-term. I spoke in support of creating more flexible, community space within departments as well as the need to ensure that teaching facilities are equipped for a technologically-enhanced 21st century.
- **Volunteer Dinner** – I was invited to judge and present several awards at this year's volunteer dinner. Congratulations to Project Nepal for winning Best International Project and Paediatrics for winning two awards including Best Home Project.
- **Chemistry Book Launch** - As an alumnus of the Chemistry Department I attended the launch of *"The Chemistry Department at Imperial College London: A History 1845–2000"* which was well attended by hundreds of academics and alumni with connections to Imperial.
- **Bottle Match** – Congratulations to RSMU for delivering another fantastic celebration of sport. We brought home the bottle.

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- **Varsity** – Varsity passed without major problems.
- **Elections** – I strongly commend anyone who ran for a position this year, the campaigning schedule was particularly gruelling but I was very impressed by the camaraderie shown between candidates. All candidates should be congratulated for the way they conducted themselves during the election, as should the various volunteer media teams who delivered an incredible suite of debates, discussions and interviews. Deepen that democracy.
- **Associated Country Women Worldwide International Women’s Day Breakfast** – Rachel and I attended the ACWW’s networking breakfast in Westminster on International Women’s Day. They are a consultative body for the UN, whilst also funding/managing charitable projects for women in rural communities. There are possible opportunities for our overseas charity groups to receive funding/ support from the ACWW.
- **Higher Education Funding Policy** – I have assisted with the HEFP working group, for more information see Luke’s report. In national news, the Lords have voted to disconnect fees from the TEF, however, sadly it is doubtful that this amendment will be accepted by the government when the Bill goes back through the Commons.
- **Giving Day** - I was happy to support the College’s first giving day, which raised just over £4000 from small donations for students (student support fund was unsurprisingly the most popular). By far the most successful element of the day was the #give5k competition where CSPs were encouraged to share pictures and stories of their activities on social media, with one of the clubs then selected to decide to which fund £5k of College money is allocated.
- **Shortlisting for SACAs** – I have chaired two student panels shortlisting and finalising this year’s SACAs awards.
- **Trustee Recruitment** - The Board of Trustees have appointed a Student Trustee (pending ratification by Council), are in the process of appointing a new External Trustee and are currently seeking applications for an Alumni Trustee.

Finally, a reminder that I am happy to talk to any student about any of the Union’s work at any time.

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