

## Imperial College Union Governance committee

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May

<b>AGENDA ITEM NO.</b>	
<b>TITLE</b>	Volunteer Policy
<b>AUTHOR</b>	Thomas Bacarese-Hamilton Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>This paper presents a rewrite of the volunteer policy originally passed by board in 2014.</p> <p>Imperial College Union currently engages with approximately 3500 student volunteers across a wide variety of roles, from Student Trustees to Departmental Academic Representatives.</p> <p>This policy is aims to provide guidance and direction for both students and staff. It outlines a number of important aspects around volunteer management.</p> <p>Additionally, following a discussion at governance, it now includes clearer role descriptions and a volunteer agreement as appendices.</p>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<p>To provide guidance for both union staff and union volunteers about the relationship and expectations on both parties. Appendix 1 provides role descriptions for most roles or explains where role descriptions lie if it is more appropriate for them to be elsewhere. Appendix 2 provides a current Volunteer agreement which all volunteers should sign on an annual basis to acknowledge this relationship.</p>
<b>DECISION/ACTION REQUIRED</b>	<p>Board to adopt the terms of this policy.</p> <p>Board to accept the relevance of the two appendices and allow for them to be living documents which can be updated</p>

## **VOLUNTEERS POLICY**

### **1. Background**

1.1. Imperial College Union recognises that engagement with volunteers is essential to the successes of the organisation, completing its strategic objectives and upholding its core values. The Union understands that volunteer engagement is vital for the delivery of many of the organisation's activities.

1.2. Many of the objectives in the Union's strategic plan rely on the engagement of volunteers in the work of the Union. They are fundamental to what the organisation does.

1.3. Volunteer opportunities at the Union are diverse and substantial. These opportunities can allow an individual to personally develop, pursue specific or general interests, contribute to student representation at the College, engage with other organisations, forge links with community groups, advocate on behalf of others, raise awareness of situations or causes, meet like-minded individuals or have a rewarding and enjoyable time while a member of the Union.

### **2. Purpose**

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide overall guidance and direction to volunteers and staff engaged in activities involving volunteers and volunteer management.

2.2. This policy applies to all those undertaking a volunteer role with Imperial College Union.

2.3. It should be noted that some of the Union's volunteering programmes<sup>1</sup> also seek to place volunteers with other organisations through a bureau service. The Union endeavours to ensure that these organisations operate policies and practices in accordance with the principles set out in this policy when evaluating potential opportunities.

2.4. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations' definition of volunteering<sup>2</sup> can be used as a basis to define what we consider volunteering in the context of the Union:

2.4.1. Volunteers are defined as those members who undertake any activity recognised by the Union that involves spending time, unpaid and not for formal academic credit, doing something that aims to benefit the environment, College or local community or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual member.

2.5. The volunteering opportunities provided by the Union currently include, but are not necessarily limited to:

2.5.1. Student Trustees

2.5.2. Members of Union Council

2.5.3. Committee members of Clubs, Societies & Projects

2.5.4. Student Representative roles within the Academic and Wellbeing Representation Networks

2.5.5. Roles within the various Management Groups

2.5.6. Liberation and Community Officers

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Imperialcollegeunion.org/volunteering

2 [ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy](https://ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy)

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- 2.5.7. Members operating Student-Led Campaigns
- 2.5.8. Members registered as part of Community Connections
- 2.5.9. Members taking part in #Helloicu Crew

2.6. A number of the Union's members are aged under 18. A specific policy<sup>3</sup> exists outlining which volunteer roles these members may undertake.

### **3. Principles of volunteer engagement**

3.1. The following principles are adopted by the Union with respect to activities involving volunteers:

3.1.1. The Union is committed to engaging volunteers in its work and values their contribution to the organisation.

3.1.2. The Union is proud of the diversity of the student community and will support this through its voluntary activities and recognised groups.

3.1.3. The Union is committed to protecting volunteers from discrimination and harm, whether physical, financial or emotional.

3.1.4. The Union will provide information about the nature of volunteer roles where possible, and develop the range and nature of opportunities which are available.

3.1.5. The Union ensures fair, efficient and consistent recruitment, election and dismissal procedures.

3.1.6. The Union will help to introduce new volunteers to their role as well as providing ongoing training, support and personal development opportunities for existing volunteers

3.1.7. The Union will not encourage volunteers, or develop existing volunteer roles, to undertake tasks which are more appropriately carried out by paid staff.

3.1.8. The Union recognises that different voluntary activities and recognised groups need varying levels and styles of support and supervision. As such, the Union will endeavour to tailor appropriate services.

3.1.9. The Union expects its staff at all levels to work positively with volunteers, and where appropriate, involve them in their work.

3.1.10. The Union is mindful that volunteering is an addition to academic life which must take priority and will not place undue pressure on those undertaking volunteer roles.

### **4. Recruitment, selection and dismissal**

4.1. In general, all volunteering opportunities are available to all members of the Union and are should be renewable annually.

4.2. One of the Union's values is *Democracy* therefore a significant number of opportunities are subject to election by and from a certain constituency of members. Constituencies can either be predetermined with a dependency on student status or opt-in. Procedures for elections are contained within the Bye Laws<sup>4</sup>.

4.3. Role descriptions should be available for each volunteer role, outlined in appendix 1. These will contain a complete and current description of the duties and responsibilities of that role. This role description should also include the normal location of the opportunity and time commitment of the role if appropriate.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/policies/92>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-were-run/constitution-and-regulations>

4.4. The Union will maintain an up-to-date record of the mandatory and optional training associated to each volunteer role.

4.5. The Union will maintain details of who the relevant volunteer line manager and/or staff support is. These contact details are passed to volunteers as their main point of contact.

4.6. For opportunities offered by other organisations through Union programmes such as Community Connections, equivalent information to a role description will be required before the role is promoted. Furthermore, the organisation will be asked to sign a *Partner Agreement*

4.7. Procedures for the removal of members from many volunteer roles are contained within Bye Law E<sup>5</sup>, with specific procedures relating to Clubs, Societies & Projects given in the Clubs, Societies & Projects policy<sup>6</sup> and procedures for Trustees<sup>7</sup>.

4.8. For an opportunity offered by another organisation responsibility for removing individuals from these roles lies with the organisation.

4.9. Any member is able to resign from any volunteer role at any point. Where practicable, support will be provided by a volunteer line manager or staff member to handover responsibilities to another volunteer.

## **5. Training, development and recognition**

5.1. Unless specified in the role description, volunteers require no previous training, experience or qualifications to undertake a role within the Union. Opportunities offered through Union Programmes may have requirements for specific previous training, experience or qualifications.

5.2. The Union will make available information about the Union, its policies and its practices which are relevant to all volunteers<sup>8</sup>.

5.3. The Union will provide training opportunities for volunteers; this may include in person training, written materials and/or eLearning. Training can be mandatory and may include a validation test to ensure the subject matter has been understood suitably.

5.4. Any other organisation offering opportunities through Community Connections will be responsible for providing appropriate induction and training for individuals taking up those roles. The Union will ensure that external organisations have suitable arrangements in place.

## **6. Support**

6.1. The Union aims to ensure that barriers to taking up volunteer roles are recognised and where possible, removed.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-were-run/constitution-and-regulations>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/policies/44>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/policies/71>

<sup>8</sup> Available through the Training Hub <https://eactivities.union.ic.ac.uk/training>

6.2. The Union recognises it has a Duty of Care to ensure volunteers undertake their roles in a safe environment. The Union's Health & Safety Policy applies to those undertaking volunteer roles. It is expected that all those undertaking and supporting volunteer roles comply with this policy.

6.3. Where volunteers are undertaking a role offered by another organisation through Community Connections it is the responsibility of that organisation to arrange appropriate insurance. The Union will ensure that organisations have suitable arrangements in place.

6.4. The Union will support volunteers with advice on applications for DBS checks.

6.5. Volunteers are eligible for the reimbursement of reasonable expenses which relate directly to costs incurred relating to the activity being undertaken. Normally travel to and from activities, subsistence and entertaining costs are not directly reimbursable for volunteers, though subsidises may be available.

6.6. Volunteers who have concerns or grievances about the Union's staff or Officers should follow the complaints procedures laid down in Bye Law E<sup>15</sup>.

6.7. Volunteers who have concerns or grievances about their role or another volunteer should contact that relevant line manager

6.8. Volunteers who feel they may have concerns or grievances about opportunities offered by other organisations through Community Connections should contact the Student Development Coordinator (Volunteering) in the first instance.

## **7. Representation of the Union**

7.1. Actions which could be perceived as representation of the Union may include, but are not limited to, public statement to the press, collaborations or joint ventures, or any agreements involving contractual or financial obligations. Policies and procedures exist particularly in the case of financial and contractual obligations.

7.2. Prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate the Union; volunteers are requested to seek consultation and approval from the relevant Union Staff member or Sabbatical Officer.

## **8. Expectations**

8.1. In terms of delivering services to volunteers it is useful to outline expectations of both the individuals undertaking the roles and what they can expect from the Union.

8.2. The Union expects volunteers:

8.2.1. To treat others with respect and courtesy, act in a manner which is appreciative of the wide diversity within the Union's membership, and not discriminate against others on any grounds.

8.2.2. To be an ambassador for the Union and the College, bringing neither into potential disrepute and maintain good relations with the external community.

8.2.3. To perform their volunteering role to the best of their ability, undertaking the tasks within the role description and to be clear and upfront if they are experiencing problems or difficulties undertaking the role.

8.2.4. To follow the Union's policies and procedures, including Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, and Finance and to report any issues, breaches to policy or events that may be unsafe for the community.

8.2.5. To respond to emails and other messages within a reasonable timeframe and to attend on time, or give reasonable notice to cancel or rearrange meetings.

8.2.6. To have a willingness to learn, to undertake all mandatory training as part of their volunteering role and make a commitment to undertake relevant optional training.

8.2.7. To sign a volunteer agreement outlining their understanding of this document, appendix 2

8.3. If a volunteer or group of volunteers is/are unable to meet these expectations, this should be raised to their respective line manager in the Union who will at first be expected to offer support to the volunteer(s) to a reasonable extent to allow them to uphold these expectations. Should this fail, the procedures for dismissal outlined in the Union Bye-Law E may need to be followed.

8.4. Volunteers can expect the Union:

8.4.1. To treat them with respect and courtesy, and act in a manner which is appreciative of the wide diversity within the Union's membership.

8.4.2. To provide a role description for their volunteering role as well as training, support, and resources to help them undertake the role, outlined in appendix 1.

8.4.3. To provide services to support individuals undertaking volunteer roles.

8.4.4. To promote their activities, achievements and successes in line with the Union's guidance on publicity; and to undertake recognition schemes such as the Union Awards and Imperial Plus.

8.4.5. To respond to your emails, messages and requests within a reasonable timeframe.

8.4.6. To be mindful of academic life and not make requests which are potentially detrimental to academic success.

8.4.7. To investigate complaints within an appropriate timeframe and keep complainants informed as to progress.

8.4.8. To respond to concerns raised about an individual's ability to complete their role as outlined in the description and to offer reasonable support to enable struggling individuals to complete their role.

8.5 Where the Union is found to not be complying with these expectations, volunteers should raise these concerns to their line manager who will be expected to take reasonable action to allow the Union to meet these expectations. Should this not have the desired effect, the volunteer should then raise their concerns to the Union President.

## Appendix 1:

### Role descriptions of volunteer positions

Role Category	Role Type	Description	Managed By	Staff Support
Student Trustees (elected and appointed)	-	<p>Trustees are accountable for delivering the responsibilities detailed in the Constitution &amp; Bye-Laws and Board of Trustees Policy. All Trustees have a duty to:</p> <p>Ensure that Imperial College Union acts in accordance with its charitable objects, constitution and other guiding documents and remains true to its Mission, Vision and Values</p> <p>Help Imperial College Union achieve its objectives and improves the lives of its members</p> <p>Ensure that Imperial College Union complies with all relevant legislation and regulations, including relevant Charities Acts and Education Acts, and related regulatory requirements</p> <p>Ensure that Imperial College Union does not undertake activities that put its financial stability, members or reputation at undue risk</p> <p>Work with other Trustees, staff and volunteers in a constructive manner and for the greater good of the Union</p> <p>Participate fully in Board meetings and join one of the Board's subcommittees</p> <p>Use their personal skills and experience to ensure Imperial College Union is well run and efficient</p> <p>Seek professional external advice where there may be material risk to the Union or where the Trustees may be in breach of their duties, or at any other appropriate moment</p> <p>Add value to the Board and the Union through generating ideas, challenging the status quo, broadening thinking and supporting and promoting innovation and creativity</p>	President/ Chair of Board	Governance Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication
Members of Union Council	-	<p>Ordinary Members speak for their fellow Undergraduates or Postgraduates in their faculty. While any student of Imperial College London can attend Council, or bring a paper to it for approval, the Ordinary Members are there to give a voice to students who may not otherwise volunteer with Imperial</p>	President/ Council Chair	Governance Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication

		College Union. The roles exist to ensure that every faculty and study type has at least one dedicated representative on Council to air their views.		
Committee members of Clubs, Societies & Projects – it is important to check the clubs constitution for any additional role requirements	Chair/ President	<p>Responsible for the overall running of the CSP including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General club finance</li> <li>Health and Safety (ensure all activities are within the law and are safe!)</li> <li>Attend all necessary training</li> <li>Storage space management</li> <li>Ensure regular committee meetings happen and are effective</li> <li>Representation</li> </ul> <p>Remember that the CSP should be run as a democracy, not a dictatorship. Your role as chair is to ensure that all of the committee feel involved and responsible for the running of the club</p> <p>You will represent your society to your Management Group</p> <p>Ensure your CSP is inclusive</p> <p>Chairing meetings</p> <p>Liaise with Management Group, Activities Team, DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES)/DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE &amp; SERVICES)</p> <p>Development of the Club, Society,</p> <p>You are driving force behind the development of your Club, Society or Project</p> <p>You will set objectives and have a vision for how you'd like the CSP to grow</p>	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS & SOCIETIES)	Student Activities Team, Head of Student Experience



	Treasurer	<p>Treasurer</p> <p>In charge of the CSP's finance          Ensure that the President/Chair and committee members are up to date with financial income and expenditure          Authorising expenditure          Working on eActivities          Working with: Income, expenditure, invoices, purchase orders, imprests, goods receipting, paying in books, etc.          Fundraising information (sponsorship, donations etc.)          Budgeting (annual and event budgets)          Liaise with Activities staff &amp; DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE &amp; SERVICES), Finance team</p>	<p>DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES) and DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE &amp; SERVICES)</p>	<p>Student Activities Team,          Head of Student Experience</p>
	Secretary	<p>The link between the committee and the society members          Ensuring communication is frequent and informative          Arrange and minute committee meetings          Sending out agendas, taking minutes, distributing them          Room bookings          Communication with Union          Reviewing and updating constitution          Key lists administration          Mail main/ mailing lists          Data protection          Liaise with Activities staff and DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES)</p>	<p>DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES)</p>	<p>Student Activities Team,          Head of Student Experience</p>
	Other	<p>Role descriptions for other volunteer roles must be present in a relevant constitution or standing orders</p>	<p>DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES)</p>	<p>Student Activities Team,          Head of Student Experience</p>

Academic Representation Network	Year	<p>Academic Year Representatives are elected members of their current student cohort. At least one representative per course per academic year exists. They are responsible for receiving and collating student feedback relating to their academic course and passing this information to Departmental reps and relevant staff as appropriate. They are expected to proactively pursue improvements to their course and seek to maintain standards.</p> <p>A full role description outlining key responsibilities, time commitment, skills and training is available here.  <a href="https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/Year%20Academic%20Representatives%20-%20Role%20Description%202017-18.pdf">https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/Year%20Academic%20Representatives%20-%20Role%20Description%202017-18.pdf</a></p>	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)	Education and Welfare Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication
	Department	<p>Department Representatives are elected members who are responsible for liaising with College staff regarding issues raised by Year Reps. They are responsible for receiving and collating student feedback relating to their department and passing this information to Academic Affairs Officers and relevant staff as appropriate. They are expected to proactively pursue improvements to their course and seek to maintain standards.</p> <p>A full role description outlining key responsibilities, time commitment, skills and training is available here.  <a href="https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/Departmental%20Academic%20Representatives%20-%20Role%20Description%202017-18.pdf">https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/Departmental%20Academic%20Representatives%20-%20Role%20Description%202017-18.pdf</a></p>	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)	Education and Welfare Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication
	Faculty (Academic Affairs Officer - Undergraduate)	<p>Academic Affairs Officers (AAO) are elected members of their student cohort. One AAO exists per undergraduate faculty, excluding Medicine which has three. They are responsible for overseeing the undergraduate departmental representatives within their faculty and passing information collected by departmental representatives to relevant bodies. They are expected to ensure students are kept aware of developments in issues affecting them raised by departmental representatives.</p> <p><a href="https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-">https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-</a></p>	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)	Education and Welfare Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication

		support-services/registry/qa/public/good-practice/roles-and-responsibilities/student-reps/Academic-Affairs-Officer.pdf		
Wellbeing Representation Network	Year	<p>Wellbeing Year Representatives are elected members who are responsible for gathering feedback directly from students and feeding this information to Departmental Wellbeing Reps. They are expected to support campaigns, Liberation Officers and raise awareness on campus about wellbeing issues affecting students. The Wellbeing Reps should never act as counsellors, caregivers, advisers or a peer support network. However, they are expected to be able to signpost students to those with adequate training to do so.</p> <p>A full role description outlining key responsibilities, time commitment, skills and training is available here.  <a href="https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/Year%20Wellbeing%20Representatives%20-%20Role%20Descriptions%202017-18.pdf">https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/Year%20Wellbeing%20Representatives%20-%20Role%20Descriptions%202017-18.pdf</a></p>	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (WELFARE)	Education and Welfare Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication
	Department	<p>Department Wellbeing Representatives are elected members who are responsible for liaising with College staff regarding issues raised by Year Wellbeing Reps. They are expected to support campaigns, Liberation Officers and raise awareness on campus about wellbeing issues affecting students. The Wellbeing Reps should never act as counsellors, caregivers, advisers or a peer support network. However, they are expected to be able to signpost students to those with adequate training to do so.</p> <p>A full role description outlining key responsibilities, time commitment, skills and training is available here.  <a href="https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/Departmental%2">https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/Departmental%2</a></p>	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (WELFARE)	Education and Welfare Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication

		0Wellbeing%20Representatives%20-%20Role%20Descriptions%202017-18.pdf		
	Faculty (Wellbeing Officers - Undergraduate)	Details of these role descriptions can be found in the relevant Constituent Union Constitution	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (WELFARE)	Education and Welfare Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication
Management Groups	Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Vice Chair and others	These can be found in the relevant standing orders of the Management Group which are approved by CSPB and must include role descriptions for all roles	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS & SOCIETIES)	Student Activities Team, Head of Student Experience
Constituent Union	All	All constituent unions have a constitution approved by Union Council on an annual basis. All role descriptions must be included in this.	President	Governance Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication
Liberation and Community Officers	All	Details of these role descriptions can be found in the Union Bye-laws	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (WELFARE)	Education and Welfare Team, Head of Student Voice and Communication
Members operating Student-Led Campaigns	-	Will agree a role description as part of their application for a campaign.	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (WELFARE)	Education and Welfare Team,

				Head of Student Voice and Communication
Members registered as part of Community Connections	-	Relevant role descriptions will be held by the organisation being volunteered with.	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE & SERVICES)	Student Development Team, Head of Student Experience
Members taking part in #Helloicu Crew	-	Responsibilities range from helping new students move into their accommodation, staffing promotional stalls, setting up events, and reassuring new students (and often parents!) through conversations	DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE & SERVICES)	Student Development Team, Head of Student Experience

## **Appendix 2: Volunteer agreement**

### **Imperial College Union Volunteer Agreement**

This Volunteer Agreement is a description of the arrangement between Imperial College Union and you (the volunteer) in relation to your voluntary work. The intention of this agreement is to assure you that we appreciate your volunteering with us and to indicate our commitment to do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us a positive and rewarding one.

We, Imperial College Union, accept the voluntary service of <Name> on <Date >

Your role as a volunteer is <Name of role>. This work is designed to give the volunteer a leadership role with our <Role Location eg CSPs or ARN>.

#### **We, Imperial College Union, commit to the following:**

##### **Induction and training**

To provide an induction on the work of Imperial College Union, your volunteering role and the training necessary to assist you in meeting the responsibilities of your volunteering role.

##### **Supervision, support and flexibility**

To define appropriate standards of our services, to communicate them to you, and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them as part of your voluntary work.

To do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us and to be flexible in how we use your volunteering.

To provide contacts that can be used for support when needed.

##### **Health and safety**

To provide adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy, a copy of which is on [ImperialCollegeUnion.org](http://ImperialCollegeUnion.org)

##### **Insurance**

To provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst undertaking voluntary work approved and authorised by us.

##### **Equal opportunities**

To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our equal opportunities policy, a copy of which is set out on ImperialCollegeUnion.org

**General**

To uphold the Volunteer Policy approved by the Board of Trustees, a copy of which is available on Imperialcollegeunion.org

**The volunteer**

**I agree to be a volunteer with Imperial College Union and commit to the following:**

To help Imperial College Union fulfil its work by being a committed volunteer.

To perform my volunteering role to the best of my ability in accordance with the role description

To adhere to the organisation’s rules, procedures and standards, including health and safety procedures and its equal opportunities policy in relation to its staff, volunteers and clients.

To maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its clients.

To meet the time commitments and standards undertaken, other than in exceptional circumstances, and provide reasonable notice so that alternative arrangement can be made.

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

**Signed by:**

**Volunteer**

**On behalf of (Imperial College Union)**

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**Date:**

**Name:**

**Role/Position:**