



nus
national union of **students**

nus *charity*
national union of **students**

NUS UK Lay Directors

NUS Charity Trustees

Candidate Pack

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01. Executive Summary

For over 100 years, NUS (National Union of Students) has been at the forefront of the student movement in the UK and internationally. The organisation was founded on Ivison Macadam's idea that *"if students are cooperating today, surely there is hope for tomorrow"*. Students play a vital role in our society, creating hope, vision and solutions for the future.

NUS comprises the limited company 'NUS UK' and the registered charity 'NUS Charity'. These are two separate legal entities, but with overlapping history, missions, and operations. NUS Charity builds excellent students' unions and NUS UK delivers national student voice and campaigns. Since these two functions are inextricably linked, the two organisations work shoulder-to-shoulder.

Both NUS UK and NUS Charity are currently looking to appoint new lay members to their respective governing boards. These are voluntary and unremunerated positions for an initial term of three years. They will entail at least four board meetings per year, plus the occasional away day, call, committee, and event.

The new Lay Directors and Trustees will perform the function of a 'critical friend' – providing scrutiny, advice, strategic input, and fresh perspectives. In doing so, they will help both organisations to enhance their impact, their operational effectiveness, and their financial sustainability, whilst consistently upholding their values.

Candidates should have a strategic mindset, a collaborative outlook, and excellent judgement. No prior connection to the student movement is required.

Applications can be made via NUS' executive search partners Society. The deadline for receipt of applications is midday (UK time) on Thursday, 21 November 2024.



02. The Student Movement

NUS exists to harness the collective power and potential of students at a local and national level. It convenes and supports one of the largest social justice movements in the world. For over a century, this movement has been at the vanguard of social change; facing into society's most existential challenges: such as war, fascism, apartheid, oppression, and poverty.

Over seven million students currently in Higher or Further Education are members of NUS. They are spread across around 600 affiliated students' unions. NUS consequently has huge reach. Its £50 million purchasing consortium carries significant weight in the hospitality sector, and its increasing levels of online and digital activity mean that it has access to rich and powerful data on the student population's interests and desires.

Independent investigation into antisemitism

In May 2022, NUS commissioned Rebecca Tuck KC to lead an independent investigation into recent and historic allegations of antisemitism within the student movement. NUS worked closely with the Union of Jewish Students throughout the investigation. The **published report** detailed shocking levels of antisemitism. It is a truly difficult read, but NUS welcomes the clarity it brings and has since acted with confidence to tackle antisemitism head on.

There is no place for antisemitism within NUS and both the elected officers and permanent staff of the organisation are committed to ensuring that Jewish students now feel safe and welcome in every corner of the movement. NUS is working hard to take forward Rebecca Tuck KC's recommendations; tackling antisemitism in all its forms across the breadth and depth of the organisation. It has developed an **Action Plan**, which will help to achieve this, and it has set up an Advisory Panel to scrutinise this plan and to oversee its implementation.

With the support of the Advisory Panel, delivery of this action plan will remain a key priority for the NUS UK Board.

Looking to the future

NUS has emerged from a period of significant turmoil and is now looking to the future with optimism, energy, and hope. With a new government in Westminster, there is a chance to reset elements of the national debate. At the same time, a fresh cohort of nationally elected student sabbaticals is just beginning their two-year terms of office.

The historic caricature of 'student politics' may be one of factions and infighting. But that is increasingly outdated. The modern student movement is actively working to model different approaches to debate and decision making; showing how we can all learn to disagree more agreeably, and in doing so push back the rising tide of political polarization and partisanship.

Earlier this year, NUS UK added two new Lay Directors to its Board. Following the success of these appointments, it wishes to strengthen its governance still further by adding two more Lay Directors, as well as by appointing two independent Trustees to the Board of NUS Charity.

03. About NUS UK

NUS UK's purpose is to bring about ahead-of-the-curve change at a scale that students and students' unions couldn't achieve alone. The organisation is constituted as a company limited by guarantee. Operationally headquartered in Stockport, it has an annual turnover of £3.6m and employs around 27 staff.

NUS' enduring hope is for a just society where everyone can access opportunity and possibility through lifelong education. You can read about NUS' [current campaigns here](#) including its campaign on the [Cost of Living Crisis](#).

[Click here](#) to read a summary of NUS UK's current Strategy, or [here](#) to read an analysis of the organisation's impact.

The NUS UK Board monitors performance, has oversight of the organisation's work and supports the officer and staff teams to ensure they can deliver on their campaigning priorities.

NUS UK's 2030 Vision is to be instrumental in bringing about a post-16 education model that prioritises social justice and fulfilment. It should be accessible, lifelong, and relevant to our socioeconomic present and future.

The organisations goals are:

1. Free affordable living costs, well-funded access for all
2. Lifelong access to relevant post-16 education
3. 5,000 activists, 1 million supporters, and 80% of students' unions
4. A political youth and student movement convened by NUS

NUS UK's values are:

- **Collectivism** – Millions of students, thousands of activists, and hundreds of students' unions work as a democratic collective to build power and create change. They amplify each other's voices and make each other stronger through mutually beneficial actions.
- **Anti-Oppression** – NUS UK strives to be anti-oppressive through its actions, reflections and learning. Using its collective power, it dismantles the structural barriers to create a liberated society inside and outside of education.
- **Care** – NUS UK practices self and collective care. It prioritises the immediate and long-term wellbeing of staff, officers, members, and students and strives towards transformative justice in its own practices and in the structures of education and society.



Current Directors

The Board of NUS UK is made up of seven elected student officers, four member representatives elected by NUS' members, and up to four Lay Directors who are appointed to bring additional external expertise and oversight.



Amira Campbell
(she/her/hers)

Chair & National
President



Qasim Hussain
(he/him/his)

Vice President Further
Education



Alex Stanley
(he/him/his)

Vice President Higher
Education



**Saranya
Thambirajah**
(she/her/hers)

Vice President
Liberation and Equality



**Sai Shraddha
Viswanathan**
(she/her/hers)

NUS Scotland
President



Deio Owen
(fo/he/him/his)

NUS Cymru President



Ben Friel
(he/him/his)

NUS-USI President



Heather Innes
(she/her/hers)

Student from Highland
and Islands Students'
Association at time of
election



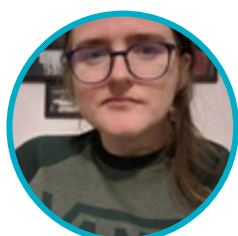
Noah Katz
(they/them/theirs)

Student from
Lancaster Students'
Union at time of
election



Paul Chapman
(he/him/his)

CEO of John Moores
Students' Union



Sarah Kerton
(she/her/hers)

CEO of Middlesex
Students' Union



Vic Langer
(she/her/hers)

Former Director of
Campaigns, Good Law
Project



Andrew Wilson
(he/him/his)

Department Manager
for Economics, LSE



**Vacant Lay
Director Role**

Available now



**Vacant Lay
Director Role**

Available now

04. About NUS Charity

NUS Charity's mission is that every post-16 student in the UK has an amazing students' union. The organisation is a constituted as a registered charity owned by its member students' unions. Operationally headquartered in Stockport, it has an annual turnover of £3.7m and employs around 40 staff.

NUS Charity is responsible for supporting the development of students' unions throughout the UK. It works with its partners, including NUS UK and SOS UK, to build a more active and resilient student movement. For a detailed list of all the services the charity offers click [here](#).

[Click here](#) to read a summary of NUS Charity's current Strategy or visit www.nusconnect.org.uk to learn more about its work and impact.

The NUS Charity Board monitors performance, has oversight of the organisation's work, scrutinises its finances, feeds into its strategy and makes sure it is fulfilling its Charitable Objects to provide the foundations needed for SUs to thrive.

Areas of focus include:

1. coaching, funding, facilitating and advising in order to empower SUs across the UK.
2. running events, programmes and support that enable member SUs to expand their reach, to grow their income, and to provide the best possible student experience;
3. using the NUS Services Ltd trading consortium to harnesses market expertise, ethical purchasing and competitive pricing, and thereby ensure SU commercial outlets succeed;
4. supporting with elections, officer inductions; self-evaluations. and networking, in order to build unshakable and resilient SUs at a local level.



Current Trustees

The Board of NUS Charity consists of up to 12 trustees. Four are drawn from member students' unions and elected by NUS UK members, four are coopted from the NUS UK Board, and four are externally appointed to provide an independent perspective. Trustees also serve on the board of the trading subsidiary NUS Services.



Gareth Hughes
(he/him/his)

Acting Chair & CEO of
Durham Students'
Union



Deio Owen
(he/him/his)

Incoming Chair & NUS
Cymru President



Noah Katz
(they/them/theirs)

Student from
Lancaster Students'
Union at time of
election



Heather Innes
(she/her/hers)

Student from Highland
and Islands Students'
Association at time of
election



Graeme Kirkpatrick
(he/him/his)

CEO of Aberdeen
Students' Union



Abby Wilson
(she/her/hers)

Head of Philanthropy
at City University



Sarah Kerton
(she/her/hers)

CEO of Middlesex
Students' Union



Paul Chapman
(he/him/his)

CEO of John Moores
Students' Union



**Vacant Trustee
Position**

Available now



**Vacant Trustee
Position**

Available from
Summer 2024 when
Gareth Hughes' term
ends

05. Lay Director Role Description

NUS UK is seeking to appoint two new Lay Directors to join the Board towards the end of 2024. These individuals will become full company directors of *National Union of Students (United Kingdom) Ltd* – Company Number 08015198.

Time commitment and term length

Lay Directors are required to attend approximately four Board meetings per year (in person). This is in addition to the occasional away day and Zoom call, and attendance at certain NUS events. Directors will also need to set time aside for reading papers.

The new Directors will be asked to complete a three-year term, commencing towards the end of 2024. They may later choose to serve an additional three-year term, subject to re-approval by the Board.

NUS UK Lay Directors may also have the opportunity to serve on the Finance or HR Committees, each of which meets approximately four times per year as well (online). Since the NUS UK Board appoints to the NUS Charity Board, there may also be opportunities to serve on that Board too, if someone wished to explore that.

Role focus

Being effective board members: First and foremost, Directors are responsible for the financial health and legal compliance of NUS UK. Directors will be expected to ensure the long-term viability of the organisation by ensuring organisational plans are effectively executed.

‘Build our business’: NUS UK needs Lay Directors who can spot the opportunities for financial growth and organisational development which will ensure that it remain relevant and financially viable.

Leading with Officers: The political times we are in now call for a Board of Directors who can share their expertise and can support and encourage NUS UK’s full-time Officers to navigate and react to a rapidly changing landscape.

Building a voice too loud to ignore: Board members will be expected to support, interrogate and strengthen the work NUS UK does around political campaigning. This means there is a need for Board members who have an interest in education policy and campaigns.

Upholding NUS UK’s values: Where students lead, others follow. Liberation is important to NUS because our identities affect participation, achievement and progression in education. The Board needs Directors who can support the organisation’s work with Black, LGBT+, Disabled, Trans, and Women students.

Responsibilities and legal duties

Before putting yourself forward you are strongly advised you to make yourself aware of the [responsibilities](#) and [legal duties](#) of UK company directors. These include the requirements to:

- act within your powers;
- promote the success of the company;
- exercise independent judgement;
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- not accept benefits from third parties;
- declare interests in transactions or arrangements.

The Board as a whole has responsibilities to:

- act as a single body;
- ensure NUS UK has a clear strategy and goals;
- ensure the work and goals of NUS UK are in line with the vision defined in its Articles;
- keep a check on the organisation’s finances and activities;
- act in accordance with the Nolan Committee’s Seven Principles of Public Life;
- champion the values of the organisation.

06. Trustee Role Description

NUS Charity is seeking to appoint two new Trustees, one to join the Board towards the end of 2024 and one to join in Summer 2025. These individuals will become full trustees of *National Union of Students Charitable Services* – Charity Number 1140142.

Time commitment and term length

Trustees are required to attend approximately four Board meetings per year (in person). This is in addition to the occasional away day and Zoom call, and attendance at certain NUS events. Trustees will also need to set time aside for reading papers.

The new Trustees will be asked to complete a three-year term, commencing towards the end of 2024. They may later choose to serve an additional three-year term, subject to re-approval by the Board.

NUS Charity Trustees may also have the opportunity to serve on the Finance or HR Committees, each of which meets approximately four times per year as well (online).

Role focus

Being Effective Board Members: Trustees are responsible for the financial health and legal compliance of NUS Charity. Trustees will be expected to guard the long-term viability of the organisation by ensuring organisational plans are effectively executed.

Leading with Students' Unions: NUS Charity is led by its member SUs. It wants Trustees who are interested their work and can help to turn their mandate into action.

Interrogating what works: NUS Charity will only do the things that students' unions can't do by themselves for themselves. It needs Trustees who can support the development of tools to assess the efficacy of its services and in turn interrogate data to see what's working.

Upholding NUS Charity's values: NUS Charity is students' union-focused, collective, and anti-oppression. Trustees need to lead with these values are the forefront.

Responsibilities and legal duties

Before putting yourself forward you are strongly advised you to make yourself aware of the [responsibilities of UK charity trustees](#) and the [responsibilities](#) and [legal duties](#) of UK company directors. These include the requirements to:

- ensure the charity's purpose is being carried out;
- comply with the charity's governing document and the law;
- act in the charity's best interests;
- manage the charity's resources responsibly;
- ensure the charity is accountable and transparent;
- act with reasonable care and skill;
- manage conflicts of interest.

The Board as a whole has responsibilities to:

- act as a single body;
- ensure the organisation has a clear strategy or set of goals;
- ensure the work and goals of the organisation are in line with its Charitable Objects;
- keep a check on the organisation's finances and activities;
- act in accordance with [The Charity Commission's Essential Trustee Guide](#);
- act in accordance with the Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life;
- champion the values of the organisation.

07. Lay Director Person Specification

We are seeking individuals who can support great campaigns, bring students together, and help NUS UK to influence policy at the highest levels. You will need to think strategically, be creative, and bring a fresh and useful new perspective to the Board's deliberations.

It is important to understand that these are non-political positions. Lay Directors have no role in shaping the policy and campaigning decisions of NUS UK. But the Lay Directors play a vital role in ensuring that NUS UK remains a sound organisation with the best resources and finances in place to execute those campaign effectively.

Personal qualities

Candidates should be able to exhibit evidence of the following personal qualities:

- excellent judgement;
- a highly collaborative style;
- an ability to 'role model' effective governance behaviours;
- a mixture of personal humility and professional conviction;
- comfort working in a student-led, democratic environment

- emotional intelligence and a good understanding of interpersonal dynamics;
- an understanding of risk;
- a reasonable level of financial acumen;
- a strong commitment to diversity, equality and social justice.

Skills and expertise

We are particularly keen to hear from candidates with any of the following skills and expertise:

- income diversification, business development and/or grant fundraising;
- legal knowledge, especially around campaigning;
- public relations;
- communications and marketing, especially around digital strategy and social media;
- community organising and mobilisation;
- liberation campaigns and change-making politics.



08. Trustee Person Specification

We are seeking individuals who can offer insight and leadership; both scrutinising and championing NUS Charity's work and keeping the organisation sustainable. You will need to be an active listener, able to interact with a range of stakeholders and to getting your point across with tact and clarity.

These roles are open to anyone who believes they can play a role in taking NUS Charity on the next steps of its journey, and who shares the organisation's belief in the ability of students' unions to affect change. A commitment to NUS Charity's values is particularly important. That means being students' union focused, collective, and anti-oppression.

Personal qualities

Candidates should be able to exhibit evidence of the following personal qualities:

- excellent judgement;
- a highly collaborative style;
- an ability to 'role model' effective governance behaviours;
- a mixture of personal humility and professional conviction;
- comfort working in a student-led, democratic environment
- emotional intelligence and a good understanding of interpersonal dynamics;
- an understanding of risk;
- a reasonable level of financial acumen;
- a strong commitment to diversity, equality and social justice.

Skills and expertise

We are particularly keen to hear from candidates with any of the following skills and expertise:

- an awareness of the work of membership organisations and being led by members;
- commercial expertise and an interest in growing NUS Charity's commercial offer;
- an excellent track record in supporting organisations to deliver positive outcomes on diversity, equality, and social justice;
- knowledge of building links with public sector organisations;
- professional expertise ie. as an accountant or lawyer;
- prior experience of acting as a trustees or non-executive director.



09. Appointment Details and How to Apply

NUS is seeking a wide range of applicants with a diverse range of skills who share a common belief in the power of students to make change. These roles are open to anyone who believes they can volunteer to take NUS on the next steps of its journey.

NUS is being assisted in this appointment process by the executive search firm Society (www.society-search.com).

NUS is totally committed to equality of opportunity for all. It welcomes applications from individuals regardless of their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation. For these appointments NUS would particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates, as they are currently under-represented on both Boards and within the sector more broadly.

Applications should consist of:

- a concise covering letter (ideally no longer than two pages), addressing your motivation and the criteria in the Person Specification;
- an up-to-date curriculum vitae;
- names and contact details of three referees (although referees will only be approached at the final stage of the process, and only with your express permission).

General advice on how to write a **strong CV** and **strong covering letter** can be found on our website.

Upload your documents via Society's website:

- [here](#) for Lay Director candidates
- [here](#) for Trustee candidates

The deadline for receipt of applications is midday (UK time) on Thursday, 21 November 2024.

These are voluntary and unremunerated positions.

NUS expects all Lay Directors to agree to follow the terms of the NUS **Code of Conduct**, a confidentiality agreement, and a committee member agreement.

We are committed to ensuring that anyone can access our application processes. This includes people with hearing, sight, mobility, and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to this document in an alternative format, wish to apply in a different format, or need any other reasonable adjustments made for you (including at interview), please contact us at inclusion@society-search.com. We also welcome suggestions or comments about any more general access improvements we should consider.





10. Appendix One – What You Can Get Out of Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to give back and to share the knowledge and expertise you have gained. NUS is a unique place to spend some time volunteering. Through the voices of 7 million students, it works to create a better world and to support students to drive change.

Expenses

All reasonable expenses will be covered by NUS for the duration of your service as a Lay Director or Trustee. At all meetings lunch and beverages are provided. Travel is arranged by NUS at no expense to you, and any additional costs you incur due to travel will be refunded. If overnight accommodation is required, NUS will book the hotels too.

Support

NUS values the contribution of its Lay Directors and Trustees and seeks to support them as volunteers. Feedback is a valued part of your experience and throughout your term you will be given opportunities to comment on your experience. During your term any additional access needs or requirements will be supported.

Meeting others

This is a great opportunity to work with other passionate, talented and experienced people from a diverse variety of backgrounds. These roles will enable you to make great connections with student representatives, other trustees/directors, and colleagues, which in turn will develop you as a person and in your career.

Induction

NUS provides a comprehensive induction for board and committee members. In this induction they will ensure you fully understand the organisation's long-term strategy and its goals for the year ahead, that you are aware of the organisational risks, and that you understand your new responsibilities. The boards and committees also set out a plan for the year ahead on how they will interact together, how they see their meetings working, and how they will ensure that the organisation receives value from their expertise.

11. Appendix Two – Future Board and Committee Dates

The two boards and each of the committees typically meet four times per year. The future dates are as follows:

NUS UK Board (in person)	6 November
NUS Charity Board (in person)	7 November
SU Strategy Exchange	27–28 November
Finance Committee (in person)	3 December
HR Committee (in person)	5 December
NUS UK Board (in person)	11 February
NUS Charity & NUS Services Board (in person)	12 February
NUS UK Conferences	TBC
Finance Committee (online)	4 March
HR Committee (online)	6 March
NUS UK Board (in person)	13 May
NUS Charity Board (in person)	14 May
Finance Committee (online)	10 June
HR Committee (online)	12 June
<i>Potential additional board meetings for budget signoffs (online)</i>	<i>19 June</i>
NUS UK Board (in person)	16 July
NUS Charity Board (in person)	17 July
Summer Away Day (in person)	12–13 August
Finance Committee (online)	9 September
HR Committee (online)	11 September
NUS UK Board (in person)	28 October
NUS Charity Board (in person)	29 October
SU Strategy Exchange	26–27 November
Finance Committee (online)	2 December
HR Committee (online)	4 December
NUS UK Board (in person)	3 February
NUS Charity & NUS Services Board (in person)	4 February
Finance Committee (online)	3 March
HR Committee (online)	5 March
NUS UK Board (in person)	12 May
NUS Charity Board (in person)	13 May
Finance Committee (online)	9 June
HR Committee (online)	11 June



Society

Global Executive Search

Certified



Corporation

10%

The Society
Foundation

Society is a global executive search firm and a certified B Corporation. 10% of our profits go to charitable causes through The Society Foundation. With colleagues in the United Kingdom, the United States, and New Zealand, we solve senior hiring challenges for responsible businesses and purpose-driven organisations around the world.

We believe that the right candidate, placed in the right organisation at the right time, can initiate a chain reaction of transformative change that will help to deliver a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Certified



Corporation