A photograph of two graduates in black academic regalia. The graduate on the right is wearing a black mortarboard cap and a black gown, smiling broadly while hugging the other graduate. The graduate on the left has voluminous dark curly hair and is wearing a white stole with a purple velvet border over a black gown. A silver watch is visible on the left graduate's wrist. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a building.

# Imperial Union Board Chair Candidate Information Pack 2021

# Welcome from our President

Thank you for your interest in joining Imperial College Union as our new Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Imperial College is a world-leading university, but for all its strengths, it could do more for its students. Established in 1907, the Imperial College Union exists to support every member of the College's 21,000+ strong student body, enhancing their experience and representing their interests.

This is an exciting time for the Union. With the support of the College, we are undergoing a major process of transformation that should leave us a more sustainable, and more effective organisation that better supports our student members. To achieve this, we must identify and recognize some of our big challenges over the coming years, as well as some exciting opportunities.

To complete our process of transformation, we will need the support and guidance of an experienced Chair. Someone who can lead our large Board of Trustees in setting the strategic direction of the organisation, build consensus, and get the best out of our student leaders. Our Chair will be able to build a strong working relationship with the Managing Director and the Union President, with a sensitive understanding of when to advise and when to listen.

The student population at Imperial College is incredibly diverse, with different needs and different expectations of their Union. As Chair, you will get to work alongside these students, drawing upon your own skills, experience and knowledge to guide their leadership journeys. Students' unions are some of the most exciting and dynamic charities within the sector – and we're really looking for an individual who will embrace that.

Imperial College Union, its Board, and its Chair are uniquely positioned to do an extraordinary amount of good for students at one of the world's most prestigious institutions. If this sounds like something you would like to be a part of, we would be excited to hear from you!



*Abhijay Sood*  
President, 2020-21



*Lloyd James*  
President elect, 2021-22



# About Imperial College Union

Imperial College Union (the Union) is a student-led, democratically run charity with elected representatives who sit on Union committees, direct Union resources, and represent the views of students to the College and external bodies. The Union is led by student officers who act as representatives to the 21,000+ members. The most senior officers are the five sabbatical officers who work full-time for the Union on a variety of areas ranging from campaigns and representation to commercial services including our bars and venues. These officers are supported by around 40 full-time and 150 part time staff, and the elected officers of the Unions various clubs and societies.

The objective of Imperial College Union is to have a positive impact on the experience and outcomes of all Imperial College students from all backgrounds. The way positive impact is delivered is through a combination of service provision (including a wide range of membership and social enterprise activities) and advocating for students.







Imperial College Union also operates to the highest standards of charity governance, professional management, and leadership and has an annual turnover of £10m (pre COVID-19). Our Board of Trustees makes strategic decisions about the Union's long-term future with more than half of its members being students and the other Trustees being individuals that are experienced in governance, charity law and both professional and personal development.

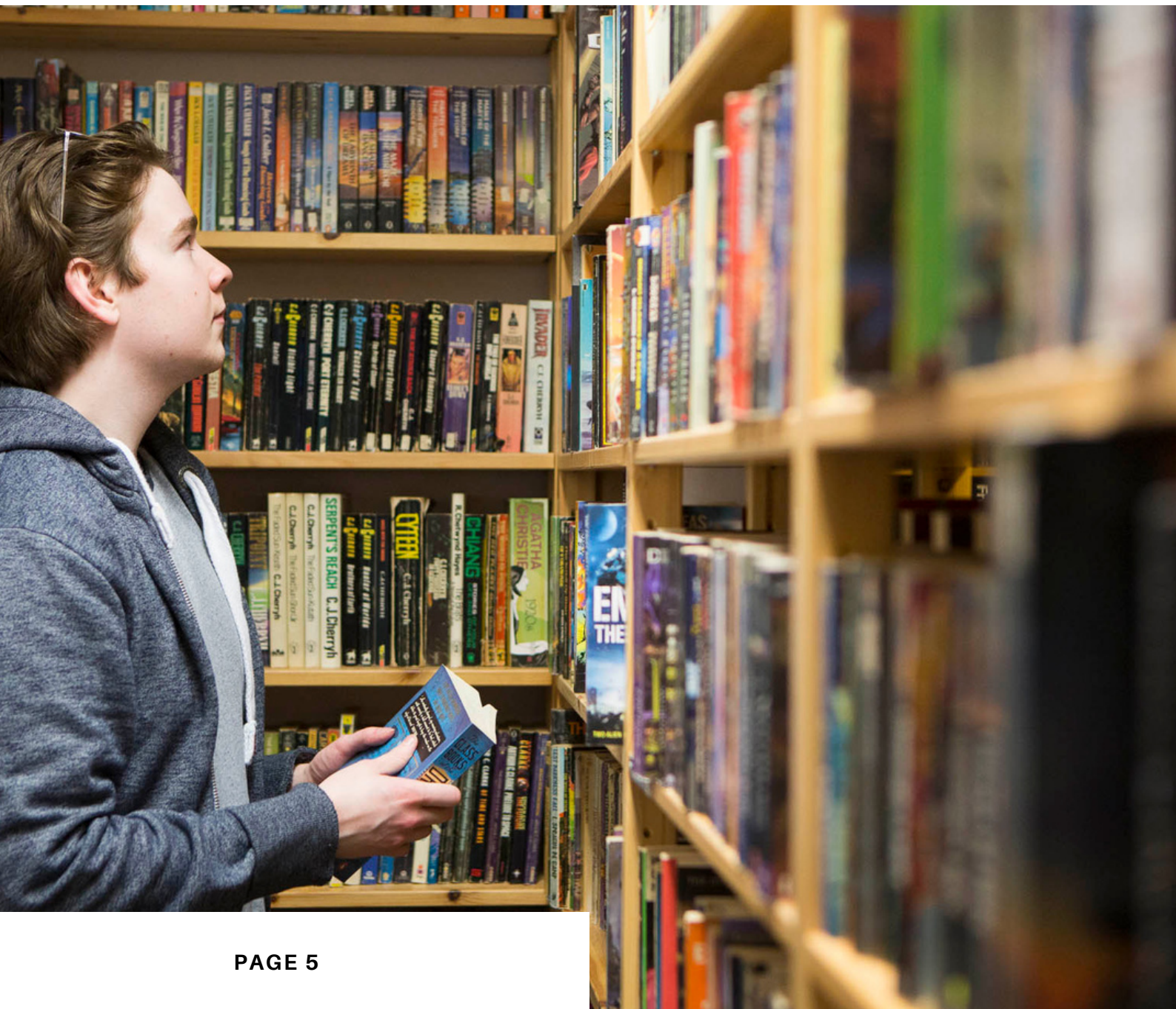
The Union has had a long, varied history over nearly 100 years, but the last 18 months have been especially challenging. The Union is currently in the middle of a period of turnaround and transformation with a new strategic plan and operating model currently in development.



# Our Board

As with all charities, the Board of Trustees is the most senior governing body of Imperial College Union. It provides the strategic direction of the organisation by ensuring that we are working towards our vision and ensures that our staff and student leaders are conducting their activities safely and legally.

The membership of the Board of Trustees is a mix of elected students (including the Officer Trustees), appointed students, and trustees drawn from outside of our student body. These lay trustees are selected from industry and academia for their expertise and experience and their external perspective. One of these lay trustees also takes the role of Chair of the Board.







# Our Strategy

**The Union is currently setting a new strategy for the organisation. A summary of the current draft, which will be approved by the Trustees in May, is below:**

## Our Mission:

To make a positive impact on the experiences and outcomes of all Imperial College students from all backgrounds.

## Our Theory of Change:

Positive impact is delivered by a combination of service provision (doing things for students, or helping them do things for themselves), and advocating for students (representing their interests to others).

Providing services for students can be done via direct delivery (doing it ourselves), in partnership with another organisation (most often the College), or via third parties. The appropriate model will differ depending on the nature of the service and where competitive advantage lies.

Advocating for students can be done at both the individual and collective level, using a range of lobbying and campaigning techniques that both rely on a combination of student voice, student insight and student interest.

We must be a sustainable, effective and credible organisation in order to provide services and advocate for students' interests successfully. Legitimacy must be earned and will be a key driver for success in both areas of impact.



### Our aims:

- To improve the academic and educational experience of students.
- To support and enhance the wellbeing of students.
- To strengthen and help create active and inclusive student communities.
- To facilitate the personal and professional development of students.
- To empower students to change the world around them.
- To challenge and reduce inequalities affecting students.
- To enable students to have fun.

### Our enablers:

- Great people and culture.
- Sustainable resources and infrastructure.
- Professional governance and strong democracy.
- Integrated and innovative technology.
- Effective and engaging communication.
- Comprehensive research, evidence and insight.
- A constructive relationship with the College at all levels.

### Our values:

- We act with integrity.
- We are democratic in our approach.
- We are inclusive in everything that we do.
- We are accountable for our work.
- We are ambitious in what we want to achieve.





# Role Overview

As Chair and part of the Imperial College Union Board of Trustees, you will be responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity. This includes ensuring the charity has a clear vision, ensuring financial stability and compliance with relevant governing documents, laws and regulatory guidelines.

## Responsibilities:

- Providing leadership for the whole Board

The Chair will need to be a leader who keeps full board focused on the organisation's mission, vision, and strategic direction, and ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation.

- Managing Director and President Relationship

The Chair should work in partnership with the Managing Director and Union President, sharing a common understanding of the organisation's goals and strategies. The Chair should also ensure that effective and productive relationships exist between the Board and all stakeholders.

- Board Conduct

The Chair will need to set a positive tone for board meetings. By modelling, articulating, and upholding the code of conduct that are outlined in the by-laws, the Chair must set a high standard for board conduct. The Chair should also take the lead in addressing issues regarding confidentiality, conflict of interest, and other pertinent board policies.



# Person Specification

Candidates need not meet all of the person specification criteria to apply. However, there is an expectation that all candidates will be able to demonstrate suitable knowledge and experience of being in a significant strategic leadership role.

## Skills and Experience

- Able to lead the Union in line with our mission, aims and values.
- Strong experience as a leader in a significant organisation.
- Good understanding of charity governance.
- Willing and able to work as part of the governance team and in collaboration with the managing director, president and senior wider leadership team.
- Able to lead organisations to inclusive and objective decision making.
- Experience of taking high-level decisions about the future of an organisation.
- Experience as a Trustee or leader during a time of significant growth and change.
- Previous experience as a Board Member.
- Strong Understanding of the voluntary sector, its context and how it operates.
- Extensive experience of working with high level stakeholders and managing relationships.

## Values and ways of working

- Excellent communication skills and an ability to persuade and influence to promote the interests of the union.
- An enthusiastic and energetic approach.
- Good listening skills and openness to others' views.
- Able to operate at a strategic level, bringing insight and interrogation to the development of organisational strategy.
- A facilitative style, keen and able to seek and hear the views of the entire Board.
- Strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.



## **COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

We are committed to increasing diversity and inclusion within Imperial College Union. This means reflecting critically on issues of diversity and inclusion within all that we do, identifying and taking appropriate actions to reduce inequality.

We welcome applications from anyone regardless of disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, religion or socio-economic background.

We are committed to inclusive working practices, and during the application process we commit to:

- Paying for childcare whilst you're attending an Imperial College Union interview.
- Paying for your travel costs to the office and back for interviews if they are held in person.
- Making any reasonable adjustments - for example ensuring we have sign language interpreters organised in advance if you'd like them.
- Providing this document in a Word document format readily available to download.
- Offering a first stage interview to disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the role.

If there is anything else you're concerned about or think we could provide, please let us know.



# Additional Information

**Term of office:** Trustees will serve an initial three-year term to be eligible for re-appointment for two additional terms of three years each. They will need to be ratified by both the Board of Trustees and a vote of our (all-student) Union Council.

**Time Commitment:** Up to six official Board meetings per year, plus additional duties. The estimated time commitment is at least 3 days per month.

**Location:** Due to current government guidelines around Covid-19, all meetings are currently being held remotely until further notice. Once staff are allowed on campus meetings, we will operate with a blended model, with physical meetings held at our offices in London, Beit Quadrangle, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB

**Remuneration:** The role of Trustee is unremunerated, however travel expenses directly incurred in the role as Trustee on official business can be reimbursed.

**Conflicts of Interest:** All candidates will be asked to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, and these will be discussed with the candidate to establish whether and what action is needed to avoid a conflict or the perception of a conflict.



# How To Apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of Imperial College Union if you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following:

- A detailed CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- A covering letter (maximum two sides) highlighting your suitability for the role and how you meet the person specification. Please note that the covering letter is an important part of your application.
- Details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of their relationship to you and over what period of time they have known you, referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.
- Diversity monitoring form - your data will be stored separately from your application and will at no time be connected to you or your application.

If you have any questions or would like to arrange a call to discuss the role please email [Imperial@inclusiveboards.co.uk](mailto:Imperial@inclusiveboards.co.uk) or call 0207 267 8369.

Please send your CV and cover letter to [Imperial@inclusiveboards.co.uk](mailto:Imperial@inclusiveboards.co.uk) by 23.59 23/05/2021.

First stage interviews ongoing with Inclusive Boards up to and including w/c 31/05/2021.

Please note the following provisional interview dates:

- Stakeholder panel discussion – 01/07/2021.
- Final decision panel interviews – 06/07/2021.

