**Societies General Meeting 3 – 31.01.24**

**Minutes**

Chair – Justyna Kardasz (VP Community)

Clerk – Erin Ross (Activities Coordinator)

**Start of meeting** 17.40pm

**Attendance**

Committee members are asked to sign in using a QR code onscreen

**Feedback**

There is also a QR code for a feedback form about society space on campus which members are encouraged to fill out

**Information**

**Budget update** – Societies Exec allocates societies funding from two different pots – £40k in general societies funding, and £15k in Arts & Culture funding

38% of the general pot has been spent to date, and 70% of the Arts & Culture pot has been spent

Societies should note that this Arts & Culture funding is available for all societies to apply for for activities related to the arts and/or culture

Justyna explains that there is also a further £15k of A&C funding which is reserved for a small number of specific societies and purposes – 68% of this has been spent

**Alumni Fund** – This university fund is currently open for applications from student groups, closing 9th April. Note this is during Easter break, so get working on your applications earlier

Justyna and Molly McHugh (VP Sport) sit on funding committee and are happy to be contacted by societies about applications

Highlights 2024 is also Strathclyde’s Diamond Jubilee year and the university is keen to showcase student activity – this is an opportunity for societies to put together unique event ideas and potentially gain extra funding to put them on. There is a form for proposals in Committee Resources. Again, reach out to Justyna or the societies team for support

**Other Funds**

Signposting to some of the funds available in the union – note that these are for individual students to apply to themselves, not through a society

<https://www.strathunion.com/support/money/financialsupport/>

<https://www.strathunion.com/support/participationfund/>

**Good Grant Request Examples**

Societies Exec brought up two recent examples of grant requests that were initially rejected, then approved following the societies meeting with their Socs Exec point of contact, redrafting with feedback and resubmitting

Application strengths included:

* Explanation given of why an external venue was sought
* Breakdown of costs and what part Socs Exec would be funding
* List of other funding avenues the society has accessed/tried
* Full evidence for the costs cited in the application
* All expected expenditure is listed and evidenced separately
* All expected income is also fully listed and evidenced
* Expected attendance is based on evidence

Karen Low (Socs Exec) gave more examples of cost comparison – if you’re buying equipment, show different versions you have found, explain why you chose this particular version, justify the cost if a higher-cost item is needed

Justyna stressed the need for advance planning – these societies allowed enough time between application and their event to work more on the application and resubmit

**Society Cycle**

Justyna talks through a timeline graphic showing the annual societies cycle

What’s coming up for societies:

* Need to hold your AGM and elect new committee in this semester (by end March)
* Next year’s Societies Exec will be elected at the Societies AGM (end March)
* Semester 3 (April & May) will be the handover period. Committees will be updated from outgoing to incoming. Incoming committee will complete and return updated Societies Policy & Constitution
* Final Socs Exec meeting is at the start of May, then they don’t meet again til end August. Get your grant applications in before the summer or plan them well over the summer so they get approved in August before term starts
* Committee and finance training will be held and made available during the handover period, over summer and in Semester 1. Committees need to complete training before accesssing society resources
* Prep that can be done over summer includes room booking requests, planning for big events and Freshers planning

Societies are directed to the Societies Policy and their Constitution to remind themselves of the steps they need to take to hand over and reaffiliate. Staff will also create a Handover folder in Committee Resources with all this information and next month’s newsletter will focus on handover prep

**Active & Engaged**

Some members aren’t sure what Active & Engaged is – this is the union’s award and reward scheme for societies being really active and involved

There are mini-badges and bronze, silver and gold tiers – each tier comes with prizes

Lots of the requirements are easy to meet and many societies will already have met them, but you need to [apply](https://www.strathunion.com/groups/badges/) with evidence by Friday 5th April for your activities for this year

There are lots of union activities to get involved in that ‘count’ for Active & Engaged – Sustainability Month in March, Charity Month events, wellbeing and other training opportunities – get in touch for ideas

Badges and tiers show up for members on union webpages, so they can see what the society is really good at and that this has been verified by members and the union

Shout-out to all the bronze societies:

* Book Club
* Camping and Outdoors Society
* EEE Society
* Engineers with Beers
* Google Developer Student Club
* Students for the Exploration & Development of Space
* Neurodiverse Students’ Association

And silver societies:

* University of Strathclyde Motorsport
* Strathclyde Musical Theatre Society
* Abercrombie & Stitch

**What’s coming up?**

**Charity Month**

February is Charity Month at the union – Socs Exec talk through this initiative to encourage societies to get involved in raising and giving

Societies can apply for Best Collaboration, Best Charity Engagement and Most Funds Raised for their events and activity throughout the month – there is a £250 cash prize per society for each category

Visit <https://www.strathunion.com/groups/charitymonth/> to apply by 29th February

**Elections**

[Spring elections](https://www.strathunion.com/elections/) will take place in February for 19 full- and part-time posts

Nominations are open until **Monday 19th February**, then voting opens on 26th February

This includes the union President, VP Community and 4 other VP roles which form the Student Executive – these are full-time, living wage-paid positions where you take a year out of your studies

There are also 12 part-time paid positions on Student Parliament, including faculty reps and inclusion reps

Role descriptions can be found on the Elections webpage. If you are interested in any role, you are encouraged to message the rep or VP who currently holds the post to find out more

**Sponsored Walk for Gaza**

Justyna highlights SUMSA & Strath Union have organised a fundraising walk on 18th February. All are welcome to join this walk of 25 miles, the length of the Gaza Strip, to raise money for Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP). The walk will take place twice – the route and more information can be found at the [event pages for the morning](https://strathunion.native.fm/event/sponsored-walk-for-gaza-morning/219825) and [afternoon/evening](https://strathunion.native.fm/event/sponsored-walk-for-gaza-afternoon/219826) walks

**Volunteering Discounts**

Justyna shares information about the [volunteer discount](https://www.strathunion.com/volunteering/volunteerdiscountcard/) that society committee members can get if they log 15+ volunteering hours on the Strath Union website. This is 10% off on all Union outlets

Students should first [log their hours](https://www.strathunion.com/volunteering/profile/), download the Bryks app and create an account and then come to Level 8 of the Learning & Teaching Building between 12-2pm to get the discount

For those who had already logged their hours, Erin validates Bryks discounts there and then

**Menti**

Members ask and respond to questions on Mentimeter:

* What do you struggle to find on the website? Themes are volunteer hour logging, training, key dates and some aspects of finance,
* Questions about Charity Month
* Justyna responded to some of the Menti feedback

**More upcoming events & activities**

* **Glasgow Goes Green** (10th-17th February): collaboration between all the Glasgow universities – events, stalls, workshops to get involved in
* **Volunteering Week** (12th-16th February): Volunteering Fair, letter-writing for Refuweegee, tree-planting
* **Rep Conference**:open to all reps, sessions including public speaking, careers, representation and more – look out for Strath Union webpage
* **Sustainability Month** (March): Sustainability Fair on 12th March with stalls available for societies, SOS UK, People and Planet, NUS UK, community organisations
* **Girls’ Night In:** Thursday 8th February, 6.30-10pm, Strathclyde Sport facilities are open for women only and free entry for members and non-members. On offer – activities like Learn to Lift, classes, clubs, pool
* **StrathActive**: [free social sport and active health programme](https://www.strathunion.com/strathactive/)
* **Responses to Strath Slavery Trade History**: sessions for student input week beginning 19th February – look out for more information

**Speak to your Intersoc Reps**

Members have opportunity to chat to their point of contact on [Societies Exec](https://www.strathunion.com/groups/societies-exec/) to ask questions about Charity Month, Sustainability Month, Active & Engaged or anything else or to raise any issues or concerns including non-emergency welfare concerns