



# College Students' Associations Realising Our Potential

## Opportunities and Ideas

Sometimes when you're staring at a blank piece of paper, trying to figure out where you want to take your students' association this year, it can be hard to know where to start. NUS has a variety of resources, projects, and initiatives available which can help you get your year off to a running start!

In this pack you will find:

- Information on various NUS and sparqs developed resources or networking opportunities to help you develop your students' association and your ideas. This includes some resources aimed specifically at students' association staff.
- Information on NUS run projects and initiatives which you can get involved in. They offer a great way of getting additional support and resources, as well as links to other students' associations who you can swap ideas with, to help you deliver your priorities.

This isn't a comprehensive list, and NUS is developing new projects and resources all the time. If there's an area of work you're interested in please get in touch and we'll see if there are any projects we can link you to!

## **Sparqs Resource Library**

The Resource Library contains an ever-growing range of examples about student engagement in quality - from shaping learning to institutional governance. You are welcome to search for useful resources that can help you reflect on and enhance your own practice; and of course we encourage you to submit your own examples of effective practice to help expand and share the sector's wealth of knowledge.

We keenly welcome ongoing submissions to the Resource Library of effective practice from throughout the sector - and indeed from throughout the world.

Whether it's a clear and concise course rep job description, a well-designed module evaluation form that renders you really meaningful ideas from students, a representative training programme, a research project, or case study on major institutional change, we'd love to add it.

The Resource Library, and information on how to contribute, can be found here:  
<http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resources.php>

## NUS and NUS Scotland: Training and Resources

### Student Opportunities Webinars

Every month, NUS' Student Opportunities team deliver a 'lunch and learn' webinar about a different Student Opportunities topic. Past webinar topics have included developing recreational sport, getting rid of bureaucracy, supporting students of faith and belief, and increasing participation. These sessions are completely free of charge and are available to both staff and officers in students' associations.

More information about these webinars, including future dates and topics, can be found [here](#).

### Student Opportunities Resource Hub

[www.studentopportunities.nus.org.uk](http://www.studentopportunities.nus.org.uk)

This website holds briefing documents, guidance notes and training plans covering topics relating to Student Opportunities; clubs, societies, volunteering, student fundraising, student media, enterprise, and employability.

### The Learner Rep Hub

The Learner Rep Hub reflects the journey of a learner representative, making your search for relevant information and guidance to develop learner voice and learner engagement in your organisation easy and accessible.

- Navigate our three sections for each step of the Learner Rep journey; Engage, Develop, and Impact
- Before beginning your search watch our introductory animations to get an overview of each section
- Search documents with key words, by date of upload, or by number of "likes" – hit the heart button if you want to recommend a resource to others
- Add your documents and resources to The Hub Community section and continue to share good practice throughout the FE and Skills Sector
- Stay connected and follow us on Twitter and Facebook and receive updates when new documents are shared on our site

The website will be launched in late summer. To register an interest please sign up here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1m21xHpxSQWGwd1CZFg7xuupyBUtkE2TTdOg5hLp4H9s/edit?usp=sharing>

## JISCMails

NUS facilitates a number of mailing lists which students and association staff can join. They're a great way to get ideas, share learning, and ask for advice. For example, if you were planning to run a campaign for the first time, or wanted to try and make your course rep system more effective, you could email the list and get advice from college officers and students' association staff from all over the country. The most relevant mailing lists are:

- FE Officers** - for college student officers from all across the UK
- FE Student Governors** - for student governors from all across the UK
- FE SSLO** - for staff that support students' unions from all across the UK
- Presidents** - for all presidents across all the UK
- College SA Staff Scotland** - for college students' association staff in Scotland

To join a JISCMail please follow the following steps:

1. Email [LISTSERV@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:LISTSERV@jiscmail.ac.uk)
2. Leave the subject line blank
3. In the main text body type:  
SUBSCRIBE listname forename surname  
i.e. SUBSCRIBE FE-OFFICER Joe Bloggs
4. Choose from FE-OFFICER, FE-STUDENT-GOV, FE-SSLO, or PRESIDENTS
5. To join the College SA Staff Scotland list please email [charlotte.lawley@nus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:charlotte.lawley@nus-scotland.org.uk) and ask to be added.

## College Students' Association Staff Network

Partnerships for Change runs a network for college association staff. The network aims to give SA staff a way to come together, ask questions, and share their experiences. Supporting students' associations is a unique and often challenging job, and having the opportunity to network with peers in the same position is valuable. Meetings include both training delivered by NUS, and the opportunity for open discussions and networking. The content of the meetings is shaped by the requests of members. So far the meetings have covered preparing and running elections, engaging apprentices, and officer induction. All materials from the meetings are uploaded here: <http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/partch.php?page=319>

The Scotland SA Staff JISCMail above is linked with this network.

If you would like to get involved in this network, or if you have suggestions for topics, please get in touch with [kate.byford@nus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:kate.byford@nus-scotland.org.uk).



## Developing Good Campus Relations: Faith and Belief training Monday 1 September 2014- Tuesday 2 September 2014

**Following the success of the first faith and belief residential training last year and in response to demand we are offering a stimulating 2 day residential training programme tailor-made based on consultation and feedback from you.**

This training is strongly recommended for all officers and staff regardless of experience.

We will be presenting two days of thought provoking and challenging training sessions to support unions to become more confident in managing faith and belief issues and helping to promote good campus relations.

We will be running training sessions on:

- Tackling Hate Crime,
- Conflict resolution
- Managing risk around external speakers understanding your legal responsibility
- Facilitating dialogue
- Tackling Far Right Extremism
- Faith and sexuality
- Community Organising

This event has been heavily subsidised to reduce the costs to unions therefore **spaces are limited**. Accommodation will be available for Monday 1 September. **The cost per person to attend is £85.00 + VAT.**

**You can register for the event [here](#).**

For more information on either event please contact Sukhi [Sukhi.Kainth@nus.org.uk](mailto:Sukhi.Kainth@nus.org.uk) or Sean [Sean.Turnbull@nus.org.uk](mailto:Sean.Turnbull@nus.org.uk) in the Campus Cohesion, Faith and Belief team.

## Faith and Belief Initiatives Funding 2014 - 2015 now open

NUS is pleased to announce the Faith and Belief Initiatives are now open for application for the third year running. The Faith and Belief Initiatives fund students' unions and societies to create innovative interfaith activities throughout the academic year.

This year we've added a new pot of money just for longer term Social Action projects which look at engaging your community beyond the campus, there'll be up to **£1000** available for these projects. The rest of the funding will be used to for interfaith projects throughout the year with up to **£500** available for successful applicants.

For more information about the types of projects we will fund and about how to apply click [here](#). The closing date for applications is **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August at 5pm**. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

For any queries regarding the Faith and Belief Initiatives please contact **Sean Turnbull, Project Officer (Campus Cohesion, Faith and Belief)** at [sean.turnbull@nus.org.uk](mailto:sean.turnbull@nus.org.uk).

## What is Green Impact Students' Union?

Green Impact started working with students' unions in 2006, and now we have over 100 students' unions taking part every year completing over . For decades students' unions have been at the forefront of social and environmental campaigning. But with the majority of students' unions not being metered for the utilities they use, and with sabbatical teams changing annually, many of our members struggled to get to grips with their own environmental impacts. Green Impact provides a practical framework (achievable, quantifiable actions in an online workbook format) for greening students' unions, covering actions around waste, travel, procurement, biodiversity, energy use, and student engagement. To see some of the actions completed by our students' unions look right!

### What's involved?

Students' unions compete to gain either a Working Towards, Bronze, Silver or Gold accreditation, by completing as many actions listed in our Green Impact workbooks as they can.

The programme is catered for both commercial and non-commercial students' union. The two workbooks for each programme can be accessed by the links below.

The commercial workbook

: [www.greenimpact.org.uk/GISUC](http://www.greenimpact.org.uk/GISUC) (login: [examplegisuc@nus.org.uk](mailto:examplegisuc@nus.org.uk) password: example)

The non-commercial workbook : [www.greenimpact.org.uk/GISUnc](http://www.greenimpact.org.uk/GISUnc) (login: [examplegisunc@nus.org.uk](mailto:examplegisunc@nus.org.uk) password: example)



Once you are signed up for the year you will receive access to our shared resource bank, email, phone based, webinar and workshop support, details of which will be sent through to you through our EANDE mailing list which you are automatically signed up to when you complete the application form. There will also be opportunities to find out about the work that other students' unions are doing to improve their sustainability.

After submitting your work in March you will receive either a face-to-face or online audit of your work. These are friendly visits, with the aim of providing you with the support that you need to achieve the award level that you want.

The programme culminates with our prestigious annual award ceremony, where top performing unions will receive special recognition. [Read about the Green Impact 2014 awards ceremony for students' unions here.](#)

### Key Dates

The timeline for GISU 2014/15 is as follows:

- GISU Launch - 14th July 2014
- GISU Intro Webinar 1 – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014 (13:00-14:00) – Invite to follow
- GISU Intro Webinar 2 - 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014 (13:00-14:00) – Invite to follow
- GISU at NUS Summer training – the Environment & Ethics team will be running sessions NUS summer training events. You can pick up information about GISU at any session run by the Environment & Ethics team, so turn up and ask your questions. More details will follow on the EANDE mailing list.



- GISU Sign Up Deadline - 15th August 2014
- Special Awards Launch - Late August
- Special Awards Sign Up Deadline - 19th December 2014
- Submit your workbook by 20th March 2015
- Submit your Special Awards entry by 20th March 2015
- Audits will take place in April and May
- Awards Ceremony July 2015

### How do I prepare?

Over the course of the next week and a half start having a think about who is going to be your union's driving forces for GISU. This year we are keen to find ways for students' unions to develop GISU in a way that truly suits the way that your organisation works. Here's a few stories to show how some students' unions have found new ways to organise their GISU work:

1) **Students volunteers as facilitators** – At Kings College London Students' Union last year, one of the Universities Environmental Management students, Rosie Bridger was recruited by the Union's General Manager Sital Gandesha to manage their GISU work. This turned out to be a really successful model with Rosie completing a useful placement to develop her knowledge of sustainability and the union getting a new enthusiastic individual involved to deliver their work. You can read more about Rosie's work [here](#).

2) **Cross students' union team approach** – University of Cumbria Students' Union are great at ensuring that they have student volunteers, student officers and staff members working on GISU. They divide up the work in relation to which areas they are all interested in and ensure that all individuals involved are invited to the audit. This helps to manage the workload, create a team support network and engage new individuals in the union's sustainability work.

3) **Student officer leader** – Fliss Newton at University of Brighton Students' Union has been leading their work for the last two years. Throughout this time she's motivated the team to complete lots of sustainability projects, gained lots of experience in managing sustainability projects and has been rewarded with a bronze GISU award for the union's efforts. It's a

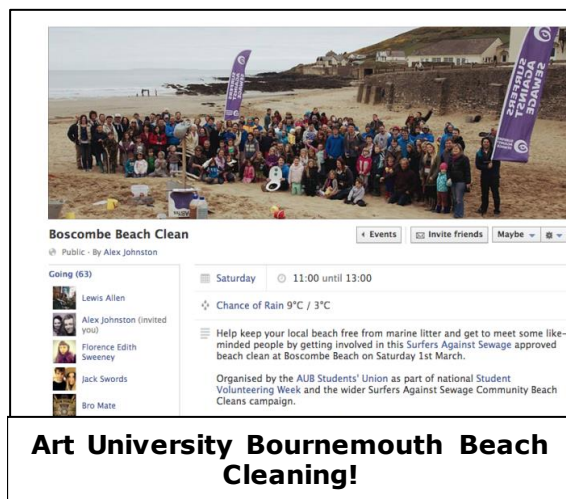
great approach for any students' union with an officer interested in this topic, who wants an opportunity to work with lots of individuals throughout the students' unions.

4) **Student forums** – Many students' unions have committees dedicated to driving sustainability projects. These are in the perfect position to complete your GISU work as they are committed to sustainability but are often unsure where to start on their work. A similar approach was taken by Worcester Technology College who commented in their audit, that they wished there was something similar for other areas of their work, because GISU was so helpful in giving their sustainability group something to work on.

If you would like to receive more information about the programme or have a chat with the programme coordinator please contact Laura Williams at [gisu@nus.org.uk](mailto:gisu@nus.org.uk) or call 07880190586.

Alternatively, you can visit our website:

<http://www.green-impact.org.uk/green-impact-students%E2%80%99-unions/>



### Art University Bournemouth Beach Cleaning!



### What will your team look like?





## Aspiring Women Leaders Programme 2015

### What's the programme about?

This five month women's leadership programme is for non-student staff and explores a range of areas to enable participants to develop and improve their leadership. Some of the topics covered include: leadership identity, career aspirations, resilience and leadership capability.

The programme also includes being mentored and is delivered by Aspire, an international and award winning leader in women's development, coaching and leadership.

### What impact will it have?

This transformational programme has already had a huge impact on those in the 2014 cohort. For example, participants have successfully applied for new jobs, including management roles, improved their confidence and taken up opportunities they wouldn't have done before the programme.

***"Thanks to the programme and my new found self-belief I am in a management role, that a few months ago, I wouldn't have even considered applying for....I cannot recommend this programme enough – all women working in students unions should take part."***

***"I can't begin to explain how amazing the Women's Aspiring Leaders programme is. It has helped me to be strategic and true to myself about my leadership journey."***

***"I've recently offered to set up and run a buddying scheme for the FE Learner Voice Practitioner Network and have also put myself forward as a buddy which I definitely wouldn't have done beforehand."***

### When will the programme start?

The application process will open in December 2014 and the programme will begin in March 2015. The cost will be £375 for the 5 month programme.

### How can I find out more?

To read further case studies from participants and find out more about the programme content, dates and how to apply please visit: **[nus.connect.org.uk/aspiringwomenleaders](http://nus.connect.org.uk/aspiringwomenleaders)**

You can also contact Mandeep Rupra-Daine, NUS Equality & Diversity Consultant:  
[mandeep@nus.org.uk](mailto:mandeep@nus.org.uk)

## Scotland Goes Global - Investing in Scotland's Global Future

Investing in Scotland's Global Future is a Scottish Government funded project led by NUS Scotland which complements and enhances existing work on student outward mobility carried out as part of the Scotland Goes Global project. The objectives of the project are to increase student outward mobility opportunities and encourage greater uptake of study abroad programmes by Scottish students. Given the increased competition for fewer job vacancies, there has been an increased interest in the role international experience plays in the enhanced employability of students. The project is supported by a steering group made up of the British Council, HEA, Universities Scotland, Scotland's Colleges, sparqs, Scottish Funding Council, QAA, Education Scotland and SCILT, Scotland's languages promotion body.



Through its previous work on student mobility, NUS Scotland has identified key barriers to the outward mobility of Scottish students. These barriers include: lack of short-term mobility windows, low provision of mobility windows in key subject areas, lack of institutional knowledge on mobility opportunities, low student knowledge on available mobility options, decline in young people learning languages and limited employer recognition of mobility skills and attributes.

The project seeks to address these barriers through three strategic themes: raising the profile of European mobility opportunities, fostering graduate attributes through mobility, and encouraging a partnership approach across the Scottish educational sector. Consequently, this is a wonderful opportunity for students' associations, as well as all involved in learning and teaching at colleges and universities, to help us shape and drive forward student mobility to the benefit of all students and colleges and universities.

Initiatives of the project that colleges and universities can engage with include:

- A student ambassador project that offers one hour training sessions for students on employability and study abroad
- A Scottish wide peer to peer mentoring scheme for students considering study abroad
- A Scottish wide employer to student mentoring scheme on using your international skills to find a job
- A hub website one stop shop for all you need to know on student mobility: [www.scotlandgoesglobal.co.uk](http://www.scotlandgoesglobal.co.uk)
- A suite of videos promoting the academic, social, employability and personal outcomes of taking up study abroad opportunities
- Dedicated staff support to help colleges promote the student mobility agenda within their institution

For more information on this project, please contact Helen O'Shea, or Catherine Thwaites [helen.o'shea@nus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:helen.o'shea@nus-scotland.org.uk) or [catherine.thwaites@nus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:catherine.thwaites@nus-scotland.org.uk) or at 0131 556 6598.

Follow us on Twitter: @ScotGoesGlobal

Like our page on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ScotlandGoesGlobal](http://www.facebook.com/ScotlandGoesGlobal)

## **Think Positive**

Think Positive is an NUS Scotland project aiming to improve student mental wellbeing and tackle the stigma and discrimination associated with mental ill health. Following five years of successful work, the project is now focusing on supporting associations and institutions to embed changes in the university and college setting that will improve student mental health as well as the experiences of students who are experiencing mental ill health. We are also looking to create a network of student activists with lived experience of mental ill health who will be supported to help end discrimination and stigma in Scotland.

In addition, a number of training opportunities are available throughout the year. Scotland's Mental Health First Aid training, Scotland's Mental Health First Aid: Young People training, mental health campaigns and activist skills training, and shorter tailored workshops can all be delivered on campus to staff and students.

If you'd like to arrange any training at your college or university please get in touch with [laura.caven@nus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:laura.caven@nus-scotland.org.uk) for more details.

## 'We Are The Change' Community Organising

Community organising is about doing leadership differently. It's about meeting people on their terms, in their space and listening to them. It's about supporting people to recognise and use the power that they already have. It's about bringing people together with a shared interest and common goal and letting them win for themselves using their collective power.

Perhaps your college association is looking for a new way to do campaigning that is accessible and relevant to all types of students? Community organising is a way of bringing along the 'rising stars' and providing them with a platform to make social change themselves.



And NUS wants to help you kick start this type of grassroots campaigning on your campus. There is an exciting new Innovation Fund available to apply for that can help you make community organising happen in your association. Also we can run training sessions for anyone keen to find out more and help you identify ways to integrate this new style of campaigning into your current approaches.

Why not get in touch to see if we can help you get organised at your association? For more information, please contact Jenny Batty ([Jenny.Batty@nus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:Jenny.Batty@nus-scotland.org.uk)).