

## Deputy Returning Officer – Role Profile

NUS is seeking to appoint a Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) with responsibility for encouraging participation in elections, ensuring free and fair elections at NUS and providing the means for voters to make well informed decisions.

This is an exciting year to join us as DRO. As part of our ambitions to Reform and open up our Democracy we have an ambition of bringing all of our elections online and to engage more voters digitally.

The DRO will support the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) in running NUS elections by implementing and delivering elections according to these principles. The postholder will be supported by a number of Returning Officers (ROs) charged with delivering individual elections.

It is expected that the postholder is actively involved in the running of elections and is on site at key election events to run elections and oversee counts.

The key responsibilities of the DRO are:

### Participation

- Work with the CRO and NUS Staff to ensure the effective publication and promotion of elections
- Engaging under-represented groups in NUS elections
- Championing digital participation in NUS Democracy and returning electronic elections
- Monitoring diversity of elections candidates

### Free and Fair Elections

- Work with the CRO to advise on and set election Regulations for all NUS elections in line with NUS UK's Articles and Rules
- Interpret the NUS UK Articles and Rules and escalate any key concerns and questions to the CRO as necessary
- Sign off on nominations and work with staff to manage this process
- Manage RO teams, especially at larger democratic events.
- Advise ROs on complaints to ensure consistency in decision making
- Making well informed, consistent and evidence based decisions
- Ensuring all complaints are formally logged and all appeals escalated to the CRO
- Reporting back on elections to the CRO

### Informed Decisions by Voters

- Ensure that relevant, useful candidate information is published ahead of each election
- Schedule and Chair Hustings and other opportunities for voters to meet candidates

### Person Specification

If you have an interest in membership organisations and a track record of returning or supporting the delivery of elections, the DRO role could be the volunteer role for you!

Essential qualities

- In depth knowledge of Single Transferable Vote (STV) and Alternative Vote (AV) elections
- Experience of students' unions or similar democratic membership organisations
- Understanding of elections conducted via electronic voting
- Flexibility to work in a Transition Year environment where significant changes are being made to democratic structures
- Experience of working in elections

- Confidence to interpret NUS's Articles and Rules and make Rulings
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to build strong working relationships with NUS staff and volunteers
- You will have an outstanding reputation for personal integrity and upholding the highest standards in fairness and impartiality.
- Commitment to equality and diversity

#### Desirable qualities

- An understanding of NUS Democracy
- Experience of using UnionCloud to administer elections
- An interest in students/the education sector and a willingness to learn

#### What we Offer

The chance to work with a variety of different people from different walks of life and make a real difference to students lives.

- Comprehensive induction and ongoing training
- A handover period
- A key staff contact to provide support
- A great opportunity to develop your existing skills and to gain new ones
- Meet like-minded people and work in a team
- Reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses

#### Expectations

The role is primarily there to lead and support the DRO and ROs to deliver elections and act as the final point of appeal. Therefore most contact would be remotely via phone, email or video conference.

Most contact would take place during the months of January to May where elections are taking place (though this could change with future democratic calendars). Whilst elections are taking place and particularly where these are being held at events we would expect more contact with the DRO. This will include remote phone/email support and attendance at key democratic events to oversee the Returning of elections.

In addition all Returning Officers will be expected to attend induction and training sessions including:

- Creating Equity at Work training
- Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia awareness

#### Recruitment Process

This position is appointed by the NUS UK Board and ratified by UK Conference. We want to ensure we get the right candidate and that this volunteering position is right for the successful postholder.

If you're interested in the role, but have further questions please feel free to email [democracy@nus.org.uk](mailto:democracy@nus.org.uk) to either ask questions or schedule a call with a member of the team to discuss further.

If you would like to apply for the role please email your CV and a brief Cover Letter to [democracy@nus.org.uk](mailto:democracy@nus.org.uk) by 30 August 2019

The panel will then shortlist and invited shortlisted candidates to interview. The aim of the interview process is to discuss the role further in a relaxed, informal setting to let candidates know about the position, answer questions and find out more about you as a candidate. Interviews will be held week commencing 5 September 2019

The successful candidate will have their appointment confirmed by the Board. This will need to be ratified by UK Conference so the candidate can serve beyond this year.

The Panel is made up of:

- Zamzam Ibrahim, NUS National President
- Yousef El-Tawil, Student Director on NUS UK Board
- Thomas McNeil, External Director on NUS UK Board
- Uzma Arif-Fryer, SU Staff member

### **Equal Opportunities Statement**

We're committed to equality of opportunity for all. We welcome interest from individuals regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, age, gender, or disability.