

NUSUK long term international relations strategy 2014 – 2022

1. Aim

The overall aim of this strategy is to co-ordinate, develop and enhance NUSUK's international relations and reputation through fulfilling our expressed vision and values enabling students to engage in global human rights issues and help create a better world.

This paper will outline the:

- Vision
- Rationale and Values
- Brand Position
- Approach and Delivery
- Long term Objectives
- Resources
- KPI's and Measures
- Projects for 2015 - 2016

2. Vision

By 2022 NUSUK will be working collaboratively with partners at a global level to influence international decision makers on education, social justice, sustainability and peace. Students, student officers and students' union staff will be engaged in activities that will achieve our objectives in these areas as well enhancing their own personal development and cultural understanding. Students and student organisations will be seen as part of the solution to global challenges and their commitment to positive change and collaboration will stay with them throughout their lives

3. Rationale and values

*"If the students' of today are co-operating then there is hope for tomorrow"
(Iverson S. Macadam – founding President of NUS 1922)*

NUSUK seeks to work with other student organisations globally utilising the connections we already have but also being alert to new opportunities for co-operation. The Global Student Leaders Summit held in London in 2012 identified education as a public good, sustainability, social justice and peace as areas on which national student organisations could co-operate, seek to make a difference and campaign together for lasting, progressive change enabling students to shape the future of education and create a fairer society. In 2012 NUSUK committed to pursuing this agenda, we should be involved because:

- Our values of equality, democracy and collectivism do not stop at our borders to be dis-engaged would be counter to our organisational values and our historical roots to promote and sustain international co-operation and understanding, we cannot act in isolation from global issues.
- We have much to contribute and gain by working with others, no one organisation can hope to bring about lasting change without collaborating. We

should use greater global connectivity to share and learn from each other. All students have the power to transform the world.

- We recognise will be limited in our ability to create a fairer, more prosperous society if we act in isolation from global concerns and pressures.
- We believe that student's ability to drive change and shape the future needs to be applied at both a national and international level.
- We want students to thrive wherever they study and we will work with our students' union members to champion student causes supporting our fellow students who are subject to injustice, we will stand in solidarity with those experiencing repression and act as a champion of human rights.
- We will join with other national student organisations to make the case for increased investment in and access to education
- We will play our part in maintaining the United Kingdom's reputation as an international provider of tertiary education and stand against attempts to limit the mobility of students and academic staff, as well as promoting transferable qualifications
- We will work with our students' union members to ensure student participation in quality assurance and enhancement process in trans-national institutions
- We recognise the transformative impact of international experience and engagement on individual students, student organisations and NUSUK.
- We seek to develop sustainable behaviours amongst students because many of the environmental challenges we face can only be addressed through international co-operation.
- We believe that through engaging students in this way we will help foster in them progressive values on peace, social justice, sustainability and education developing "Global Citizens" who will seek to forger a better world and who will champion such approaches in their future lives and careers.
- We recognise that our experience and values as requested can support the developmental capacity of other national student organisations through mutual commercial activity and partnerships.
- We have an opportunity to generate income and additional capacity that will enhance opportunities for students studying the UK and those who choose to study abroad
- We believe that if NUSUK can inspire our future leaders to approach global issues in a collective and collaborative way then we will have played and will continue to play a part in bringing about positive and progressive change

4. Brand position

<i>Scope: What area of activity are we in?</i>	Ensuring students can thrive no matter where they are studying
<i>Status: What status do we want to achieve?</i>	Championing students at a national and international level
<i>Ambition: What is our heart-felt ambition?</i>	Shaping the future of education to help create a fairer, prosperous society on a global level
<i>Ethos: What are the principles behind our actions?</i>	Representing the reality of students' lives Passionate about the power of students to drive change and to continue to drive change in their future lives
<i>Style: How do we go about our business?</i>	Pragmatically provocative Insightfully authoritative Energetically inspiring
<i>Response: What impression do we want to create?</i>	Student voices united internationally
<i>Focus: What is our basis for making decisions</i>	By students, with student, from students' unions

5. Approach and delivery

We should recognise that since the demise of NUSUK's international department in 1984 our approach to international relations has been inconsistent and lacking in influence. Our record on solidarity and human rights by contrast is one to be proud of, particularly our campaign work on Southern Africa and Chile, more recently however we have tended to focus on domestic issues. We believe there is an appetite amongst students and young people to create a better world and that student organisations provide the infrastructure through which they can engage in issues of human rights, liberation and social justice. Our expressed values are universal and should not be afraid to stand alongside our fellow students in the struggles and barriers they may face. To rebuild our international reputation and implement our strategy between now and 2022 there are three key phases:

Phases	Activity
<u>Phase One:</u> Develop relationships with national student organisations in particular the European Students' Union, the Commonwealth Students' Association and the Association of College Unions International	Providing consistent representation to the identified partners as well as developing new relationships and channels of communication to enable us to develop cross Global co-operation and joint projects that help to develop our aims.
<u>Phase Two:</u> Develop and enhance our credibility with our international partners through participation in and contribution to policy discussions and professional development	Taking part in working groups, communities of practice and policy development processes, developing a reputation for reliability and a collective approach and to explore areas for co-operation
<u>Phase Three:</u> Developing partnerships that help both NUSUK and our international colleagues take forward and develop work on peace, social justice, sustainability and education	Applying for funds to deliver joint initiatives and forming alliances to tackle specific issues of concern to students everywhere.

Of course the pace at which the different strands of work will progress will vary, some will be at phase three whilst others remain at phase one. We will go about making change by:

- Understanding the experiences and concerns of students at an international level
- Organising campaigns that impact on international issues that engage the public, membership and students
- Being responsive to international policy agendas
- Advising students' unions about ways in which they and their members can engage in global solidarity
- Supporting students to understand the importance of human rights, global co-operation and cultural understanding

Each year an annual plan for the six work areas will be produced and progress towards agreed objectives will be monitored by quarterly meetings of the NUSUK International Relations Group (IRG). Our approach needs to bring together colleagues working across the NUSUK group. Members of the IRG will include elected officers as agreed by President (usually the VP Higher Education, VP Society and Citizenship, International Students Officer) members of the Policy Team, Sustainability Team, Union Development Team, Nations (officer and staff), and Communications Team along with colleagues from Enterprise and Engagement and other individuals as circumstances require. It is important that our representation is consistent so that we can build trust and effective relationships with international student organisations. Our representatives should be briefed on international issues and be sensitive to cultural differences. We should seek to engage students from abroad studying in the UK in helping us to develop our global contacts.

6. Long term objectives

There are six main work areas.

Project Area	Outcome	Features
IRG1: Work with the European Students' Union.	<i>NUSUK will be playing a stronger role within ESU learning from other national unions, contributing to European wide policy development and discussions whilst creating mutually beneficial partnership opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular input into policy development at a European level • Mutual exchange of expertise and support in campaigns • Collaboration on projects and commercial opportunities and partnerships • UK officers serving on ESU committees and working groups
IRG2: Work with the Commonwealth Students' Association	<i>NUSUK will have supported the creation and development of the CSA, and will be contributing to discussions and policy development as well as developing mutually beneficial partnership opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in capacity development • Mutual exchange of expertise and support in campaigns • Collaboration on projects and commercial opportunities and partnerships • UK officers participating in CSA structures
IRG3: Work with the Association of College Unions International	<i>NUSUK will have strong links with ACUI and NUS members will be participating their events and programmes, exchanging good practice and promoting professional development.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange visits and shadowing for NUSUK and ACUI staff • Attendance and engagement at ACUI conferences, seminars and webinars • Information exchange and support on human rights issues
IRG4: Develop and Maintain International Partnerships and Collaborations	<i>NUSUK will be continually seeking out new partnerships and opportunities with like-minded international organisations around capacity building and collaboration on peace, social justice, sustainability and education.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting initiatives to enhance student representation in other countries • Working with students' organisations across the globe on campaign areas of mutual interest • Collaboration on projects, commercial opportunities and partnerships (ISIC and EYC being one example)
IRG5: Solidarity and Human Rights	<i>NUSUK will continue to work collaboratively to challenge human rights abuses across the globe and will have developed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student organisations will work together to influence international decision makers • UK students will access

	<i>opportunities for our members to express their solidarity and campaign for change</i>	information on human rights issues and being able to support campaigns in a way of their choosing through NUSUK's communication channels
IRG6: Administration and Infrastructure	<i>To enable all the above work to happen we will ensure an adequate organisational infrastructure and appropriate levels of resource</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officer buy in and adequate staff support • Agreed budget allocation for internationalisation • A series of credible and successful funding bids • More staff support for international affairs

7. Resources

At present financial resources are spread across several budget areas so any objective analysis of our investment in internationalism is difficult, in the first year of the new Directorate of Devolved Nations and Internationalism a new budget area will be created based on expenditure in 2014 – 2015 for 2015 – 2016, this is estimated at £50,000. A key part of the strategy anticipates seeking out external funds for projects that will both assist our students' union members and contribute to building our internal capacity. The main staff allocation is the Director of Devolved Nations and Internationalism (40-45% of their capacity) and the International Policy Officer whose work is primarily to support our work with international students studying the UK, but will at times touch on our international relations strategy. Time allocation for elected officers is less easy to calculate, and will vary from year to year and according to priorities, however once appointed it is important to ensure they understand the percentage time commitment required.

The International Relations Group will draw in colleagues across the group as and when required to help deliver the projects and activities outlined below. Key team members will be drawn from the Policy Team, Sustainability Team, Enterprise and Engagement, Communications Team and the Union Development team.

8. KPI's and measures

Key target	NUSUK influences policy at a European level on widening access and liberating the curriculum		Key target	Students' Unions will be able to access information on key human rights struggles on which NUS has policy via NUS Connect
Key target	NUSUK publishes a review on the state of student governance in Commonwealth		Key target	Reports from all international work to be placed on NUS Connect with hyperlinks to further information and resources
Key target	NUSUK delegates participate in ACUI events and produce a development report on key learning that can be applied to our work		Key target	NUSUK submits a successful funding bid based on internationalisation or trans-national education
KPI	100% attendance by NUSUK delegates at meetings of the European Students' Union -	60%	KPI	60% of students surveyed agree that there should be a forum for students who care

	NSO feedback is positive about NUSUK engagement			about creating a better world to work together?
KPI	NUSUK is involved in support the development of at least two National Student Organisations	60%	KPI	60% of students surveyed agree NUS should work with NSO's on education at a global level
KPI	At least 30 unique users click through to the NUS Connect International section	80%	KPI	80% of NUSUK delegates to international events feel supported

Green indicates that the target or KPI has been achieved, yellow that it is work in progress and white that the work has not yet started.

Other more general measures are:

- NUSUK has a strong international voice – other national students unions agree we are influential
- Delegates to international events feel supported
- Students' Union members are aware we members of international organisations and that we are engaged with international activity

9. Projects and activities 2015 - 2016

Work Area	Projects
IRG1: Work with the European Students' Union.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in ESC 30 and 31 • Participate in ESUBM 69 and 70 • Contribute to the ESU International Relations Working Group • Develop information and a campaign plan to oppose withdrawal from the European Union • Investigate the feasibility of hosting an ESC or ESUBM in 2017 • Continue to support the SIEHEKU Project in Kosovo • Continue to support the ESPAQ project in Armenia (sparqs)
IRG2: Work with the Commonwealth Students' Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up the student governance report and finalise the publication • Engage in agreed activities following the inaugural CSA conference • Contribute to the information sharing website for the CSA
IRG3: Work with the Association of College Unions International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate meetings of the Sustainability Community of Practice • Participate in the Region VIII Conference • Participate in the ACUI Annual Conference • Encourage and promote UKSU membership of ACUI
IRG4: Develop and Maintain International Partnerships and Collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a funding bid for increased capacity and support for the internationalisation of students' unions • Develop a funding bid to research UK institutional involvement with trans-national education • Monitor the commercial opportunities provided through working with ISIC • Investigate the benefit and feasibility of joining OBESSU

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch Students Organising for Sustainability • Participate in AASHE Conference
IRG5: Solidarity and Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a transparent process for decision making and research around requests for solidarity • Develop NUS and students' union input on supporting the Human Rights Act • Create links to organisations supported by NUS who are fighting injustice • Ensure Human Rights input into the Society and Citizenship Zone Conference
IRG6: Administration and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a meeting of the International Relations Group in each quarter • Develop a communications plan for international relations work • Develop clear procedures for participation and representation at an international level