



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Candidate Pack
August 2022



INTRODUCTION

We are the University of Southampton Students' Union (SUSU) and are here to represent students at every level at the University of Southampton and to make their university experience unforgettable. Independent from the University, we're run by students, for students.

We are a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, with over a 100 years' worth of history. We are proud to be an integral part of a prestigious **UK Russell Group & top 100 global university**.

We are committed to being the voice of our students, creating a memorable University experience and opportunities to form friendships and communities, providing support in challenging times, being a healthy and sustainable organisation, and an employer of choice.

Over the last two years, despite and partially thanks to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, we have consolidated and transformed in terms of our offer, approach, and robustness. Our relationship with the University has never been stronger, and we have ambitious work planned in the areas of sustainability, equity, diversity & inclusivity, and student engagement.

Our new Chief Executive will have the exciting opportunity to lead our fantastic team of around 250 members of staff, many of whom are students, who have been part of the transformational journey over the past two years.

The next stages in our journey will include work in the following exciting areas:

- the delivery of **Ambition 2025**, our current strategy to ensure that **every student loves their time at Southampton**, and its supporting strategies
- continuing to strengthen our relationship with the University, whilst maintaining our independence
- supporting each year's Sabbatical Officers team with successfully delivering their **manifestos**
- working with the University to refurbish our buildings, creating exciting spaces to serve our staff and students for the future
- embedding robust organisational governance and future ways of working throughout SUSU
- rebuilding and enhancing our Social Enterprise offer through our various outlets, events, and activities

We are therefore looking for a new Chief Executive who will work with a team of Senior Leaders, Sabbatical Officers, University and external stakeholders, colleagues, and the Board of Trustees to lead SUSU on the journey to achieving our ambitious aims. They will build on the success achieved by the previous Chief Executive, whilst continuing to improve and develop our operations, governance, and people.

If you are ready to join us on our journey then please read on. We look forward to discussing your application with you very soon.

Best wishes,

Oliver Murray
Union President 22/23 and Chair of Trustee Board

Rebecca Self
Deputy Chair of Trustee Board

ABOUT US

Key information about our view of the world and our place in it, taken from our current strategy, is shown below, whilst general information about SUSU, including our history, finances, governance and strategy is also available [here](#).

OUR VISION...is that every student loves their time at Southampton.

OUR PURPOSE

...is to:

- help students form friendship groups
- support students to complete their degree programmes
- help students have a great time at University
- give students a voice in the University and wider community

OUR BELIEF...is that

every student at Southampton should:

- feel part of a community and feel happy and safe
- experience a world-class academic programme
- be able to access top quality experiences outside the curriculum
- feel listened to, able to shape their University experience and influence the world around them

OUR MISSIONS

...are the work we do to deliver our purpose; they are to:

- strengthen student voice
- grow and nurture student communities
- create a memorable student experience
- support students to compete their studies
- be a strong and sustainable organisation

OUR VALUES

Our Values inform how we work and behave and what we stand for. They are:



STAND STRONG - We stand up for students and make sure their voice is heard. We stand strong when facing challenges and are not afraid to be different. We think big and work to achieve great things.

JOIN TOGETHER - We are an inclusive and diverse community of students and staff. We join together with each other, the University, and the local community to make a positive difference.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY - We take action on the issues that matter to students and act with integrity. We continually work to be more sustainable, challenge discrimination and prejudice. We strive to be a force for good for students and wider society.

OUR STUDENTS' UNION

A Students' Union plays a very special role in supporting and adding to each and every student's university experience, even if they don't always know it. There are four main areas that SUSU is able to do this:

1. REPRESENTATION

Completely independent of the University we are here to ensure that students have a voice in their educational experience and we do that through many different ways. To start with, we have network of elected students placed throughout the infrastructure of the University system to support students at all levels of study with a wide range of problems and concerns. These roles include Course Reps, Faculty Officers and School Presidents,

dealing with everything from concerns about lectures to requests for better facilities or timetable issues. A more detailed explanation is available [here](#).

But our representation reaches beyond the academic experience and supports the wider student experience. We are run by students, for students and that starts with some key roles within the SUSU infrastructure itself. Each year five Sabbatical Officers are elected to represent the voice of the student body with particular focus on the following areas: Union President, VP Education & Democracy, VP Welfare & Community, VP Sports & VP Activities. For more information available [here](#).

But the involvement of students doesn't end there, we also have a Senate to oversee the work of our Officers and to support the requests of our student members. And finally, we have our Student Trustees who alongside our Sabbatical Officers are on our Board of Trustees and influence the work of SUSU from the very highest level.

We recognise that this is a very unique way of working but as a membership led organisation this allows us to work with true authenticity and focus.



2. ACTIVITIES

For those who went to university, when they reflect back, it is unlikely that they will remember a specific lecture or module of work but they will remember the club that they joined and the friends that they made. Our Activities Team run over 300 clubs and societies ranging from your traditional Football, Netball and Cricket through to the slightly less known like Ultimate Frisbee or Quidditch. Our societies cover a wide range of hobbies, interests, faiths, cultures and countries, supporting the needs and interests of our diverse student membership.

3. SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Very few Unions are complete without a student pub or place for students to call 'home' and we have that in abundance. Our Social Enterprise Directorate has been running bars, catering and retail operations on the Highfield campus of the University for many decades. With a new business strategy and the challenges being faced following the pandemic, this part of the organisation is more than ever crucial to the successful engagement with our students.

Our Social Enterprise offering (generating an annual revenue of circa £5M) includes:

- **The Cube** - an entertainment venue used for live entertainment, as a cinema, for lectures and as a nightclub;

- **SUSU Shop** - a large convenience store;
- **The Locker** - a clothing and merchandised goods store;
- **The Plant Pot** - a catering outlet;
- **The Bridge** - a coffee shop;
- **The Stags & Below Deck** - a range of bars with integral food offers.

In addition to all of the above, SUSU runs a Business Development programme that links up with local and national partners to build awareness of product and services relevant to our students. We also offer a packed events programme to deliver student specific day and night-time activities and a popular lettings agency.

4. SUPPORT

The university experience is like no other and with it comes challenges that most haven't faced before. As a Students' Union we offer all our students independent advice on areas such as finance, academic support, and housing through our Advice Centre.

Our support stretches beyond this and covers other areas such as Student Safety, Participation, Sustainability and EDI to name a few.

Although this section may appear small in comparison to the other areas, supporting students is a top priority for us here at SUSU, and is at the heart of everything we do.



JOB DESCRIPTION

OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE POST:

- Develop and maintain positive and mutually beneficial relationships with University stakeholders and other strategic partners locally and nationally
- Work with the Board of Trustees to ensure the effective leadership and governance of the organisation.
- Development and subsequent implementation of organisational strategy, supporting strategies, and operational plans for the organisation.
- Provide effective strategic and operational leadership and management of people, finance, health and safety, and organisational risk

Post Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Reports to:	The Board of Trustees
Location:	Southampton (Highfield Campus) with flexibility for some home working
Direct Reports:	Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Marketing & Events
Other people post holder works closely with:	The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Board of Trustees; Board Committee Chairs; the Sabbatical Officers; Members of the Board of Trustees; Senior University Management; Local Government Officers and Members; chief executives of other local students' unions; senior management of local agencies and organisations.

MAIN DUTIES

Develop and maintain positive and mutually beneficial relationships with University stakeholders and other strategic partners locally and nationally

- To develop strong and mutually beneficial relationships with University stakeholders, working collaboratively with senior University colleagues to design and deliver joined-up services for students but also challenging constructively as appropriate.
- To support student officers and wider management to work collaboratively with University colleagues, leading a culture of partnership work with the University, whilst maintaining SUSU's independence and role in representing students to the University.
- To develop productive partnerships with local and regional organisations and the Russell Group SUs to deliver partnership projects, increase impact, share best practice, pool resources and create efficiencies.
- To provide mentoring, support, and guidance to the Union President, working to ensure they can carry out their duties effectively

Work with the Board of Trustees to ensure the effective leadership and governance of the organisation.

- To work with the Board of Trustees to ensure adherence to a robust governance framework for the Union, empowering trustees to govern effectively through appropriate support and challenge, effective communication, and enabling trustees to engage at a strategic level through the effective management of operational activity.
- To lead and provide overall direction to SUSU's staff team through the Senior Leadership Team and Senior Management Team.
- To support and empower the Sabbatical Officers, advising them on the implications of their decisions and supporting them to align their ambitions with the Union's Strategy and in relation to statutory and constitutional constraints.
- To provide strategic leadership and oversight of the organisation's commercial and non-commercial services, in line with the vision, purpose, strategy, and values of the Union.
- To lead the development of a high performing culture, which embeds and supports delivery of the Union's values, purpose and plans.
- To manage the interface between the democratic, governance and operational aspects of the Union, ensuring effective implementation of policy, procedures, and plans.

Development and subsequent implementation of organisational strategy, supporting strategies, and operational plans for the organisation.

- To lead the implementation of existing strategy and future development as needed, ensuring students and key stakeholders are consulted and engaged in its development.
- To lead development of appropriate supporting strategies, which assist in delivery of the business strategy.
- To promote and champion SUSU's values, purpose and stated culture and commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity
- To oversee the development of organisational and departmental operating plans to facilitate delivery of the business strategy and underpinning strategies.
- To ensure a robust performance management framework is in place to ensure delivery of operating plan objectives.
- To ensure effective planning, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and impact measurement is implemented across the organisation.
- To remain abreast with knowledge and trends in the student movement, Higher Education and wider society to inform organisational strategic direction and services

Provide effective strategic and operational leadership and management of people, finance, health and safety, and organisational risk

- To lead and manage the Senior Leadership Team to achieve their potential, in line with policies covering the full range of staff management issues, including recruitment, induction and probation, personal development, performance management, and absence management.
- To lead the undertaking of Union-wide activities and foster collaborative working between directorates and departments.
- To oversee, via delegated budget holders, the budget for the Union; total turnover amounts to circa £7million.
- To maintain financial controls and systems and ensure budgets are managed effectively, in accordance with the Union's financial procedures.
- To ensure long-term financial forecasts are developed and to lead negotiation with the University over grant funding.
- To ensure the effective management of people, finance, risk, and compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements, and in line with policies determined by the Board of Trustees and Union Senate.
- To hold the ultimate responsibility for the health and safety in the organisation
- To promote and champion professional behaviour and personal integrity and work for the benefit of the entire organisation and its members
- To drive own continuous professional development, ensuring personal knowledge and skills are updated to ensure ongoing personal effectiveness.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential requirements should be demonstrated before appointment and maintained in post. Desirable elements should be developed and maintained once in post as needed.

1. Qualifications	Essential	Desirable	Tested at Interview	Tested at Application
Educated to <i>degree</i> level		X		X
Generalist <i>management</i> qualification (e.g. MBA, Diploma in Management Studies)		X		X
<i>Health & safety</i> management qualification (e.g. IOSH Certificate in Managing Safety)		X		X
Membership of a relevant <i>professional</i> body (e.g. CMI or ILM)		X		X
2. Experience				
Substantial <i>management and leadership</i> experience including at a senior level in a complex organisation	X		X	X
A record of successful <i>financial management</i> , including substantial budgets, interpretation of complex information and business planning	X		X	X
A track record of leading the formulation and delivery of <i>corporate and strategic plans, objectives, and policies</i>	X		X	X
Experience and demonstrable success in the <i>generation and management of major organisational change</i>	X		X	X
A track record of leading <i>multi-disciplinary</i> teams to achieve significant improvement and outstanding results	X		X	X
Experience of <i>developing and sustaining a culture</i> that engages and meets the needs of customers and staff in a high performing environment	X		X	X
Evidence of success in <i>building and enhancing the reputation</i> of an organisation with external bodies	X		X	X
A record of forging <i>partnerships</i> and engaging with a range of internal and external stakeholders at a senior level	X		X	X
Experience of building constructive working relationships in a <i>political, democratic or membership-led</i> environment		X	X	X
Experience of <i>managing large and complex contracts</i> , including tendering, to achieve organisational objectives		X	X	X
3. Knowledge				
Comprehensive knowledge of <i>relevant regulation and legislation</i> , in particular charity, education, and employment law	X		X	X
A good knowledge of best practice in the <i>management of health and safety</i>	X		X	X
A sound understanding of best practice in <i>human resource management</i>	X		X	X

PERSON SPECIFICATION cont.

A thorough knowledge of best practice in <i>financial management</i>	X		X	X
A comprehensive understanding of best practice in <i>performance management</i>	X		X	X
A sound understanding of <i>effective governance</i> in not-for-profit organisations	X		X	X
Awareness of the structures and systems in, and current issues affecting, <i>Higher Education</i>		X	X	X
4. Skills and Abilities				
Ability to <i>operate effectively</i> in a complex environment, with the political skills and acumen to develop productive relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders	X		X	
<i>Skilled and committed user of IT</i> , enabling efficiencies and improved service through the use of technology	X		X	
Ability to <i>think clearly, corporately, and strategically</i> , gain commitment to a clear vision and mission, and deliver results	X		X	
Excellent <i>networking, presentation, oral and written skills</i> , with the ability to relate to and communicate effectively with people at all levels	X		X	
Sound <i>judgement</i> and ability to handle competing priorities and a challenging workload in a pressurised environment	X		X	
A <i>confident and resourceful manager</i> who can operate in a complex multi-disciplined environment, and who has credibility because of what they do and how they do it	X		X	
5. Values and Behaviors				
Evidence of personal commitment to <i>continuing professional development</i>	X		X	
A <i>personal and strong commitment to equality of opportunity</i> ; a leader who builds a culture of inclusivity and removes barriers to diversity	X		X	
A <i>team player</i> who helps others build a successful team, celebrates others' success, and supports others to achieve goals	X		X	
An <i>effective manager and leader</i> who is energetic, determined, robust and resilient enough to cope with the demands of the role	X		X	
An excellent <i>role model</i> who promotes high standards of probity, integrity and honesty and commands trust and confidence	X		X	
A deep commitment to working in a <i>member-led organisation</i> , with the ability to build constructive relationships with elected officers	X		X	

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Location: Southampton (Highfield Campus) with flexibility for some home working

Relocation package: a contribution of up to £4,000 towards relocation costs

Working Hours: As required to fulfil requirements of the role, but standard hours are 35 per week

Salary: £80-85K per annum

Annual Leave: 44 days (including statutory and customary days)

Pension: Defined contributory scheme with 10% employer contributions

Right to Work: If requiring a visa (such as a [Skilled Worker Visa](#)) to work in the UK, please note that SUSU is NOT a sponsoring organisation and is therefore not able to sponsor one for the candidate.

HOW TO APPLY

Should you wish to have an informal conversation about this role, please contact suhr@soton.ac.uk

To apply, please send a cover letter and CV to suhr@soton.ac.uk by **13:00 on 23 August 2022**.

The selection committee will meet to choose a shortlist **after applications close** with interviews and assessment days taking place between **05 and 16 September 2022**.