



Royal College of Science Union

End of year report

2021-2022 Executive Committee

Aparna Pillai (*President*)

Priantha Pretheshan (*VP of Activities*)

Tianyu Wen (*VP of Welfare*)

Trinity Stenhouse (*VP of Operations*)

Susan Rutter (*Treasurer*)

Nicolas Barykin (*VP of Education*)

Tharanyaa Bala (*Secretary*)



The Aims of the Royal College of Science Union:

1. *To further the community experience of UG and PG students in the RCSU by providing sporting, social and other recreational activities.*
2. *To build a stronger relationship between RCSU and departmental societies and the FoNS alumni association.*
3. *To represent the welfare and education needs and concerns of students.*

President's message

APARNA PILLAI

Recent Activity

The year has gotten off to a great start. We have seen a lot of engagement with the various events that we are hosting particularly the annual RCSU Pub crawl that saw more than 200 students participate, and the RCSU Autumn Ball that has sold out over 800 tickets. We are hoping that these events provide an opportunity for students to reconnect with their friends but also provide a platform that freshers from the last two years can use to meet people outside their usual subject bubble.

Further to this, we have been focussing on education and welfare representation as usual. We are focussed particularly on the shift back to in-person teaching and in-person assessments and making sure that students are comfortable with the transition.

We also have plans to introduce a careers conference as part of the activities run by the operations team, with Science Challenge going forward as usual. We have also launched a Sports league in the RCSU that should finally provide an opportunity for informal participation in a variety of sports for RCSU students. And finally, we are hoping to run another alumni event in the upcoming weeks as well as setting up a formal RCSU alumni board that can run in a self-sufficient way with minimal RCSU UG involvement. All in all, we have been making steady progress towards achieving the aims above and are constantly evaluating our progress and what we can improve.



Activities

PRIANTHA PRETHESHAN

Fresher's Fortnight

This year our events across the two weeks included a presence at the Welcome Fair, the Annual Pub Crawl, a Scavenger Hunt, a Bookshop and a Mums and Dads Bar Night (the week after). We used the Welcome Fair to publicise most of our other events and the Autumn Ball and added a little fun to our stall by having a spinning wheel which determined what merchandise we would give out to each individual that visited us. The pub crawl was without doubt our biggest success with over 250 people, the first 200 of which were given a free t-shirt, joining us at the start and at least 30 of whom remained in the crawl until it ended at 2am. All in all, our events were a success and gave a good insight into the type of events the RCSU runs and also the services that we provide.

The Autumn Ball

This is the RCSU'S flagship club night event and this year it has been planned to be bigger and better than ever before. After visiting a couple of venues, we have decided to host it at the Steel Yard in Cannon Street and have sold 800 tickets (as opposed to the 200 usually) to our members (and plus ones) and gave drinks tokens to around 600 people. The event will be held on the 11th of November, and we hope that all our guests will have a great night dancing and meeting new people.

Sports

This year we are introducing a sports league to the RCSU which involves the departments in the union facing off against each other in five different sports across the year, including football, dodgeball, and chess. The winner of each match will be granted a certain number of points and at the end of the year we will crown an overall winner. We hope to use this league to get all of the different departments to interact more and also hope to find the best players across the union and form a Union sports team in the future that can play against other constituent unions. Sign-ups for the first sport are already underway and looks very promising for the future of the league!



Activities

PRIANTHA PRETHESHAN

RAG

Our first RAG event of the year was our Fresher's Fortnight Bookshop and was where we sold donated textbooks for a fraction of their retail prices and all the proceeds will be going to charity. We are also currently planning to sell RCSU Christmas cards and possibly decorations as well at the end of the year, the money from which will also go to our chosen charity. The charity has not been finalised as of yet but we hope to get the RCSU general committee to vote on it soon!



Welfare Representation

TIANYU WEN

October is the month when everything settles down and we make plan for the upcoming year. Students across all years within the RCSU departments are happily overwhelmed by the re-opening of all activities. No significant issues have been reported by individual dep reps; all dep rep positions are filled, and we plan to have in person meeting as soon as RCSU office is cleaned up.

Welfare activity officer and I have discussed the plan and started contacting the relevant people in preparation for the annual flagship event of welfare week in the second term. Current events planned are 1 hour yoga session with the yoga collabs, speed friend bingo, dodgeball collaboration, dog therapy day, origami day etc. All event budgets have been approved by the RCSU treasurer. Other smaller scale events are also planned to support the diverse group of students at Imperial, such as “what does BHM mean to you” campaign in the physics department.

Individual departmental welfare reps are contacted to discuss the NSS report and the plans for the next year to better support the student well-being, as well as recent updates within the departments. Issues raised during individual meetings will be discussed across faculty in our first RCSU welfare meeting; meetings were not possible previously as some of our officers have caught the freshers’ flu.

Physics wish to increase female representation in physics lecturer, as some years only have 1 female lecturer. NSS complaints are mainly focused on lack of community in physics department, which will be addressed this year more easily as more in person activities will foster a stronger sense of community. Peer mentor study program are setup and community building events such as meeting with senior groups (vertical mentoring) are put into trials.

Math strives to provide for counselling service in other languages, as currently only the mental health first aiders are available in languages other than English, not the in-person counselling service provided from the Sherfield Building. Math department Plans to organize more events for the second-year students to get more familiar with the university as the Mom and Dad events were on-line last year.



Welfare Representation

TIANYU WEN

Life sciences (biology and biochemistry) students enjoy the newly opened common room in the SEC building. Currently the room is only opened up to year 3 students as a trial, as all year 3 students have in person lectures and comes to the uni most often, whereas other years have recorded lecture and comes in only for labs. The students are using the common room well for discussion after lectures and will be open throughout the exam season. The academic reps and welfares rep oversee the management of the opening hours and common room rules. More welfare events in the upcoming month will be organized around the decoration of the common room, such as artwork session for the paintings in the common room, plant decorations. Once the trial within the year 3 students is successful, will open to all years.

Chemistry The dep rep has been sick for the entire time, unable to speak and work.



Operations

TRINITY STENHOUSE

Broadsheet

Our Broadsheet recruitment event – an evening of board games, pizza and cocktail making – was a great success, with over 40 attendees, many of whom have now signed up to the mailing list. Broadsheet meetings will commence soon, with the intention of putting together a top quality magazine, but also helping the attendees team build so as to assure cohesivity.

Alumni and Sponsorship

We have just set up an alumni mailing list, meaning that we can begin to contact alumni via LinkedIn to ask them if they would like to join. Last year's Pub Quiz mailing list is also being used as a starting point for the alumni mailing list. We are hoping that this list will become more established over the course of the year, enabling some mentorship events in terms 2 and 3, as well as some social opportunities for alumni and current students.

We have updated the sponsorship document with new statistics and a reshaped sponsorship categorisation, which is now easier to understand and can be tailored to different companies' needs more simply. Our sponsorship officer has created a list of companies who employ a large number of Natural Sciences graduates and is working through the list cold-calling HR departments and sending emails. Morgan Stanley is willing to sponsor the RCSU for the 2022-3 academic year, but their applications for this academic year closed in April, so we are unable to secure sponsorship from them at the moment. We are continuing to contact companies and will hopefully receive positive responses soon.

We are also hoping to hold a careers conference in term 2, but this is reliant on speakers from companies being forthcoming, and as of yet this has not been the case.



Operations

TRINITY STENHOUSE

Science Challenge

Preparations are well under way for this year's Science Challenge, with plans to make it bigger and better than ever before.

We have created a social media account for the Challenge, so that Imperial students and school children can follow and learn more about it and keep up to date with announcements. I am in the process of creating graphics to post on this page.

I have also had meetings with Professor Lord Winston, regarding the running of the Challenge, and we have agreed on the theme of Climate Change. He has been very forthcoming with suggestions for judges, and at the moment we are looking at Professor Kathy Sykes, Viscount Matt Ridley and Professor Mark Lythgoe, with Professor Sykes already agreeing.

Our next task is to make a launch video to be shared to schools on the day of the Launch (9th December), for which I have already recruited a videographer.

I am in the process of booking Blackett Level 8 for the Launch Ceremony but need to know for certain the names of the judges as they will need visitor passes and to be explicitly named on the risk assessment.

I have also booked the Royal Institute for the Awards Ceremony on 21st March 2022. We are hoping to acquire funding through either donations or ticket sales so that we can hire some reception rooms and serve champagne and canapes on entry, rather than just hiring the lecture theatre and having no breakout spaces.



Finances and Societies

SUSAN RUTTER]

The RCSU DepSocs have had a successful term so far, introducing the first years to their academic parents, running events in the first few weeks of term, and most have booked their Christmas Dinner events. We met with all the socs before term started, but have decided that we'd like to do one to one meetings now that the start of term has calmed down.

The RCSU exec started the year in a strong financial position, having £24k in reserves. We have not yet finished talking to the college about our financial position, however our expected budget is to run a deficit of £18k, hopefully most of which will be funded by the college.