

SABBATICAL OFFICER REPORT TO COUNCIL #7

Hilary Term, February 20th 2024 until March 19th 2024

NAME: László Molnárfi

POSITION: President

REPORT IN BRIEF:

- 1. ANNUAL LEAVE & TOIL ACCRUED
- 2. EXPENSES
- 3. PREVIOUS REPORTS
- 4. UPDATES & HIGHLIGHTS
 - a. Hist Debate 'This House Believes the SU Does Not Represent Us"
 - b. Housing Campaign
 - c. National Student Action Group
 - d. Lecture Recording
 - e. Off-Campus Students
 - f. Social Work Survey
 - g. Supports for P.M.E
 - h. Back to Education Allowance Reform
 - i. Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and Greenwashing Week
 - j. Water Products in House 6 and College Shops Proposal
 - k. Free Period Products in All Higher-Education Institutions
 - I. #YesNo
 - m. Asylum Seekers at the IPO
 - n. #AddThe10th
 - o. Palestine Solidarity



- p. EU-Passworld Project
- q. Masters' Fees
- r. Core Funding
- s. Green Paper on Disability Allowance Reform
- t. Atrium Redevelopment and Microwaves and Spaces
- u. Sports and Student Parent Bursaries
- v. Constitution 1.4
- w. Visit of U.K Student Unions
- x. University Rankings
- y. Part-Time Officers Election Reform
- z. Student-Worker Solidarity
- 5. MEETINGS ATTENDED
- 6. MANIFESTO PROGRESS
- 7. MANDATE TRACKER
- 8. HOW TO GET INVOLVED?
- 9. VOTER REGISTRATION

OFFICER REPORT:

1. ANNUAL LEAVE & TOIL ACCRUED

Since July 1st 2023 I have taken 2 of my annual leave days.

Since July 1st 2023 I have worked 20.5 of additional hours outside of working hours.

2. EXPENSES

The cumulative expenses come out to €3803.23 since July 2023 as of 15th of March 2024.

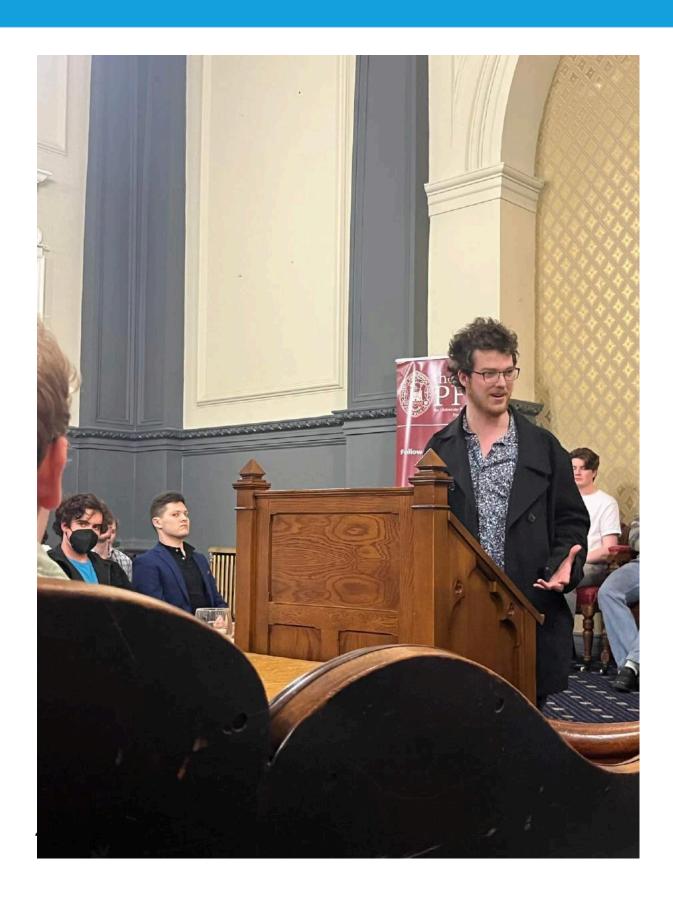
3. PREVIOUS REPORTS

- <u>July 1st 2023 until October 1st 2023</u>
- October 1st 2023 until October 16th 2023
- October 16th 2023 until November 7th 2023
- November 7th 2023 until November 21st 2023
- November 21st 2023 until February 6th 2024
- February 6th 2024 until February 20th 2024

4. UPDATES & HIGHLIGHTS

Hist x Phil Debate 'This House Believes the SU Does Not Represent Us"







• On the 22nd of February 2024 I attended the Hist x Phil debate on 'This House Believes the SU Does Not Represent Us' and spoke in opposition. I spoke in favour of our union with this speech. I spoke in favour of a radical, politically left-wing and grassroots union.

Housing Campaign



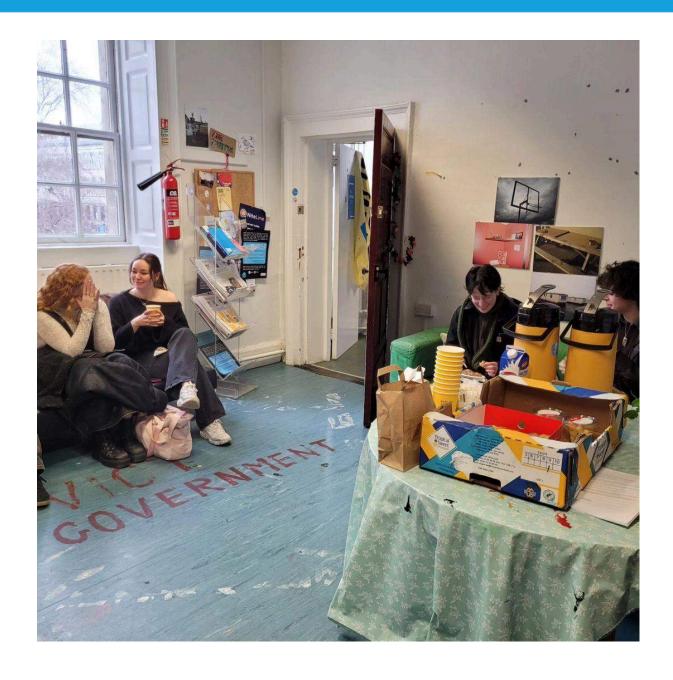














2 Proposed Policy Motion or Amendment:

2.1 Motion Title: Ensure monthly rent for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) is no more than 30% of the full-time monthly minimum wage.



2.2 Policy Area: Housing

2.3 Motion Text:



Ensure monthly rent for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) is no more than 30% of the full-time monthly minimum wage.

a. This applies to both privately-owned and university-owned PBSA.

b. The rent should be indexed to the minimum wage





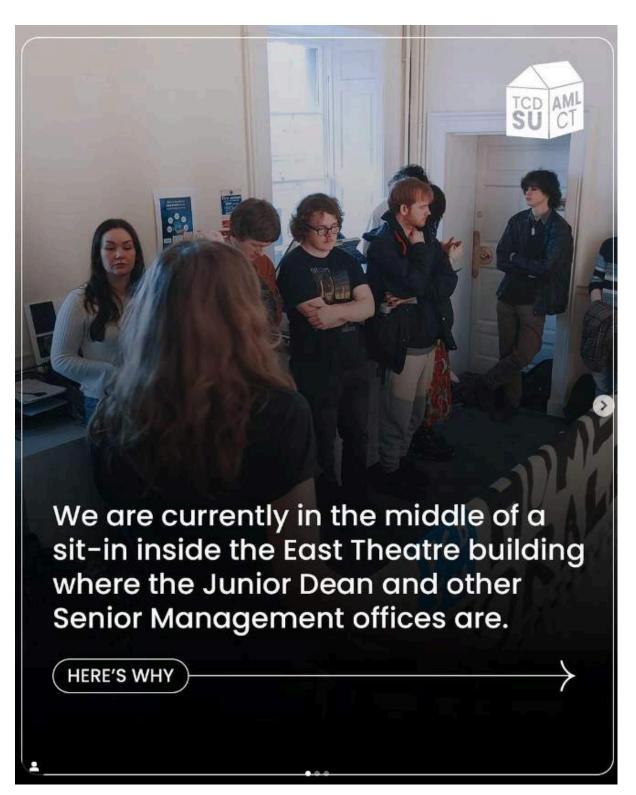














LISTEN, TOURIST! STUDENTS PAY EXTORTIONATE AMOUNTS OF MONEY YET HAVE LITTLE RIGHTS IN STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

TCD Renters Solidarity Network, supported by the Students' Union, has long been raising issues with Trinity's management about student accommodation. This university makes €10.9 million euros a year from student rent. Students are struggling, with 88% worrying about finances, and 85% finding rents on-campus unaffordable, yet we are still charged up to €12,000 a year to live. On top of this, students are faced with a restrictive and paternalistic overnight guests policy - imagine being in your 20s and not able to have someone over after midnight! Finally, on top of the extortionate rents, the laundry machines cost €7 per wash.

We are campaigning but the College is not listening to us. We are addressing this flier to you, dear tourist, and are asking you to help us.







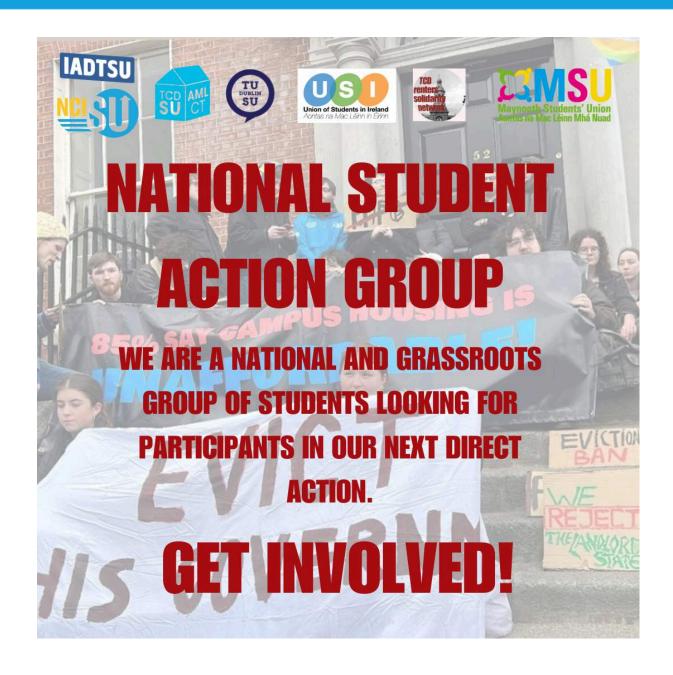
- I worked with the Young Green's Adam Ó Ceallaigh to pass a policy at the Green Party Policy Council defining housing rent affordability as being 30% of the national monthly minimum wage income in December 2023.
- TCD Renters' Network has been set up and has reached more than 100 members after flyering and social media push, please join if you rent on-campus or at Halls!
 - We have brought one case to the RTB so far about the overnight guests policy.
 - We collected testimonies about the overnight guests policy and posted it on social media.
 - We conducted an interview with District Magazine.
 - We conducted an interview with Trinity News.



- We held a coffee and pastry hour on the 22nd of February 2024 to discuss our upcoming direct action.
- We handed over the petition to abolish the overnight guests policy that has more than 540+ student signatures to senior management on the 22nd of February 2024.
- We flyered on the 28th of February 2024 to get student tenants to sign up to our network.
- o Our dispute has been lodged with the RTB about Trinity's denial of our right to a peaceful and exclusive occupation as per 12A of the Residential Tenancies Act because of the overnight guests policy.
- We flyered tourists on the 17th of March 2024 St. Patrick's Day with the "Listen, Tourist!" flyers to apply pressure on College.
- We participated in the roundtable discussion in the Dail on the 27th of February 2024 with other student unions about the legislation to protect students renting in digs, put forward by Sinn Féin.
- We held our Renters' Union and Campaigns Town Hall #5 on the 12th of March 2024.
- We conducted a sit-in and occupation with TCD Renters' Solidarity Network and TCDSU on the 14th of March 2024 in the East Theater administrative offices.

National Student Action Group









- On the 15th of February, students occupied the Department of Further and Higher Education, demanding the abolition of university fees, the end of casualizing workers, and public student homes. We are now looking to escalate. With dropout rates soaring due to unsustainable conditions within academia, it is now more important than ever that we stand together against oppression. This initiative is supported by multiple student unions and the USI. Join the National Student Action Group!
- I did flyering in the Arts Block for our campaigns on the 19th of February 2024.
- It was great to see the Trinity News article on the 28th of February 2024 showing that students are more politically <u>engaged</u> as well as that our voter turnout in this election cycle was the <u>highest</u> since 2020.
- I submitted a <u>letter</u> to the editor on university core funding to the Irish Examiner and the Irish Independent on the 11th of March 2024.
- We held our <u>National Student Action Group #1</u> on the 14th of March 2024.

Lecture Recording





- Lecture Recording Survey Report has been made and can be found here, many thanks to the 1,556 students who filled it out, and it also made its way into the press!
- I published a <u>comment piece</u> in the University Times arguing for lecture recordings and for students and staff unity on this issue.
- I met Eoin O'Dell from the School of Law on the 1st of March 2024 and I am also seeking to meet IFUT to learn more about staff concerns.
 - We are aware that any sort of progress on this issue can only be made if staff concerns are listened to, including the need to hand over copyright to lecturers over recorded lectures in Trinity's Intellectual Property policy, ban the use of recordings for strike-breaking and ban the use of recordings for any 'performance management'. As well as this, the student perspective about attendance concerns are dealt with in the mentioned report. Finally, we fully support adequate compensation for the time spent recording, editing, and uploading by staff members.

Off-Campus Students









- Our Health Sciences <u>survey</u> is still ongoing.
- We have created a new campaign <u>flyer</u> for off-campus students which I did a first round of distribution of on the 15th of March 2024 with Mature Students Officer Ailish Smith and Health Sciences Convenour Rarosue Emakpor.
- Myself and Welfare Officer Aoife Bennett are continuing to work with the School of Medicine on St. James including reopening the former canteen as a student space as well as a possible re-allocation of the William Fetherston Montgomery Lecture Theatre that Health Sciences Convenour Rarosue Emakpor is also advocating for.
- Issue with €500 HSE payments fixed in some hospitals, still liaising with others.

Social Work Survey

• Our survey has been sent for analysis and a report will be created soon.

Supports for P.M.E Students

- We passed our motion of support for P.M.E students and to work with the relevant trade unions on ending exploitation of P.M.E trainees in secondary-schools.
- Our survey has been sent for analysis and a report will be created soon.
- ASTI dropped off their union material in House 6 which I distributed to P.M.E students on the 12th of March 2024.

Back to Education Allowance Reform

 Back To Education Allowance is a form of social welfare paid to long-term social welfare recipients enabling them to access further education, including third-level education once they have been in receipt of a



qualifying benefit for more than 9 or 12 months. Myself and our Mature Students Officer Ailish Smith have collected testimonies and created a report for its reform.

• With this report, myself, Welfare Office Aoife Bennett and Mature Students Officer Ailish Smith are meeting Mairéad Farrell TD on Thursday 21st March.

Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and Greenwashing Week



- Working with our Environmental Officer Nathan Hutchinson Edgar to pressure College into endorsing this treaty.
- A protest was organized by our Environmental Officer Nathan Hutchinson

Edga organised on Friday the 15th at 1pm on March 2024 at the Campanile, and Trinity's greenwashing was called out, including its links to Ryanair, Coca-Cola and CRH.

Water Products in House 6 and College Shops Proposal

• I am working with our Environmental Officer Nathan Hutchinson Edgar on a <u>proposal</u> that we received from a group of students to change the House 6 and College Shops water products to an environmentally-friendly alternative.

Free Period Products in All Higher-Education Institutions

- I have been working with Welfare Officer Aoife Bennett who has launched a <u>petition</u> calling on the government to tackle socio-economic and gender inequality on our campuses by providing access to free period products to the students and staff who need it.
- Myself and Welfare Officer Aoife Bennett are working with Martina Mullin from Healthy Trinity to submit a budget application for an interim measure for TCD to fund this from the €1 million project fund that TCD is receiving submissions to while we await the government. We had our first meeting on the 15th of March 2024.
- Myself and Welfare Officer Aoife Bennett talked to the HSE when they
 were in the Arts Block on the 19th of March 2024 in order to lobby them
 with regards to our <u>petition</u>.

#YesNo

 In light of the referendum scheduled for March 8th, our union, representing a diverse body of students, including individuals with disabilities, carers, and their advocates, called on students to vote YES in the family referendum and to vote NO in the care referendum. Please read our <u>statement</u>. **Asylum Seekers at the IPO**





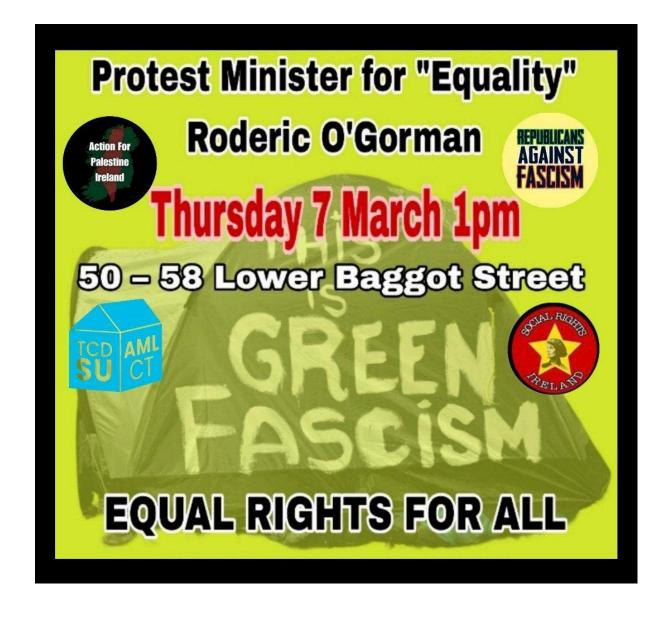




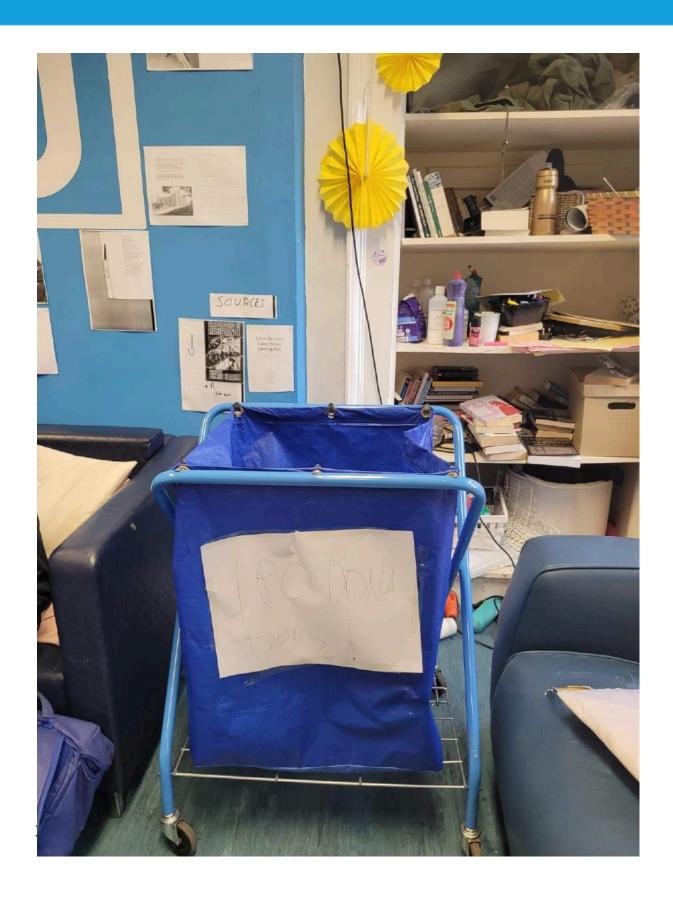




















- I am continuing to support asylum seekers at the IPO and gave a speech which can be found here at their protest on the 20th of February 2024.
- TCDSU supported and our Gender Equality Officer Anna Kollár spoke at the protest on the 7th of March 2024.
- We are running a collection drive for taurpolins, hats, socks, umbrellas, gloves, sleeping bags, clothes of all types, preferably warm for refugees sleeping rough at the IPO. You can drop them in the House 6 kitchen.
 - We dropped off our first collection on the 16th of March at the IPO.

#AddThe10th





• We support ATD"s campaign to #addthe10th to have socio- economic status recognized as the tenth ground of discrimination in Irish equality legislation. Sign their <u>petition!</u>

Palestine Solidarity







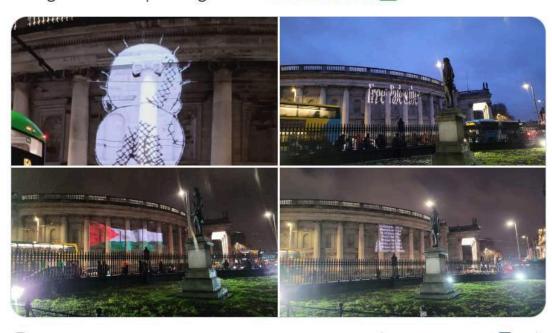


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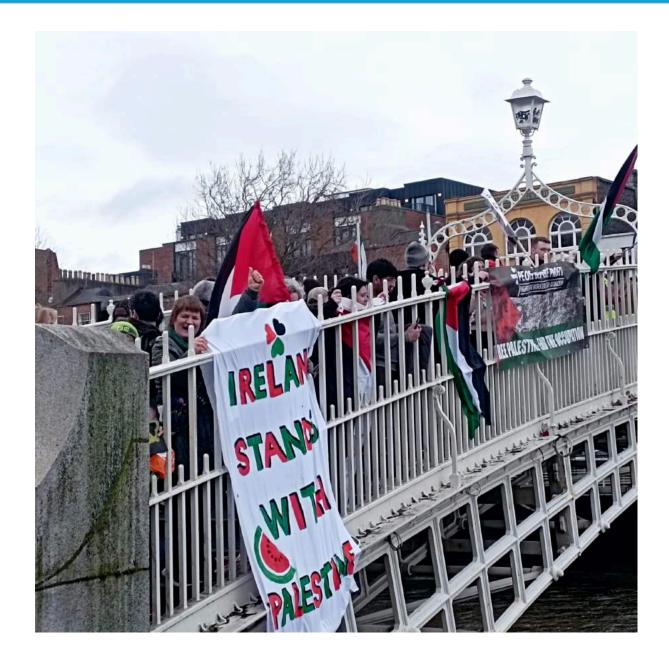


IPSC @ipsc48 · Mar 1

We absolutely love to see it! Well done to Trinity students who projected 'Free Palestine', the flag, Palestinian icon Handala and the names of children murdered in Gaza by apartheid Israel, onto the Bank of Ireland on College Green. Keep talking about a #FreePalestine







As a result of our Freedom of Information Act (2014) request, we found out that Trinity invests in UN-blacklisted companies involved in Israeli apartheid, genocide and settlement-building, breaching international law, and we managed to get a Ditch article.

- We wanted to shut down the U.S. Army coming on campus on the 26th of February 2024 but we found out, when we got there, that the event was already cancelled, without any communication to staff. As such, we have submitted a Freedom of Information Act (2014) request to find out what happened.
- I attended the Activist Assembly for Palestine at Trinity on the 28th of February 2024.
- We occupied the Book of Kells and shut it down on the 29th of February 2024, extracting a concession from the Junior Dean and the Dean of Students that the issue will be raised on the highest levels of senior management.
- On the 1st of March 2024 we projected a series of images, including Free Palestine, the Palestinian flag, the Handala and the list of names of babies and children murdered by the terrorist state of Israel onto the Bank of Ireland building from House 6.
- I attended the Mothers Against Genocide picket at the Dáil on the 6th of March 2024.
- I attended the Campus Justice for Palestine (CJP) meeting on the 9th of March 2024 on behalf of TCDSU.
- I am helping to organize the <u>TCDSU x IAWM event on the 21st of March about the arms trade</u> as well as the <u>TCDSU x IPSC event on the 26th of March with Saleh Higazi</u>.
- I sent out the <u>STEM Student Preferences for Military and Civilian Work Survey</u> on the 14th of March 2024. We are asking STEM students to fill out an anonymous survey, one that is based on a similar survey ran in the U.K. by Demilitarize Education (dEd) and funded by the Trust for Research and Education on the Arms Trade (TREAT). We would like to learn more about students' preferences for military or civilian work. The lack of empirical data in this field undermines the public debate about the military-industrial complex, and its harmful effects on the planet and

- people. Answers take only five minutes to complete and will be kept anonymous and confidential.
- I helped Mothers Against Genocide (MAG) for their protest on March 16th 2024 by ordering small and big Palestinian flags through the TCDSU.
- Join TCD BDS.

EU-Passworld Project

• I sent an <u>email</u> in support of EU-Passworld project on the 14th of March 2024 to the VP for Global Emma Stokes.

Masters' Fees

- Thank you to Trinity News for publishing my comment piece on the 25th of February 2024 on College's coming attempt to increase masters' fees, and don't forget to join our campaigns group.
- I authored, with the help of Union Forum, the position <u>paper</u> of the TCDSU advocating for a masters' fee freeze which was sent to the 24 Schools on the 11th of March 2024.
- On the 21st of March at 1pm we will launch our #RipOffTCD social media storm, and then again on the 23rd of March at 1pm to coincide with the open day, student guide linked here.

Core Funding

Irish third-level sector in dire straits

The dire situation of third-level education in Ireland must be acknowledged by Minister Simon Harris.

State funding of €60m falls short of the €307m gap. As a result, our student-to-staff ratios are untenable, classrooms overcrowded and buildings dilapidated.

Academics suffer on precarious contracts and postgraduate researchers struggle to pay for groceries, while students are left behind by underfunded welfare services and inadequate facilities.

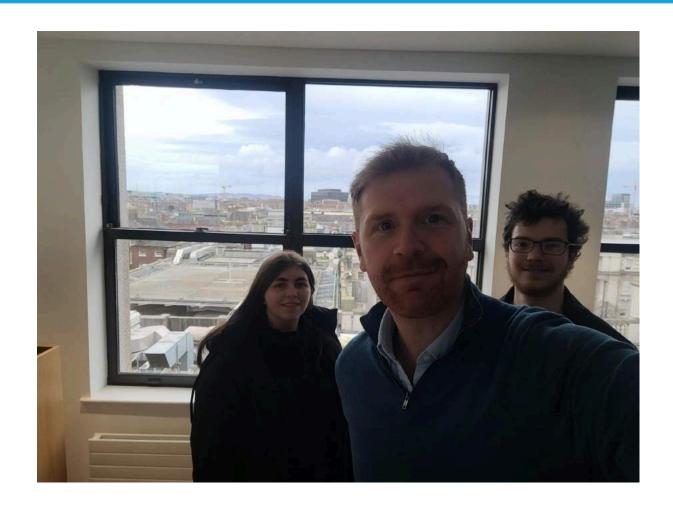
Notwithstanding, there is an irrational drive to increase student numbers imposed on the sector. This threatens the viability of the sector as a whole, and will have grave effects on the economy.

László Molnárfi, TCDSU President, Trinity College Dublin

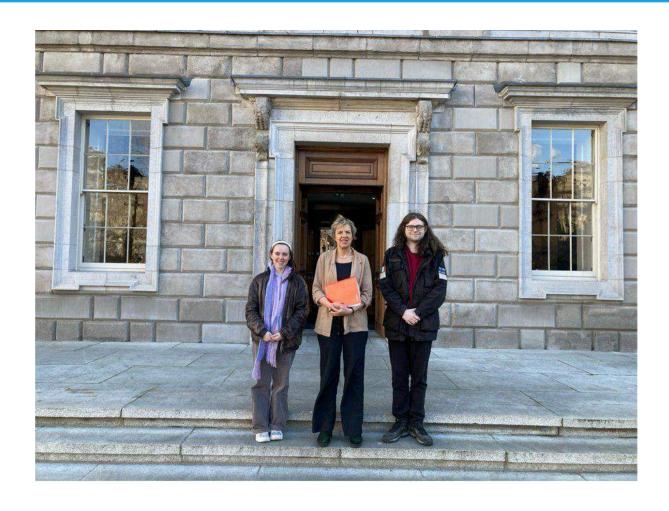
• Thank you to the Irish Examiner for <u>publishing</u> my letter to the editor about third-level sector core funding on the 14th of March 2024.

Green Paper on Disability Allowance Reform

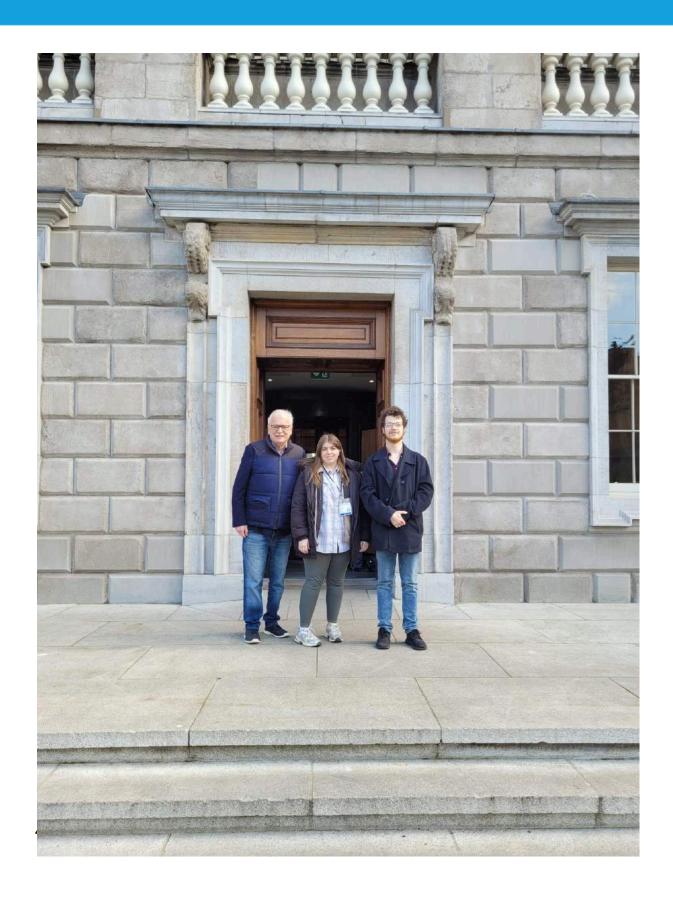












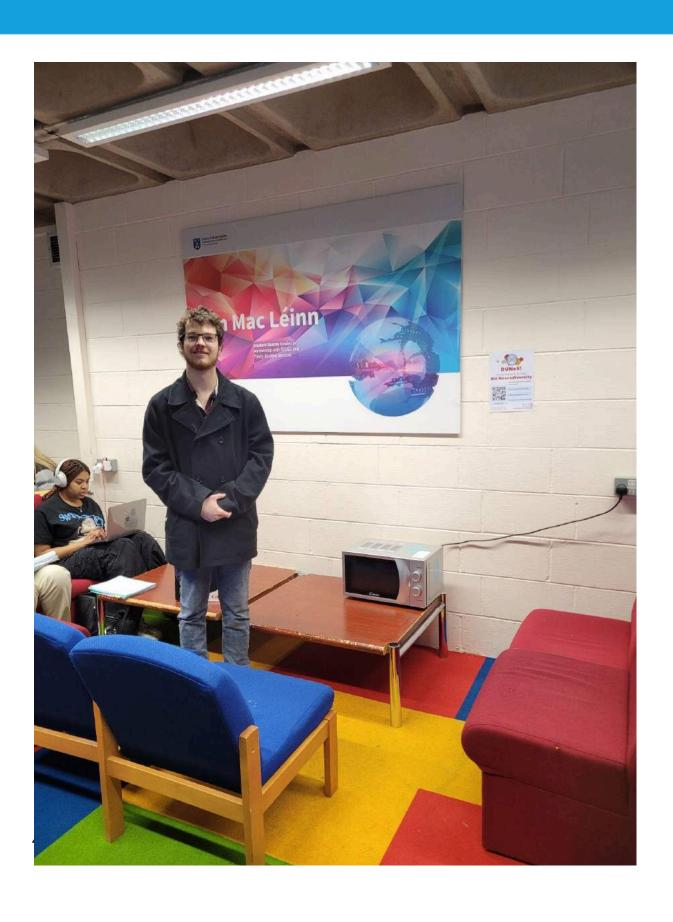
- We have completed our <u>submission</u> to the consultation to the Department of Social Protection, and we would like to thank the Disability Service and the Ability Co-Op for their assistance.
- We met Gary Gannon TD from the Social Democrats on the 20th of February 2024.
- We had a meeting on the 23rd of February 2024 with the Ability Co-Op on planning our submission.
- We met with Ivana Bacik TD from Labour on the 26th of February 2024.
- We passed a <u>motion</u> to make our stance on this official at Council on the 20th of February 2024.
- We met Finian McGrath, the first Minister for Disabilities in the history of the Irish state, on the 7th of March 2024.
- We are continuing to work on this with Disabilities Officer Keely Jenkinson and Welfare Officer Aoife Bennett and thank you to Trinity News for reporting about this.

Atrium Redevelopment and Microwaves and Spaces













- On the 22nd of February 2024 I installed a microwave in the Hamilton JCR with STEM Convenor Ruaidhrí Saulnier.
- On the 23rd of February 2024 I installed a microwave in the Arts Block student space, but then it was taken away due to "health and safety" reasons, so we are going through the official procedures to try getting it back.
- I am in contact with College about the issues with the 1937 Reading Room.
- I have been working with the Chair of CSC Samuel Isijola and the Director of the Disability Service Declan Trainor on a proposal to the Capitations Committee to redevelop the Atrium spaces.

- We did an audit of some of the social spaces on the 2nd of February 2024, starting with The Atrium rooms, which is currently amongst the only accessible society meeting spaces on campus. Thank you to Kevin Moloney, the Premises Manager for the Atrium, for inspecting the rooms that have been identified for refurbishment.
- I did a walk through with Sharon O'Reilly who is responsible for the House 6 lift project and Declan Treanor of House 6 on the 13th of March 2024 to help progress this project.

Sports and Student Parent Bursaries

 At Council on the 20th of February 2024 a sports bursary and a student parent bursary were set-up from the HEA Fund, with €20,000 each over a 5-year period. This is great <u>news</u>. Thank you to the collaboration with Trinity Sports for the former, and congratulations to Sheila Keegan, our Student Parent Officer, for the latter.

Constitution 1.4

• I sent this submission to the CWRG.

Visit of U.K Student Unions

• A group of student unions sabbatical officers and staff visited Trinity and TCDSU on the 26th of February, and this involved coffee, pastries, chats, a presentation and a visit to the Book of Kells.

University Rankings

• I had a very positive meeting with the Dean of Research's Office on the 8th of March 2024 where I was told that they are doing a strategic review of university rankings and considering signing up to the More Than Our Rank initiative.

Part-Time Officers Election Reform

• I submitted this attached <u>submission</u> to the CRWG for consideration about the election of part-time officers.

Student-Worker Solidarity

• I submitted this attached <u>submission</u> to the CRWG for consideration about the role of the Citizenship Officer.

5. MEETINGS ATTENDED

Meeting	Frequency
IT Services User Group	1 x 1hr
Consent Framework Implementation Oversight Group	1 x 1hr
Dean of Students	2 x 0.5hr
Council	2 x 3hr
USI Campaigns Strategy Committee	1 x 2hr
USI Back to Education Allowance Ad-Hoc	1 x 0.5hr
CSC	1 x 0.5hr
Sabbatical Board	4 x 1hr
Union Forum	1 x 3hr
Finance Committee	2 x 2hr

Board	1 x 3hr
Chair of Board	1 x 0.5hr
Provost	1 x 0.5hr
Digs Legislation Roundtable	1 x 1hr
Activist Assembly	1 x 2hr
Student Life Committee	1 x 2hr
Threshold	1 x 0.5hr
Global Engagement Committee	1 x 1.5hr
Dean of Research's Office	1 x 0.5hr
Sanctuary Fund Advisory Committee	1 x 1hr
Oversight Committee	1 x 2hr
Chair of the Board of Trustees	1 x 1hr
Healthy Trinity	1 x 0.5hr

Note: These are formal college committees, but several other meetings take place regularly and I also meet regularly with a variety of students and staff, my appointments are <u>bookable online</u>, and you are always welcome to my office hours!

6. MANIFESTO PROGRESS

<u>Please click here to see the 2023/2024 Manifesto Promise Tracker for the role of the President.</u>

7. MANDATE TRACKER

Please click here to see the 2023/2024 Mandate Tracker for the role of the President.

8. HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

- Join the <u>TCDSU Campaigns Group!</u>
- Join the National Student Action Group!
- Join the <u>TCD Renters' Solidarity Network</u> if you are a campus or Halls resident!
- Get involved in a group like <u>Trinity BDS</u>, <u>DU Gender Equality</u>, <u>Postgraduate</u> Workers' Organisation and Students4Change TCD.
- If your class does not have a class representative, email chair@tcdsu.org (Conor Casey) and you will be automatically a class representative.
- Come to Council and submit motions, discussion items and take part in the debate, you do not have to be a class representative to do this.

9. VOTER REGISTRATION

All credit goes to Ella Mac Lennan, Citizenship Officer, for the below text.

Local & EU elections will take place in June 2024. To ensure you have your say, register to vote here now - it only takes a few minutes. You will need your PPSN and Eircode - if you do not have a PPSN, complete the relevant form here.

Even if you do not hold Irish citizenship, you are still eligible to vote in local elections. In addition to this, British citizens can vote in Dáil elections, and EU citizens can vote in EU elections. First time EU registrants wishing to vote in Ireland must complete an <u>EP1</u> declaration form to prevent double voting.

You may only be registered at one address - students who are already registered or wish to register at their home address may apply for a <u>postal vote</u>. You may also apply for postal vote if you cannot go to your polling station due to illness or disability. The deadline for all postal vote applications is 22 working days before polling day. If you register for postal vote, you cannot vote in person.

You may pre-register to vote if you are 16 or over. Your name will be added to the live register when you turn 18.

Frequently asked questions can be found at https://www.checktheregister.ie/en-IE/faqs