Activities Forum

3. Chair's Report

Author(s):	Tom Gordon — Deputy President (Activities)
Purpose:	To update Activities Forum on the progress of relevant projects, and of the forum's sub-committees.
Decision(s):	To **note**.

1. Objectives

This year, my key objectives are as follows:

Objective	Description / Progress
Cut response times when reaching the activities team	**Description**: Reduce response times for approvals of finances, core risk assessments and activity proposals, as well as Freshdesk tickets. **Progress**: Since writing this manifesto goal, the size of the activities team has grown and Freshdesk has been introduced. Average "first response time" this month is 9 business hours, with an average resolution in 3 days. Core RAs and activity proposals are now handled by staff in Freshdesk, so everything customer-facing (except finances) is now in a single location. Tickets go directly to the most relevant agent, instead of all staff using a shared email inbox. With the hiring of a dedicated Activities Coordinator (Finance), we are in a better place for approving expenditure >£1000, but I will continue to monitor and encourage MG reps to get in touch if an approval is urgent or taking a long time.
Improve training quality for club and society committees	**Description**: At the time of setting this manifesto goal, training was spread through the Union site, SUMS and eActivities. **Progress**: Everything except finance-related articles have been moved to a centralised Freshdesk knowledgebase, with much better searching functionality. The number of articles is increasing regularly, and I plan to go through all legacy eActivities training to ensure it is up to date and concise. In-person training occurred at the end of September for incoming committees. This was received well but turnout was low — approx. 100 students attended out of a total of >2000 volunteers.
Expand the increase the usage of the	**Description**: The Student Experience Fund, launched in 2023-24, aims to ensure that students, who would not normally be able to due to financial constraints, are

Student Experience Fund	able to engage with clubs and societies by means of a credit applied to their Union accounts. This fund is currently only available to home students in receipt of a bursary. This project aims to increase the uptake of SEF amongst these students, and widen the eligibility criteria so that more can access it, including postgraduate and international students. **Progress**: Current focus has been to secure funding for SEF to continue in its current form, and to work on a governance framework to ensure that funds can be guaranteed for years to come. For 2025-26, funding has been secured from ICU and Imperial (£20k and £80k respectively), and we hope that the leftover funds from IC Trust in the previous year are enough to sustain the fund for bursary students in the year ahead. Our funders seem broadly supportive of expanding the fund to more students, though a strong proposal for this will be needed. Current challenges include determining the eligibility criteria, and the fact that the uptake in previous years has been low (48% of eligible students accessed the fund and only spent 33% of the total pot).
Build a CSP alumni network	**Description**: Conduct a review of how clubs and societies are engaging with alumni through their events, and to see how ICU can support them with reaching former members, whether it's for career events, fundraising, socials, or otherwise. **Progress**: Initial meetings have been held with Imperial's Alumni Engagement team who are eager to support our clubs and societies. A discussion will be brought to Activities Forum in the near future to brainstorm potential ideas.
Improve provision for fundraising for clubs and societies	**Description**: The current method for donating to an ICU society is to receive a donation letter and send the donor an invoice, which poses a barrier to some. I'm eager to explore how we can make this process easier, e.g. by adding a dedicated page to our website. ICU also has no official support for crowdfunding or more unusual methods of fundraising, which may pose useful to some societies. **Progress**: Initial meeting set up with ICU to brainstorm ideas and discuss what may or may not be operationally feasible. A discussion will be brought to Activities Forum in the near future to brainstorm potential ideas.
Offer tiered membership to clubs and societies	**Description**: A potential need has been raised for societies to have more granular control over their memberships — e.g. for someone to join a sports society as a social or non-competitive member, without needing to buy Imperial Athletes membership.

2. Funding Balances

2.1. Activities Development Fund

Last year, **£21,235.65** was allocated from the Activities Development Fund (ADF) directly to clubs and societies, and an additional **£9,141.53** was allocated to supplement the 2025-26 annual budgeting grant allocation.

In line with previous years, Imperial College Union's Board of Trustees has designed £100,000 to the ADF for 2025-26, of which £70,000 is available to be allocated to clubs and societies:

Opening balance	**£100,000.00**
Balance for contingency / future years	(£30,000.00)
Available funds for ADF 25/26	**£70,000.00**

This year there will be three rounds of ADF, with application deadlines on 30/11/25, 22/02/26, and 01/03/26.

2.2. Trips Fund

Last year, the full allocation of **£25,000** was granted to societies to support trips.

In line with previous years, IC Trust (an external charity) has designated **£25,000** to the Trips Fund for 2025-26.

This year there will be three rounds of Trips Fund, with application deadlines on 14/11/25, 06/02/26, and 08/05/26.

2.3. Student Experience Fund

Last year, the Student Experience Fund (SEF) was made available to all students on an Imperial Bursary to support them in engaging with clubs and societies. Allocations ranged from **£20** to **£70**, depending on household income of the student.

Last year, **48%** of the ~2,300 eligible students accessed the fund, with **33%** of the total funds allocated being spent.

SEF is expected to be launched for the 2025-26 academic year in the coming weeks, with the intention that by 2026-27 the eligibility criteria will widen, including postgraduate and international students.

3. Activities Forum Sub-Committees

As it is the start of term, the CSPB sub-committees are yet to meet. Appointments to the sub-committees are due to be made at Activities Forum on the 16th October 2025.