



MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

STUDENT GROUP BID BRIEFING DOCUMENT

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CAMPAIGN BURSARY

UUSU is offering the opportunity for student groups to apply for a campaign bursary. The total amount in this pot is £1000, however £500 is the maximum amount that can be awarded to any group.

The campaigns purpose and rationale should be focused on improving or supporting the mental health and wellbeing of a targeted student group or more generically.

In order to be awarded a bursary, student groups must send in a bid that details:

- The activity you are undertaking;
- The impact you are trying to achieve with your campaign;
- And outlining how you will spend any funds awarded.

If funds are allocated, the students who have placed the bid enter into an agreement with UUSU to deliver the activity as outlined. In campaign planning some elements may shift and expectations adjusted, however there is an expectation that the funds will be used to improve or support the mental health and wellbeing of the target group outlined in the original bid.

Applications open:	19th January 2026
Applications close:	16th February 2026 MIDDAY
Shortlisting of Applications:	23rd February 2026

By offering this opportunity for students to lead campaigning activity we aim:

1. To support you to develop your skills as campaigners and facilitators;
2. To give space for innovative ways of improving student mental health and wellbeing;
3. And through localising this work creating a deep sense of belonging for the students who will benefit from the campaigns that you will run.

Send your completed application to our Campaigns Coordinator Rosie at s.mckenna@ulster.ac.uk and if you have any questions or want to discuss your idea get in touch!

HOW TO PLAN YOUR CAMPAIGN

In order to approve your bid, we'll need to see a plan for what you want to accomplish. We don't need a full campaign plan, as we will work with you to develop your ideas. However, we need to see that you're serious about delivering a campaign that has impact for the students you are targeting with this activity.

This guide will help you to put your ideas on paper and plot out the impact that you want to have.

This funding is to support you to run activities which focus on the welfare of your group members. This includes activities which:

- Support positive mental health
- Improve student wellbeing
- Promote an inclusive environment
- Help include underrepresented groups of students

You cannot apply for funding for:

- Food and drinks
- Past expenditure
- Non-specific general costs

You must provide a full breakdown of what the funding will be used for with quotes for purchases, and demonstrate you have taken value for money into consideration by providing alternative quotes where possible.

WHAT, WHO, WHY?

Your first step should be brainstorming what exactly you want to do, who your audience will be, and justifying why you're taking this action. This may start with your ideals, with an end product in mind that you work backwards from, or just with enthusiasm to take some action on student mental health – all of these starting points are valid.

The action you are going to take to improve student mental health and/or wellbeing is the centrepiece of your campaign, and it is essential for the success of the campaign that you not only understand how this will benefit students, but have evidence and support behind what you are doing.

The evidence you may use for a campaign can vary; often campaigns use a mixture of evidence bases. Existing evidence from previous research are often the base points of campaigns including reports from the government, from charitable organisations, from other campaign groups, and from academics. Start with a google search for groups who have run campaigns similar to what you're thinking about, and from there you should be able to find sources to inform your own activities. This evidence will give you direction as to how you can make a difference to the students impacted by the particular issue you are looking at.

From here, you can begin to lay out a more detailed plan of action.

DEEP OR WIDE?

There are two forms of impact your campaign can have. A wide impact means it is having a positive effect on a large number of students, and that its influence can be felt across the student body. A deep impact means that it does not benefit as many students, but those that it does have a profound and meaningful experience.

For example, a wide impact may be securing free winter graduations for students at UU. This is something that is a positive outcome for those students, and if UUSU are successful in our campaign moving forward to secure free graduations for all students it is something that will have influence across the student body.

An example of a deep impact campaign would be UUSUs Stress Less initiative, where student officers take tea and coffee around the library and study spaces to speak to students face to face about any concerns they have, and be a listening ear in times of high stress and anxiety.

Both of these forms of impact are important and valuable to a cause, but it is difficult to do both at once. When planning your campaign, you must decide which form of impact you are looking to have.

SMART GOALS

When planning a campaign, it is important that our goals are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timebound. This is so that we are clear on what we are trying to achieve and also to give us metrics by which we can measure success.

- **Specific:**
You should state what you want to achieve in a clear and detailed manner.
- **Measurable:**
In planning you should build in elements that will help you measure your impact. This could be target numbers, or ways of testing the impression left on students by your work.
- **Achievable:**
Your campaign's desired outcome should be something that is possible within a reasonable timeline – how long is up to you. Just remember that campaigns may sometimes lose momentum if there are periods of time with no activity.
- **Realistic:**
You have to ensure you have the resources to achieve your goal, if you do not think you have the resource capacity to achieve the outcome then you either need to adjust your expectations or fundraise. For the purpose of this campaign, we ask that you set your goals within budget.
- **Timebound:**
It is important to set deadlines and time-based goals so that you do not lose momentum, and you can stay on track to reach your goals.

An example of a SMART goal might be:

By March 2027, we will have worked with the University of Ulster to secure 300 new bedrooms for students at the Magee Campus.

OR

By March 2026, 945 UU students will have written to their MLA to demand action on the Cost of Living Crisis and to meet the campaign asks of UUSU.

TIMELINE

What are the pinch points and key dates for this campaign? Are there national days of awareness or national/international events that we can take advantage of?

When key dates and deadlines have been agreed, it is important you assign deadlines to individuals, so that everyone is clear who is responsible for delivering what!

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

This is where we can, at a glance, see what we are working on and the key information relevant to this part of the campaign.

Here is an example of how you might fill in this table:

PROJECT	DURATION	COMPONENTS	TARGET AUDIENCE	SMART GOAL	TOTAL BUDGET
Consent Workshops	Welcome period: w/c Sept 16th – end of Oct	In person workshops, organised with departments, to include Consent workshops delivered by UUSU as a part of their induction timetable. Series of webinars for all students to have access.	All students at UUSU, with particular opportunities for students in leadership positions.	By the end of the Welcome period, 70% of students in their first year of study at UUSU will have attended a consent workshop.	£100 for printing promotional leaflets, £180 for campaign badges, £200 for workbooks for workshops.

We will help you work out your SMART goal and finalise the details however, giving us an outline of your timeframe, target group, what activity you will carry out, and how you would spend your bursary if awarded, is key.

Below is the criteria we are using to assess applications. If you thoroughly answer the questions in the application form, you should meet all criteria, but this will help you to think about the detail required.

CRITERIA	THEME
Clear target audience	Impact assessment
Rationale for impact expected from this activity	Research
Examples or evidence	Research
Is this activity one with deep impact, or wide impact	Impact assessment
Considered cost effective resources	Financial responsibility
Clear outline of what funds will be used for	Financial responsibility
Detail on what issue they are trying to tackle (i.e. isolation, inclusion of underrepresented groups, etc.)	Impact assessment

You can find the application form on the UUSU website, under Mental Health in the Campaigns section. If you have any questions or need help with your application, please contact our Campaigns Coordinator Rosie McKenna at s.mckenna@ulster.ac.uk