



**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' UNION (ISU) NORWAY**  
**INTERNAL WORKING GUIDELINES FOR THE ISU NATIONAL BOARD**  
**Approved version by the National Board in July, 2016**

**Preamble:** Below are guidelines to facilitate the work of the National Board.

The guidelines are approved by the National Assembly, who has internal powers within ISU, and applies to the National Board members, as well as participants at events and other persons who perform services for or acting on behalf of ISU by appointment of the National President.

The guidelines are meant to create a healthier working environment and office attitude and should be updated as the organization grows and learns.

In order to get elected into any National Board position it is recommended to have prior experience in any local ISU branch.

Definitions and abbreviations:

EB- Executive Board (3): the National President, the Union Development Officer and the Political Affairs Officer

NB – National Board (7): the National President, all other Executive Board members, the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the Treasurer, the Political Auditor

NO – National Office – the National President, all other Executive Board members and the Organizational Consultant

NP: National President

OC: Organizational Consultant

The National Assembly elects the National President, and all the other National Board members. The National President and all the other Executive Board members is a 25% work position (10 hours a week) with expected voluntary work of 5 extra hours a week not including the Executive and National Board meeting time.

### **Part 1: General responsibilities**

It is important that the following criteria are considered while electing the NP:

- Previous leadership work in the local branch
- Presentation and communication skills
- Administrative skills/experience
- Oral and written competence in English

*Responsibilities of the Executive Board members: (REFER TO THE CONSTITUTION)*

*Responsibilities of the National President:*

- Is the main representative/face of the ISU Norway, both internally and externally
- Responsible for representation of the ISU Norway at the meetings of partner organizations, the Norwegian Government and other external organizations
- Is legally responsible for the ISU's finances



- 56
- Represents the ISU Executive Board and chairs all board meetings
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- Represents the ISU National Board
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- Responsible for training and working closely with the OC
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62 *Responsibilities of the Union Development Officer:*

- 63
- Is responsible for supporting the work of the president of ISU-Norway
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- In cases where the National President is not available for important events or periods, the Union Development Officer shall serve as his/her representative and shall be granted the authority of the National President on an interim basis
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- Is in charge of the fundraising for the ISU Norway
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- Is responsible for maintaining regular communication with the ISU Local Branches and being the link between the ISU local branches and NB
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- Supporting the work of the National President in contact with the local branches by visiting the local branches to give them support and assistance, if necessary, with the election of new boards in order to ensure the continuity
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- Leading the work of the Regional Cooperation Groups (RCGs)
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- Monitoring the possible enlargement of the organization, if appropriate, for the creation of a new local branch
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77 *Responsibilities of the Political Affairs Officer:*

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- Monitoring media possibilities for ISU and using them appropriately with approval of the NP, in accordance with the ISU Norway Platform 2009
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- Is responsible for publishing press releases approved by the NB
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- Leading the information campaigns together with the National President
- 81
- Is responsible for the reception and presentation of cases and petitions from the local branches to NB
- 82
- Tracing the national and regional laws regarding international students and inform local branches
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- Is in charge of bringing issues regarding housing and academic welfare of students to the NB.
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89 *Responsibilities of the Organizational Consultant:*

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- 91 The Organizational Consultant shall perform the administrative work and assist the Boards.
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- Be present in National Board meetings and take transparent, unbiased and professional minutes of the meetings. The OC will be working in close cooperation with the entire NB, but mostly with the NP.
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- Compile the individual reports of NB members and planned agendas into a single document to be sent out to local branches (with a fixed subject line as to prevent communication overload)
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100 *Responsibilities of the National Board members (REFER TO THE CONSTITUTION):*

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- Chairman – Responsible for chairing all National Board meetings, calling for NB meetings, creating an agenda for NB meetings, and ensuring all NB members have tasks assigned and followed through with
- 102
- Deputy Chairman – Assists Chairman and Political Auditor. Fills in the absence of the Chairman and assume all responsibilities.
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- Treasurer – Work with OC to create updates on budget and projected costs.
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- 107 • Political Auditor – Ensures that all committees and boards at a local and national level are  
108 adhering to constitutional principles.  
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#### 110 **Hiring of the OC:**

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- 112 1. 1 The Organizational Consultant shall be hired by the hiring committee that shall consist of the  
113 National President of ISU, outgoing Organizational Consultant and the external person from  
114 ISU partner organization (e.g NSO, LNU, Spire).
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  - 116 2. Only the hiring committee will screen the applications, interview the selected candidates and  
117 vote for the best candidate to be selected. The most important criteria for the OC shall be: the  
118 fluency in spoken and written Norwegian, organizational experience and experience in  
119 accounting. The National President has the final decision.
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  - 121 3. The hiring committee should be ready to give feedback to candidates (upon request), who went  
122 through the interview, but were not selected  
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#### 124 **Control Committee**

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126 The National Board decides on the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Board meeting, if the amount of work of the Political  
127 Auditor requires to form a Control Committee to elect at the first Leadership Meeting (since  
128 Constitution don't refer to a Control Committee creation) or can do the job alone.  
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#### 131 *Responsibilities of The Control Committee*

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- 133 a) Ensures that the National Board works and takes decisions according to the Constitution, the  
134 guidelines of the organization and the Norwegian Law.
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  - 136 b) Reports to the Leadership Meeting, the National Assembly and the Extraordinary National  
137 Assembly.  
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#### 140 **Part 2: EB training and reporting**

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- 142 1. Whenever a new Executive Board is elected, there should be at least 3 meetings in the first two  
143 months of their tenure. At these meetings EB members should clearly define the specific tasks  
144 they want to work with, upon which the NP sends a general letter of introduction, with their  
145 tasks, to the local boards.  
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  - 147 2. All EB members should send before the EB meetings to the NP a written evaluation of their own  
148 work, the deadline being the previous day of the EB meeting at 12:00 for NP send a copy to all  
149 EB members and OC

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3. The NP should send in behalf of the EB, an ISU bi-monthly report of evaluation of the NB work to the local branches, ISU partners and Ministry of Education. NP will publish with OC that report on ISU website. As a follow-up, the NP should take time for one-on-one session with each board member giving him/her constructive feedback personally (preferably in face-to-face meetings, when possible).
  4. The NP reports to the NB, the Ministry of Education and ISU partner organizations on the deadlines indicated on the yearly Action Plan approved by the NA.
  5. The ISU bi-monthly report shall be sent from the National Office to all Local branches with the issues worked at, the situation in the Office and the decisions that have been taken, as well as the plan of action (with the intention of informing on the issues and activities where cooperation with branches/board members/partner organizations could be useful or required). The report shall be sent during the **last week of every two months**.

### Part 3: Communication

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1. All communication of the NB internally and externally should be copied to all NB members (except the OC in some cases and except moments when it would not be appropriate to do so).
  2. The National Board discusses and directs the National President about ISU's official communication, in accordance with ISU Constitution and the strategic and ongoing policies. The National President speaks for and leads ISU in official meetings.
  3. Information/decisions related to LM, NA and others from the National Office to the local branches and partners should be agreed upon by the entire EB before NP and/or OC sending.
  4. NP is in charge to inform to rest of EB and NB members about communication internal and external in ISU, including EB meetings agenda and practical information. NP will send a draft agenda of NB meetings to NB Chairman makes a final agenda.

#### *NB Meeting minutes and protocols*

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**Minutes of the meeting:** the document that is considered internal. The minutes contain the most important and sensitive information about the meeting of the NB.

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They are structured accordingly: agenda of the meeting, short description of the discussion linked to each part of the agenda, decisions proposed (if reasonable), decisions approved, number of votes in favor, number of votes against decisions, the tasks dedicated to whom, deadline of fulfillment.

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**Protocols of the meeting:** Protocol is a shorter version of minutes which is considered public (can be presented outside the organization). It consists of the decisions approved by

195 the NB.

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197 **Reports:** reports are generally considered as a description of activities.

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199 A report always contains: time frame, who prepared the report, to whom the report is addressed,  
200 the description of the activity, the summary of decisions taken over the time period, the outputs  
201 or findings of some phenomena, and recommendations if appropriate.

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#### Part 4: NB and EB activities

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206 1. The EB meetings shall happen twice a month, either gathering physically or virtually, but at least  
207 one of them physically. Meetings could happen more often if the necessity arises.

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209 2. The National President and/or a EB members can call for a EB meeting in a written form. At least  
210 2 days should be allowed to respond to the call of the meeting. The date could be adjusted  
211 according to the availability of the NB. The agenda has to be sent out at least 24 hours before the  
212 board meeting.

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214 3. The National President will be chairing all the Board meetings. Taking minutes will rotate among  
215 the Board members in the absence of the OC.

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217 4. In order to have a valid decision making process, at least 2 board members have to be present at  
218 the National Board Meeting. If that quorum is not satisfied, no board decision can be taken. In the  
219 presence of just 2 Board members, the decisions MUST be taken unanimously. In the case of  
220 disagreement among the 3 present members, the disagreement could be included in the minutes  
221 of the meeting but all EB decisions are binding to its members.

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223 5. Board decisions regarding one specific case can also be taken by e-mail. The e-mail will contain  
224 the proposal and the replies will be considered as the opinion followed by the vote of each board  
225 member. NP is in charge of communication if a decision has to be taken by e-mail.

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227 6. In case of disagreement or inability to work democratically within the Board, the first time the  
228 problem should be discussed/raised in the EB. It is often best to keep this conversation informal at  
229 first between the EB because sometimes this may be the result of a misunderstanding. There should  
230 be a note of the EB discussion and what was agreed. In the event of failure to comply with either the  
231 ISU National Constitution or the Internal NB working guidelines, then the Organizational Consultant  
232 is to be invited to advise on the situation or resolution of the conflict, in case of failure, the National  
233 President calls an external mediator (Members of former ISU Presidents and Board  
234 members/NSO/LNU).

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236 7. At each EB and NB meeting should be included an open discussion to discuss other issues not included  
237 in the meeting agenda, and a meeting evaluation to discuss possible improvements of the meetings

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239 8. If a NB member fails to attend two (2) meetings without a valid excuse, fails to comply with either the  
240 ISU National Constitution or the Internal NB working guidelines, or consistently does not complete



241 tasks agreed upon by the NB, he/she's position can be suspended by a 2/3 majority vote of the NB.  
242 All absences to EB and NB meetings should be communicated by e-mail to both NP and OC.  
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244 9. A 15 minutes' delay to the EB meetings, is considered a fail to attend the meeting. All delays with a  
245 valid excuse should be communicated to NP by e-mail or phone with deadline 15 minutes before the  
246 EB meeting starts  
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248 10. NB members should confirm one week before the NB meeting to NP their attendance.  
249 All delays with a valid excuse should be communicated to NP by e-mail or phone with  
250 deadline 16:00 of the previous day the NB meeting will take place  
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### 252 **Part 5. Expenses**

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254 1. The National Board is legally responsible for ISU finances, management and disposal of in a proper  
255 manner. The National Board:

- 256 I. executes all decisions of a financial nature, ISU's accounting and budget  
257 II. makes sure that ISU has a sound and efficient financial management  
258 III. with the assistance of the OC to prepare financial reports, cost forecasting, analysis and  
259 proposed budgets  
260 IV. to keep National Assembly abreast of ISU's financial condition and development  
261 V. The National President has to be informed of any expenses when a NB represents ISU to  
262 approve it.  
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265 2. Travel and subsistence costs  
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267 a) ISU covers travel and accommodation costs related to National Board activities. Travel and  
268 accommodation to meetings and events should be undertaken in the cheapest way. Cheapest means  
269 must not cause big inconvenience. The same applies if other special considerations make it necessary  
270 to use other more expensive modes of travel. Discounted tickets must be used when possible, and  
271 accommodations are covered under the price of a double room.  
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273 b) Covered trips include similar to and from residential and educational institution in Norway. Travel  
274 to and from elsewhere must be clarified with National President before the trip is booked. Travel to  
275 and from overseas should be cleared with the National President.  
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277 c) Taxis may be used where this is the cheapest or only transportation mode. It should not used  
278 when one has the opportunity for other modes of transportation. Taxi use must be approved by  
279 the National President.  
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282 3. Meals  
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284 a) ISU covers expenses on meals for National Board activities. Expenditure on meals beyond the  
285 planned National Board activities must be specified in the expenses form of ISU. The National  
286 Board is delegated to set individual rules for each event. The National President can make personal  
287 considerations for the National Board and others.  
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289 b) Costs of alcoholic beverages are not covered.  
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294 c) All meetings in representation of ISU should be taken in ISU office, unless is an ISU partner  
295 organization or Norwegian official institution requires to meet in a different place. The National  
296 President can make personal considerations.  
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298 d) The meals expenses should not exceed 150 NOK at EB meetings and a total maximum amount for  
299 each NB meeting expenses of 800 NOK. All meetings where a EB represents ISU needs to be  
300 approved by NP. Those meal meetings if needed should not exceed 150 NOK for lunch and dinner,  
301 and 50 NOK for rest of meetings during the day. Same rules apply to NB if any members acts  
302 representing ISU that NP approve  
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304 4. Payments and refunds  
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306 a) All receipts and other documentation for all expenditures must in all cases be submitted to the  
307 Organizational Consultant. All travel expenses and other expenses shall be on the prescribed  
308 forms. Travel and subsistence expenses are refundable mainly in arrears. Travel expenses shall be  
309 approved and signed by the National President before payment can take place.  
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311 5. Other matters  
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313 a) Telephone : ISU covers all expenses related to the organization mobile phone. Expenses for  
314 private cell phone to National Board are covered by agreement approved by the National  
315 President.  
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320 **Part 6. Transparency**

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322 Bearing in mind the preamble of the ISU constitution the Board shall adhere to the highest  
323 standards of transparency permissible by Norwegian law towards its members. Decisions and  
324 official protocols of Board meetings will be made available to all members, partner organizations  
325 and the Ministry of Education upon request or as part of regular information exchange.  
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327 1. The minutes shall be made available to local branches upon request and under an agreement of  
328 confidentiality. Norwegian law (mainly on protection of personal information) and organizational  
329 ethics must be followed when disclosing non-official information. Example: Where a board  
330 member considers (on good grounds) the inside information to be potentially harmful if disclosed,  
331 he/she may request that (at least informal) board approval be required for disclosure.  
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333 2. Protocols and minutes do not require recording of the personal votes. However, if a board  
334 member considers it necessary, he/she will have the possibility to explain his/her vote in the  
335 minutes. The explanation should be presented before the board meeting ends.  
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337 3. Any valid decision is binding to all Board members. However, if a board member expresses strong  
338 disagreement or considers the decision to be against his/hers principles, he/she has the right to



339 have this noted in the official protocols.

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### **Part 7. Finances**

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344 1. All decisions of the National Board regarding the finances have to be public, since the National  
345 Board is legally responsible (having legal access to the ISU bank accounts and expending the  
346 money). The minutes of all Board decisions regarding the finances will be available to members of  
347 the organization, our partners and the Ministry of Education at any time.

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349 2. The National President, together with the Organizational Consultant, presents a proposal for the  
350 budget. The budget will be explained and discussed at the National Board. The National Board can  
351 take decisions regarding specific budget posts but if those decisions are considered inappropriate  
352 or against the guidelines of application made to the Ministry of Education or any other  
353 authority/organization which provides funding for the ISU, the National President can call for the  
354 formation of a control committee to revise that decision.

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### **Additional Notes**

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358 The guidelines shall be deemed effective and binding from 1st August 2016.

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