



## **Caroline Pledger**

Age: 23

University: Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU)

Upcoming Studies: Masters, International Relations

Current Studies: Bachelors, International Environment and Development Studies at NMBU

Dear Fellow Delegates and International Students,

It is with honor and passion that I propose my candidacy for the position of Political Affairs Officer for the National Board of ISU.

To me, the person who deserves to be elected to this position is one who exemplifies a commitment to the legacy and values of the International Student Union. Having been involved at the local level for two years, I feel I understand our diverse community of students, and given my personal experience, represent the core principles of internationalization that ISU stands for.

Let me share how ISU has imparted both personal and professional connections in my life. When I first arrived to study in Norway in the Summer of 2014, I felt nervous and quite alone. By joining the board of my local ISU branch in Ås I quickly gained friends, many who felt just like I did, and we soon formed a family of close-knit internationals who worked to make our community open to Norwegian students as well. Over my two years working as Social Media and Communications Officer, we promoted several media campaigns that helped to spread our message of internationalization and inclusion, and, at the administrative level we successfully petitioned to have all university communication produced in Norwegian and English.

What ISU encouraged me to do was participate, even when the tasks seemed too big to conquer. As an individual, and then, even more powerfully within a team of people, I have worked towards these goals: improving student welfare in housing and studies, and promoting a better representation of international students and their affiliated concerns in the Norwegian student parliament on our campus. These are skills that I feel are easily transferrable to the role of Political Affairs Officer and given my consistent experience with both university administrations and students politics, I know I will excel at communicating our message to institutions at a higher level.

In fact, through my experience working as the first intern within the new ISU Embassies program, I have already made many contacts within Oslo's civil society, institutional, cultural and governmental communities. Reaching out to this network over the following year, I will seek to foster larger projects, cooperation, and support from organizations currently uninvolved in ISU's political and social platforms.

Indeed, while working at the Embassy, I proved instrumental in elevating their programs online. Given my enthusiasm for branding and my social media savvy, I quickly gained followers on Twitter and Facebook for the Embassy's accounts, liaised internal and external communications on behalf of the Cultural Affairs Department, and, when given larger projects to manage, I promoted our role in managing projects for the Nordic Film Institute, the Oslo World Music Festival, and the United Nations Oslo Governance Center— all organizations I hope to connect to ISU.

Coming from Washington, DC, USA, I have always been aware of and passionate about politics. Now, living in Norway, I have become quite involved with many student political associations at NMBU and am studying social sciences specifically to enhance my understanding of how politics can best serve a society. Because one in five students is international on my campus, it is my wish to push my involvement further this upcoming year to represent their concerns, and yours, to the national level.

The position of Political Affairs Officer requires that one is not afraid to take risks. As someone who has themselves pushed to learn Norwegian, studied full-time while managing ISU board positions, traveled to three different continents for field work during my studies, and made lasting friendships, both international and Norwegian, I feel I am the best candidate to do that.

Whether we are faced with challenges or partnerships, you can know that I will champion every political and social position on behalf of this organization to the best of my capabilities. From my perspective, our strength comes in showing Norwegians, and others alike, that our presence in studying here benefits other students, faculty, and the greater communities we live in—that, for however long we may study here, we are working to make Norway our home.

Please allow me to use my creativity, motivation, and ambition to rally for our interests, in any way necessary. If given the opportunity to serve on the National Board, I look forward to working for you.

Warm Regards,

Caroline Pledger