

Leah Rachel Rea
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FAO IAPSS Secretariat
IAPSS Secretary General

By email: secgen@iapss.org

Subject: IAPSS General Assembly 2023 - Submission of nomination for Advisory Board

Date: 26 April 2023

To whom it may concern,

I hope you are well. In advance of the IAPSS General Assembly 2023, I am writing to express my interest in standing for a position on the Advisory Board of the IAPSS. Having served in the role as a member of the Advisory Board since June 2022, I would welcome the opportunity to continue to serve IAPSS and its membership in this role.

I am a scholarship PhD candidate at the Transitional Justice Institute, Ulster University, where I am undertaking interdisciplinary research in the areas of Law and Political Science. As outlined in my attached platform statement, I have extensive experience in serving on Boards, and working with colleagues to provide advice and support regarding the strategic direction of an organisation.

Further, I have strong experience of serving within student representative bodies, and of engaging in constructive, collaborative dialogue to identify issues and devise solutions on matters of concern raised by students.

The IAPSS serves as an important representative and supportive body to students of political science on an international scale. It continues to provide an excellent, supportive platform for engagement, development, and learning. I would be honoured to be entrusted to support the IAPSS in its work through utilising my experience to provide direction and guidance by continuing to serve on the Advisory Board.

May I thank you for your consideration of my application, and for the opportunity to apply to contest for this position. Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With warmest regards,

Leah

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Transitional Justice Institute, School of Law, Ulster University

Platform Statement: IAPSS Advisory Board



I am seeking your support to serve on the Advisory Board of the IAPSS for another term, and am happy to present my Platform Statement for your consideration.

About Leah

I am a scholarship PhD student at the Transitional Justice Institute of Ulster University, Northern Ireland. I am also a Teaching Assistant within the School of Applied Policy and Social Sciences. Within my research, I am examining the development of human rights in constitutional arrangements through an investigation of the relationship between constitutional conventions relating to devolution and the progression of human rights standards in Northern Ireland in the specific context of language rights. My research is interdisciplinary in the areas of Law and Political Science. I have a strong academic and research background which illustrates my research interests in the areas of the protection and promotion of human rights, constitutionalism, parliamentary procedure, and comparative analysis. I hold a MA with Distinction in Violence, Terrorism, and Security; a MA with Distinction in Conflict Transformation and Social Justice; and a LLB (Hons) degree, all from Queen's University Belfast, where I was also awarded a scholarship to study abroad in the United States for the academic year 2014-2015. I am a member of the Washington Ireland Program Class of 2021, a programme which focuses on service and leadership.

My motivation

I am running to serve on the Advisory Board for a second term because I understand how important it is to have a body which provides scrutiny, support, and guidance within a busy membership-based organisation which advocates for students and engages with other organisations. At a time when IAPSS is undergoing some structural changes and membership growth, I would like to work with colleagues to support the Global Board in its work to respond to new challenges and opportunities so that our organisation can continue to provide the engaging and supportive learning and development opportunities we all have availed of.

I know that the IAPSS serves a vibrant and diverse community of students across the world, and provides a unique space for shared learning and academic development. The IAPSS has a strong and active governance structure to help it realise its responsibilities and deliver upon its representative commitments. It is therefore important that the IAPSS governance structure includes a robust Advisory Board to provide guidance and support in the delivery of the organisation's vision and responsibilities, and to assist the Global Board in achieving its strategic aims.

Moreover, the IAPSS actively advocates for students, and engages in lobbying for students with other bodies and organisations. The Advisory Board also provides important guidance and support to the Global Board in the undertaking of these responsibilities.

I have strong experience in serving in advisory and representative roles, and experience in student advocacy and support. I feel I can continue to bring this experience to the IAPSS' Advisory Board, and continue to work alongside colleagues to provide an effective monitoring body and comprehensive support to the Global Board.

My experience: advisory

I was grateful to have been elected to serve on the Advisory Board at the IAPSS GA 2022.

Since 2018, I have actively served as a Trustee and a Board Member of Abbey Sure Start, an important charitable organisation which provides support in early years development for families residing in areas of socio-economic deprivation. In this role, I have provided advice and support in the delivery of the organisation's strategic vision and aims. I have also provided advice and guidance as a serving Board Member of Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey since 2019. Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey is a charitable organisation providing independent advice on socio-economic matters such as social security support. In both roles, I have reviewed strategic plans, financial statements, manager's reports, and other documents relevant to the delivery of the organisations' responsibilities, and worked with colleagues to approve the organisational direction.

In addition, from March 2022 – March 2023, I served as a member of the student Secretariat overseeing the development and implementation of the Model UPR simulation of the Human Rights Centre, University of Padova. I have provided advice on the development of the engagement and outreach of the programme, as well as guidance on the devising of the simulation. I was subsequently invited to provide strategic support and guidance to the new Secretariat for the 2023 Model, a role I have held since April 2023.

My experience: student representation and advocacy

I have strong experience of holding student representative roles, and serving student constituencies, particularly in engagement and advocacy with University Faculties and Departments, and senior staff.

I currently serve as the Representative for PhD researchers within the School of Law at Ulster University on the Doctoral College's PhD Forum, a position I have held since 2021. This entails consultation and engagement with PhD researchers to identify any issues of concern or queries to be relayed to senior staff and the Doctoral College, and undertaking advocacy where required. I also am accountable to my fellow PhD researchers and produce reports and updates for dissemination. I was accepted to serve on the Student Panel (October 2022- May 2023) and provide ongoing engagement and advocacy to senior staff and student officers.

I was elected to serve as the Course Representative for the constituency of Second Year Full Time PhD Researchers in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Faculty for the mandate 2021-2022. Within this role, I served as a representative and advocate for second year PhD researchers in the Faculty at UUSU, the students' union, at events and meetings. I particularly lobbied for a change to the student representative structure to ensure PhD researchers have full representation and recognition within the UUSU system.

Whilst undertaking my second Masters degree, I was elected to serve as the School Representative for School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics (October 2019 – July 2020) and as Course Representative for MA Violence, Terrorism and Security (October 2019 – December 2020). In both roles, I advocated for students through engagement with senior School and Faculty staff. I chaired meetings of the Staff-Student Consultative Committee as School Representative, and identified issues and areas of concern, working with senior staff to implement change and communication with students. I particularly worked to provide support to students and relay their concerns upon the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the transition to online education. I successfully lobbied for the dissemination of clear and accessible guidance and updates, as well as the extension of deadlines for assignments due within the second semester of 2020.

In addition, I also served as a Student Councillor on QUBSU Student Council between October 2019-June 2020, serving as a representative and advocate at Council meetings.

I believe I have the necessary competencies and experience to participate and contribute within the IAPSS Advisory Board as illustrated through my strong academic record, my representative and advisory experience, and wider professional experience. If elected, I would work alongside

colleagues to provide an active body which provides effective scrutiny, assistance, and guidance to the Global Board, and promotes engagement and openness with IAPSS membership.

May I thank you for your consideration of my application, and for the opportunity to contest for a role upon the IAPSS' Advisory Board. I would warmly appreciate your support for my candidacy. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at rea-l2@ulster.ac.uk.

With warmest regards,

Leah

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