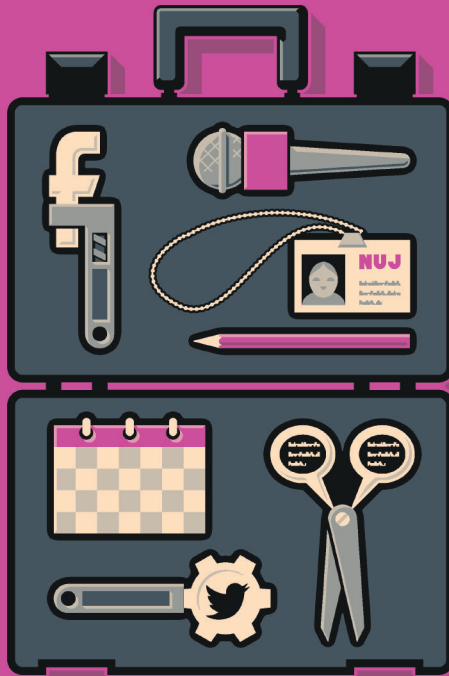


NUJ Student Recruitment Toolkit

*Your guide to building effective
student recruitment campaigns*



NUJ
NATIONAL UNION
OF
JOURNALISTS

www.nuj.org.uk

Student membership of the NUJ is a passport to a career in the industry, one that steers and supports journalists through their careers. The union provides access to several networks and ways in which student members can become more active, building our collective power across industries. The NUJ's offering includes a student press card; an essential tool for budding reporters covering events and confirms the identity of members to authorities.

Use this toolkit to inform student recruitment campaigns that consider practical action to engage with new members.



Plan a timetable of action

Whilst recruitment campaigns can run well throughout the year, ensuring any planning of engagement with students occurs in advance of Autumn start dates when cohorts begin journalism and media courses, can prove successful. By starting early, you can maximise opportunities to build networks and promote the union to students.

Contact student newspapers and radio stations and build relationships with course leaders who can help spread knowledge of the NUJ to students. Ensure reps are allocated to attend events to engage with prospective members, using the union's recruitment materials. By mapping how you will build an effective campaign, you can ensure you identify relevant courses and universities to engage with early on. A full list of journalism courses in Ireland, and a helpful UCAS tool can be found at <https://www.nuj.org.uk/resource/student-recruitment-campaign.html>

Tailor approaches to recruitment

Student members may be at different stages of studying and gauging their knowledge of the union will be a helpful start to conversations. They may not always be aware they are eligible for membership, and their interest in joining will differ from person to person. Those studying courses within media but not journalism specifically, may be surprised to learn that the NUJ is the trade union for them. When engaging with students over 16, remember to explore this using language that is jargon free and welcoming. The union's equality bodies, and democratic decision-making processes lie at the core of the NUJ and journalism

students will be interested in the work of the councils to ensure our industry thrives. Remind students that as members, they can become involved in activism within the union and learn more about our structures and why they matter.

When to arrange events and talks

Ask tutors for permission to set up a stall or guest talk at the start of the academic year for first year or final year/masters' students. September is a good time to introduce the union to freshers and May is the time to remind final year and postgraduate students about the value of membership and retaining membership after graduation.

Plan key talking points ahead of events to ensure you inform potential joiners of all the NUJ has to offer, and how the union can support students beyond their studies. Many students will go on to freelance at some stage in their career, so seize the opportunity to highlight our campaigning work including the Fair Deal for Freelances page. <https://www.nuj.org.uk/resource/fair-deal-for-freelances.html>

Encourage student activism

Successful student recruitment campaigns also consider how to encourage participation within the union. Be creative in the approaches you adopt, using a mix of online and in-person methods. Try social media takeover days where you allow student members to plan content and post on your platforms, sharing their experiences of being an NUJ member. Could you facilitate a student meet and greet? Remember, if this takes place online, you should ensure meetings are inclusive with closed captions provided.

Plan communications to student members

First impressions count. Be proactive in outlining the work of the chapel and consider a welcome email with an introductory message from an NUJ rep. This can provide an insight into priority areas and next steps in union participation. Include a section for students in your branch newsletter, reminding them of upcoming events they can attend. A wide range of union events is listed at www.nuj.org.uk/events

Remind members about how they become involved in the union by sharing an interview with a rep about their NUJ journey so far.

Take steps to retain student members

Running a recruitment campaign can be a great way of organising members within the union. Use quotes from existing student and full members that highlight the importance of being in the union, and the impact our work has on the media industry. Plan an audit to identify student members within your branch early on - this way you'll have accurate records of membership mapped and can review information you circulate to members before courses end. This is a great opportunity to explain why remaining an NUJ member is important for next career steps.

Reference useful case studies

The union actively campaigns on equalities issues, for media freedom, and ethical journalism. When speaking with prospective students, discuss the union's successes to illustrate our efforts supporting members. Our crib sheet on making contact with



students outlines helpful detail on how to forge useful links and encourage membership.

It also includes examples of cases with union backing including Chris Mullin's protection of sources victory. <https://www.nuj.org.uk/resource/making-contact-with-students-guide-for-branches.html>

In March 2022, the union secured an Old Bailey ruling against the West Midlands Police who were trying to get him to reveal his sources - the NUJ will always protect a member who is being challenged to produce journalistic materials to the authorities. Mullin said: "The right of a journalist to protect his or her sources is fundamental to a free press in a democracy. I am grateful to the National Union of Journalists for their unswerving support and to my legal representatives, Louis

Charalambous and Gavin Millar QC.”
[https://www.nuj.org.uk/learn/
resources/resource-library-search.
html?topic=chris-mullin](https://www.nuj.org.uk/learn/resources/resource-library-search.html?topic=chris-mullin)

Another useful case study to highlight to student members is the union's role in journalist Samira Ahmed's equal pay win. In 2020, Ahmed was represented by the NUJ and won a landmark equal pay tribunal after discovering a male colleague was earning six times more than she was for presenting a remarkably similar programme. The union has won millions of pounds for members at the BBC and other workplaces, and it's useful to include these in recruitment communications.

Promote the George Viner Memorial Fund

The George Viner Memorial Fund is the NUJ's charity which improves the diversity of journalists working in the British and Irish media, by providing bursaries to help with studies and subsistence. Each year, the union encourages journalism students from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds to submit applications. The NUJ has produced a short video featuring journalist and previous George Viner scholar, Monika Plaha, about her positive experiences on the scheme. Watch the video and show it to students at college/university talks.

[https://www.nuj.org.uk/resource/
george-viner-memorial-fund-2022.
html](https://www.nuj.org.uk/resource/george-viner-memorial-fund-2022.html)

Share your successes

Chapels may adopt different approaches to student recruitment and by sharing practices that have worked well, other union reps can consider including them in their campaigns. Email campaigns@nuj.org.uk with

examples, and we'll collate tips to ensure our resources are updated with what's worked best.

We're also able to signpost you to helpful resources to kickstart your campaign or expand on guidance in this toolkit to boost your recruitment efforts.

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