



BRIGHT IDEAS

GUIDANCE

**ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
STUDENTS'
UNION**

Introduction & appropriate ideas.

So you want to submit a Bright Idea? Fantastic! We've put together some brief guidance on how to get the most out of your idea, or where it might benefit you to actually go elsewhere.

Before we get into developing your idea, let's cover what is not appropriate for this platform and where else it could go:

- **Ratifications of student groups** – If you want to start up a student group, you should contact the Vice President Societies & Sport or check out our website su.rhul.ac.uk/opportunities/create. All ratifications take place within the Societies, Sports & Opportunities Executive.
- **Laws and Governance** – Does your idea breach or contradict a law or governing policy external to the Students' Union such as licensing and the Education Act? If so then we won't be able to act upon your idea. However, you could look to launch a campaign for change.
- **"I need help next week!"** – If your idea relates to a time limited action then this platform might not be right for you. Ideas once made live won't be directed further for fourteen days from the moment it goes live. You may want to submit it directly to an Executive or the Officer Group.

Submitting your idea.

Writing your idea.

When writing up your idea, it doesn't need to be long but you should consider including these three points:

- **Problem**
- **Example**
- **Solution**

What is the cause of you wanting to submit an idea? Is there a particular problem? This is where you should start with your idea. Outlining the current situation will provide students with the insight of what is going on and allow them to understand you.

Providing an example can help you in a couple of ways. Either an example can be used to show how the problem or point of improvement is having an impact. You could use your lived experience in relation to the problem here. Alternatively you could use an example as part of your solution.

So your solution. Have you had any thoughts regarding what exactly can be done? If not, that's fine and we can work with you to identify possible solutions. But if you can include one in your idea, it's much more likely to get the support from fellow students.

Don't forget to do some research! Your idea may have been looked into elsewhere. There may be existing research or statistics that you can use to back up your idea, whether it's enhancing student experiences or by highlighting where solutions have worked.

Union aims.

Whenever you're considering your idea, try and incorporate one of our strategic aims into the idea! They will help both yourself and us, see how they fit into the wider work of the organisation. What are our aims you ask?

- **Improve your education:** The number one reason you're a student at Royal Holloway, and it's what you've told us you spend most of your time doing.
- **Make your campus fun:** Something we've always known that we need to do, and the single most popular area identified by you as a priority for us.
- **Look after your wellbeing:** We know it's really important that we play a role in supporting your health and general wellbeing, and that money is an issue.
- **Make you more employable:** The second highest result for what you want us to focus on. We know that once you've finished studying the graduate job market is tough.
- **Empower you to change the world around you:** Higher Education is transformative for people at all stages of their life. It inspires and drives people to look at things how they could be, rather than how they are.

Examples.

To give you some guidance we've included a few well written ideas below from a variety of ideas that incorporate some of the guidance provided above.

Male Mental Health Campaign.

The prevalence of mental health issues experienced by men across Britain has become a focal point in recent years. Just over three out of four suicides (76%) are by men and suicide is the biggest cause of death for men under 35, whilst 12.5% of men in the UK are suffering from one of the common mental health disorders. Throughout this campaign I will seek to understand the male perspective on seeking help, through discussion with young men on campus. I want to challenge how men interact with mental health and how they engage with support services and networks, looking at what more we as an institution can do to help. I would seek to help create a culture on campus where men feel comfortable in discussing their mental health – with anyone from peers to friends to professional services.

Greenery in the Davison Library.

Whilst the Davison library is well-equipped, its grey floor tiles, grey carpet and pale wood panelling result in a rather sterile and cold atmosphere. It often feels soulless and claustrophobic. The addition of greenery in the library would not only make the working environment more pleasant, but be beneficial to the mental health of students. There is plenty of open space in the library's atrium for plants and other forms of greenery, and other UK universities such as Exeter have implemented greenery into their libraries, particularly in their atria. I believe addition of plants inside the library would benefit students and staff for the following reasons: Plants have been linked to an increase in creative thinking, and a 2016 study, conducted at the University of Illinois confirmed that greenery helps reduce psychological stress. The presence of plants would greatly improve the mental well-being of students, especially around the busier times of term, when the library sees higher usage. The presence of plants in the library would be beneficial to the air quality and visual environment of the library. The glass roof of the library would ensure enough sunlight for plants in the atrium to grow.

Lobby the College to Commit to Divesting from Fossil Fuels.

The fossil fuel industry is driving us towards global climate crisis. 200 publicly-traded fossil fuel companies hold the vast majority of the world's proven coal, oil and gas reserves. These companies hold five times more carbon in their fossil fuels reserves than we can safely afford to burn to stop runaway climate change. The College needs to implement a divestment policy to symbolise its commitment to play its part to prevent irreversible climate change for future generations. Over a third of UK universities have committed to divesting and it's time that Royal Holloway did too! Recommendations: - The College to amend the ethical investment policy ASAP to preclude investments in FTSE All Share Index stocks in fossil fuel companies - Reinvest at least 10% of divested funds into local community energy projects on and off campus (eg MaidEnergy's proposal to install solar panels on Halls) This campaign fits in with SU's strategic aim to empower students to change the world around them and therefore it should be a leader of the divest campaign on behalf of the student body.

Tags explained.

Once you've written up your idea, you should check out the tags. The tags help us and your fellow students easily identify what themes your idea fit into. They also happen to fit nicely into existing structures within the Union or College. You can check as many as are relevant! So what are they?

- **Wellbeing** – Any ideas that have an impact on student wellbeing at Royal Holloway. This includes mental and physical health.
- **Education** – Any ideas that have a link to education. Regardless of whether it's more directed at undergraduate or post graduate studies.
- **Community** – Any ideas that have an impact on the community. This could be within Royal Holloway, or the local and wider communities.
- **Student Group** – Any ideas that link to student group activities or opportunities for development. (Reminder: ratifications will not be accepted)
- **Union Services** – Ideas that may consider Tommy's Kitchen, The Packhorse, Union Shop etc.
- **Facilities** – Ideas that may consider facilities such as Medicine, EWD, Sports Centre etc.
- **Events** – Any events that the Union or College host such as the Give It A Go programme, club events, college events, etc.
- **College** – Any idea impacting the College.
- **Students' Union** – Any idea impacting the Students' Union.



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