

# SRUCSA Annual Report 2022-2023

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## Introduction – Sabbatical Team 22/23

SRUCSA is a student-led organisation that exists to ensure the best possible experience for all students at SRUC.

Just by enrolling at SRUC, students automatically gain free membership of SRUCSA! We exist to support the student population and encourage student to contact us with any college-related issues - if we can't help you, we'll make sure to find someone who can.

We are made up of three full time elected sabbatical officers and two full-time staff members!

This year, we also hired temporary staff members to work on specific projects - such as the elections - and we have also hired a part-time community coordinator for the coming year using money that was saved during the teaching strikes!

## Events

### Welcome Week

The SRUCSA team worked extra hard to put on a social event at every faculty for this year's new students.

Claire and Roz delivered a Garden Gathering at SRUC Barony. We teamed up with staff on campus to ensure we delivered a successful event for students. We opened the event up to staff as well as students to ensure there was a community feel. The sun was shining, even in the first week of September!

We hired a SRUC Alumni called The Spitting Pig to serve a hog roast and we had live music from the talented Jamie Clark! The atmosphere was warming in the courtyard and it's safe to say a lovely evening was had by all. We were over the moon with the turnout of both staff and students and want to extend our thanks to everyone who helped make it happen.

We received donations from Morrisons in Ayr, Lantra, Dear Green and lots more! Wild and Kind also produced our lovely notepads for the occasion! I mean who does not love a freebie!?

It is important that students get the opportunity to socialise at the beginning of the year, and we wanted to do something that everyone could get involved in. This was a big focus in all our projects this year, and we did really well in pulling it off. We hope everyone had a fantastic time!

Liam put on a SRUCSA Social at the Kings Buildings campus on the Friday evening of Welcome Week. The event included a free meal for every attendee (and a takeaway box full of leftovers since way too much food was ordered!), live DJ set and sound system, pop-up bar and a campfire!

Since this was the first academic year that was to be fully unconstrained by covid-19, Liam felt it was super important to create a chance for classmates to meet each other and have a bit of a boogie at the beginning of the academic year.

Claire and Roz entertained Students at SRUC Craibstone with live music from Katie Whittaker and food from SRUC Alumni - The Spitting Pig. There was also a photo booth marquee for students to take selfies with the Instax camera and keep them as a memory from their first week on campus!

Claire managed to secure a range of freebies including the Alcohol-Free Spirit - donated by Feragaia, which allowed students to try a ginger beer mocktail.

Katie played a range of classic pop tunes from past and present, and it brought life to the event! We were also joined by Aberdeen Sports Village and Dyce Rugby Club.

Thanks to all who came along, and we hope you had a fantastic welcome week event!



**Careers Fair 2022 & 2023**

SRUC Barony

In November 2022, Roz worked in partnership with Joyce Dickson (South and West Careers Advisors) and Alex Reynolds (Academic Liaison Manager) to run a small careers event for Students at Barony. The event was a huge success and we had around twenty employers come along and exhibit.

In February 2023, Roz also got involved in the SRUC-wide Careers Events that were taking place by going along to the Barony one and supporting Joyce. We were joined by many exhibitors and students found both careers events really useful to help them on their future career journey.



## Winter Wonderland

*SRUC Elmwood – December 2022*

Claire and Roz ran a successful event back in December – Winter Wonderland. Claire led this project with the vision of bringing the staff, students, and the local community together to spread some festive cheer. This is an event that had not been done before as it was previously thought to not be achievable. This was a lesson learned for the SRUCSA Team, that we can aspire and achieve anything if we put our mind to it!

Well... that's exactly what happened and what an amazing success it was! The event included student and staff craft stalls, external crafters, and bakers, and two amazing musical acts.

We were overwhelmed with positive comments, and it was a delight to see our students exhibiting their crafts, baking and lots of other festive treats! Some of the students had never done anything



like this before and were keen to get involved. Students also liked the idea of travelling to another campus and socialising. This event was supported by Elmwood staff including the estates team and the lovely lecturers.

Massive thank you to SRUC Board member Mike Smith for coming along and supporting our project.

Reviews for Winter Wonderland:

“Great event, well attended. Chatted with various stall holders and shoppers. Organisers very helpful on the day, help with WIFI, table layout etc. Appreciated the free table very much and also the tasty treats throughout the afternoon!”

“Bravo to SRUCSA – this event lifted everyone’s spirits and brought us all together with the community.”

“It had a nice atmosphere, and I was sat between two lovely people.”

“It was extremely well run, and the staff were so unbelievably helpful. The live music and the baking demonstrations were amazing. Best fare I have attended.”

“Fantastic inclusive, community-based event.”



## Community Building

*SRUC Barony*

### **Pool Evening – April 2023**

Roz supported students who wanted to organise a pool evening in the bar space at Barony. Roz secured donations of goodies, organised for the room to be free and supported students to encourage everyone to get involved.

### **Social Space Barony – May 2023**

Roz and the SRUCSA Team donated items such as a brand-new TV/DVD player, board games, puzzle books, cushions and snacks to the Barony Bar. This was to encourage students to use the social space to study, listen to music, play a board game, or have a play station night. This room isn't used enough and needed a little lift. SRUCSA was on it!



### **Fundraiser – May 2023**

Roz in partnership with the South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital and Animal Care Lecturer - Nicola Porter organised a fundraising evening, with pizza, live music, doughnuts, and tombola stalls. A great night was had by all!

“There should be more events like this.”

### **Student Meal at La Dolce Vitta in Dumfries – May 2023**

SRUCSA has supported many students end of year events. The focus of this project was to give students the opportunity to celebrate their achievements together as a class in a way of their choice. Vet nursing students at Barony had a fab evening! The meal was part funded by SRUCSA.

### **Student Meal at La Dolce Vitta in Dumfries – December 2022**

Roz also supported the postgraduate community by funding a meal for the students to go out and socialise together as they spend a lot of time studying away from campus.

“Just wanted to say thank you so much for the meal last night! We all had such a great time.”

## **The Organisation for the Wellbeing of Learners (OWLS)**

SRUC Elmwood

Claire had a vision of creating a generic social club with a focus on positive mental health and wellbeing. The aim was to create a safe space on campus and online that gave residential and non-residential students an opportunity to socialise and develop a student community.

Claire successfully established the Elmwood OWLS Club led by two students called Joe and Neil. They are currently organising fundraising stalls for the Elmwood Open day on Sunday the 11th of June 2023. The OWLS meet up regularly and SRUCSA often support by buying them a meal or facilitating the meeting.

#### *SRUC Online*

As well as the Elmwood OWLS, Claire and Roz have developed an online OWLS Group which consist of the Elmwood OWLS and SRUC students from all campuses, including distance-learners. This was to give all students an opportunity to get involved and be part of a wider social group. There is currently a Teams page that is monitored by SRUCSA and members of the Elmwood OWLS.

As part of the online OWLS, we ran an online talk called “Restoring the Balance” from the Barn Owl Trust. This was delivered on Wednesday the 3rd of May and we had a whopping 19 people in attendance including staff and students.

#### *SRUC Barony*

Roz has also been working closely with a group of students at Barony to establish an OWLS group. The main focus is to establish a wider social group, that brings students together no matter what their interests are, with a focus on positive mental health and wellbeing.

This could mean students organising a walk or an outing or event, or hosting guest speakers to talk about a range of subjects. The whole point is to encourage community building on campus. OWLS will work well if we are able to establish champions at each campus, with the hope of rolling out OWLS at every campus in the future. Roz kitted them out with OWLS Merch!





Claire and Roz were lucky enough to attend the Institute of Chartered Foresters Conference - Connecting Trees Farmers and Foresters, in Birmingham in April this year as part of their Continuous Professional Development.

They wanted to distribute their learning and ran an online Forestry Learning event for Students and Staff across the whole of SRUC.

Claire and Roz delivered an online Forestry Session for SRUC Staff and Students. Guest speakers included: Prof Davy McCracken (SRUC), Joyce Dickson (SRUC), Ben Law (SAC) Andrew Vaughn (Tillhill).

Around 28 Students and Staff members turned up which is a really good turnout! We hope everyone enjoyed the event.

## Campaigns/Projects

### Gown Fund 2022

Graduation is a time of year when students are expected to celebrate, but the additional costs surrounding graduation can often be a strain. In 2022, we partnered with SRUC Registry to help fund the cost of graduation gowns for students struggling with costs. We were able to provide financial support to cover the £28 gown hire for 25 students.

This was a great result, and we are keen to continue the project for graduates next year!

## Gender-Based Violence (“We Lit the Path”)

### SRUC Barony

20-22 North Co-President Cara led the Gender Based Violence Project. Along with 20-22 Central Co-President Amy and Roz, the team completed a series of walk rounds at each campus to identify any areas students may feel unsafe.

One of the recommendations we made to SRUC was lighting the path between Barony and Parkgate, which was a common route used by students to access the bus stop.

It originally had no lighting at all, and it was really dark in the winter. Initially the proposal was rejected, however the proposal was then re-looked at and the outcome was fantastic!

This is a significant result for our students, and we are absolutely delighted. We would like to acknowledge and thank The Campus & Estates Services for supporting our project and listening to the students.

The feedback from Students and Staff has been positive so far, and it honestly makes such a difference, which makes it all the more rewarding!

We would also like to acknowledge and thank Nick Sparks, Fiona Mackay, Malcolm Crowe, Alex Reynolds, Pearl Edgar, and the contractors involved in lighting the path.

We strive to build positive relationships with staff, and this is a great example of the results we can produce when we work together. A long-term legacy that SRUCSA can be proud of!



*1 The footpath into campus, now with lighting*

## **Student Sex Work**

In January 2023, SRUCSA was invited to participate in a campaign dedicated to supporting student sex workers at Scottish universities and HE colleges. At SRUCSA, we neither promote nor discourage students from entering sex work. However, we believe that any individual considering sex work should be able to make an informed decision. Studies show that this is an increasingly prevalent issue for students in the cost-of-living crisis, with as many as 20% of students considering engaging in sex work.

Thanks to the light we shone on this issue, SRUC's executive leadership team have committed to providing institution-wide access to a nationally recognised qualification - delivered by University of Leicester - which will educate SRUC support staff on how to provide assistance specifically to students involved in sex work.

We encourage any SRUC student in need of mental health support to contact SRUC Student Support Services ([studentsupportgeneral@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupportgeneral@sruc.ac.uk)) for further guidance. More specialised support and information can be accessed at one of the following charities dedicated to the rights and advocacy of sex workers: [Support for Student Sex Workers \(SfSSW\)](#), [ScotPep](#), [National Ugly Mugs \(NUM\)](#), and [SWARM](#).



## **Residencies/Residential Student Survey**

Whilst we love to shout about what is good at SRUC and SRUCSA, sometimes we have to fight for the less good parts. The problems we discovered with SRUC residential facilities was one of these parts.

Conversations about this issue were initiated with Liam by a group of residents from Oatridge campus. Surveying and reporting were carried out and used to present the issue in various committees and meetings. This work was then replicated for SRUC's other residential campuses (Elmwood and Barony) by Claire and Roz.

We met with representatives from the Campus and Estates Service (CES) and agreed to bring a "wish list" of requests from residential students.

We have seen some of these priority request met since this project began, such as more washing machines at Oatridge, and the CES have assured us that budget will be directed to these requests.

We wrote and presented a proposal to embed three annual meetings in the academic calendar where student residents can meet with representatives from the CES, academic and residential teams to feedback on what is/isn't good about their time living on-campus.

Claire also carried out a very successful in-person focus group with Elmwood residents, which generated important and useful information about the residential situation there. We hope that this can be used to fight for improved conditions by future SRUCSA projects.

## **National Society of Apprentices (NSoA)**

Liam collaborated with Ben Kinross from the National Society of Apprentices (NSoA) by bringing him over to Oatridge campus to meet with some of our engineering students!

A massive thanks to Fraser Wilson - the senior Engineering Tutor at Oatridge campus - for facilitating our meetings with his classes of Engineering apprentices!

Ben ran his 'sweetie game' workshop, in which apprentices use Starbursts as a 'currency' to assign value to which issues they feel are the most important to them.

Every group that we met with (and indeed every group that Ben has EVER met, which accounts for over 10,000 apprentices) chose apprentice pay as their number one issue!

Fortunately, later in the academic year, we managed to get the local Member of Parliament - Hannah Bardell - to visit the college and listen to what the apprentices had to say... Perhaps we'll get to hear her pose a question about apprentice pay to the prime minister at some point in the not-too-distant future.

## Social Media

The SRUCSA Team have worked hard over the last couple of years to increase our engagement on social media. We have done so by posting a weekly update to let students know what we are all working on each week.

We also post success stories, events, and lots of other useful information that students need to be aware of. Instagram is where we have the most engagement and that's where our efforts have been focused over the past year.

## "My Journey"

South and West Co-President Roz wanted to put together a portfolio of videos that enabled students to get an idea of potential career paths, and relayed the message that no career path is simple or straight forward and that sometimes you have to take risks - sometimes they will work out and sometimes they will not.

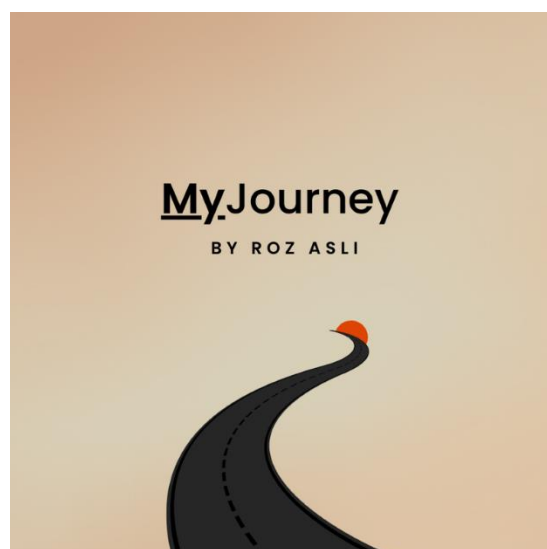
This led to Roz reaching out to staff, alumni, and board members from across SRUC to produce a video that would be called "My Journey". The aim of these videos was to illustrate each individual person's career journey, and include all the twists and turns, and adventures they have been on, to inspire Students at SRUC.

Roz was able to secure 20 videos, which is a really positive outcome. Roz then worked with staff and students to get the videos edited and ready to share. A current SRUC student was able to make an advertisement video to enhance the project, allowing a sneak peak of what these videos entailed.

A Message from Roz:

"I want to say a massive thank you to everyone who got involved from myself, and on behalf of the SRUC Students' Association Team. We are more than grateful to everyone who took the time to contribute and help make this project happen.

I hope that these videos will help encourage young people to follow their dreams and grab those opportunities when they swing around the corner. It can be tough, and sometimes not everything will work out for the best, but stay focused and some day you will be able to reflect and look at your own journey."



## Clubs and Societies

The growth of new student-led communities was a priority for all of us this year. As well as the one-off events we organised, we have managed to get several new clubs and societies started.

We created a Dungeons and Dragons club, and the Organisation for the Wellbeing of learners (OWLS) at Elmwood, and a foraging club and a hiking club at Edinburgh.

We are super grateful to the students who stepped up to lead these groups. Taking a risk with a new club is a courageous effort that we always admire.

We devised and ran a new workshop for helping get societies started. The workshop got the group to work together to think about the priorities of the new club in a way that also taught them about the leadership roles within a club. We then asked attendees to reflect on the roles and themselves so they could imagine themselves in the leadership roles and understand what they could get out of them.

## Annual Dialogues

In September 2022, right in the middle of welcome week, SRUC ran their annual institutional-led review (ILR) - also known as "Annual Dialogues".

This is a week-long process by which every subject area (or board of studies) within the college submits a report about how the last year has gone. A panel of colleagues is then formed who read all the annual reports, decide what the main themes of the reporting are and form questions based on these themes (an example theme being: career opportunities and industry connections, an example question: what plans does the agriculture (or other) board of studies have to develop its capacity for industry connections?).

The panel then spend around 3 hours per board of studies asking questions to teaching staff and course leaders and in the process, a set of actions for development in the coming year emerges.

SRUCSA members were part of this panel and fed into the process at the same level as any other SRUC colleague. Liam was also given the chance to chair one of the meetings which meant running the timings, ensuring everyone got the chance to speak and steering the meeting to productive ends.

This was a very good opportunity for the Co-Presidents to feed into the highest level of institutional reporting and strategic planning and whilst it was a herculean effort to participate in, especially alongside welcome week, we felt very privileged to be involved.

This process was repeated later in the year but with a more specific remit: student support services.

In early 2023, SRUC carried out another annual reporting process. This process is the same as the annual dialogues but rather than drawing data from all the academic boards of studies, it focusses on one element of the college and spends around 3 full days delving into it alone. 2023 saw SRUC delve into its student support services.

Liam got the opportunity to sit on this ILR and off the back of one of his suggestions, a new role within SRUC has emerged - a Student Support Services Lead - who will have strategic and operational driving force for all student support staff across SRUC. This will take a significant amount of pressure and responsibility from the Academic Liaison Managers (ALMs) at each campus and free up their time to focus on academic matters.





## Elections

### Co-President Election 2022

North Faculty Co-President	
Name:	No. of Votes:
Claire Williams	42
Charlie Dixon	18
Central Faculty Co-President	
Name:	No. of Votes:
Liam Thorpe	40
Lynn McLachlan	30
Fi Brown	29
South & West Faculty Co-President	
Name:	No. of Votes:
Roz Asli	26
Molly McClure	15
Eryl Whiteley	5

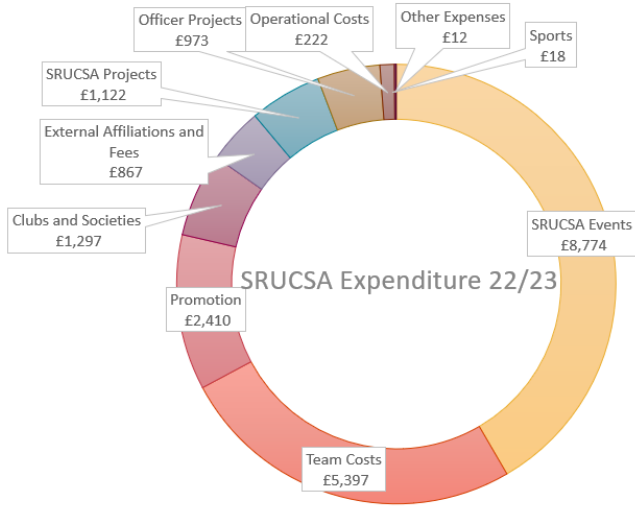
### Co-President Election 2023

Nominations for the SRUCSA Co-President election were open from 30<sup>th</sup> January – 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023. However, by the end of the nomination period there were no candidates standing. As a result, the Co-President election was rescheduled for spring, and nominations were officially re-opened from Monday 10<sup>th</sup> – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April. The deadline for nominations was subsequently changed to Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May to encourage more applicants. By the end of the nomination period there were four candidates standing, two of which were unopposed.

North Faculty Co-President	
Name:	No. of Votes:
Jeremiah Chibueze	10
Re-open Nominations (RON)	6
Central Faculty Co-President	
Name:	No. of Votes:
Damson Ellen	40
Re-open Nominations (RON)	1
South & West Faculty Co-President	
Name:	No. of Votes:
Schaun Shirkie	5
Catherine Stewart	27
Re-open Nominations (RON)	0

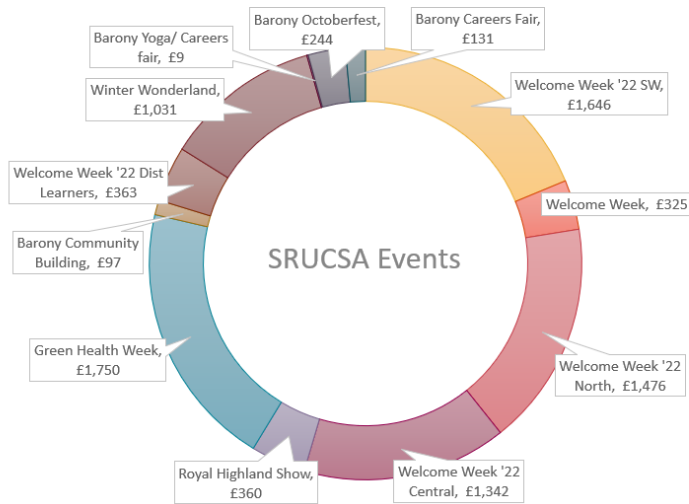
## Finances

Total Budget: £21, 093



2. SRUCSA Budget broken down into individual projects

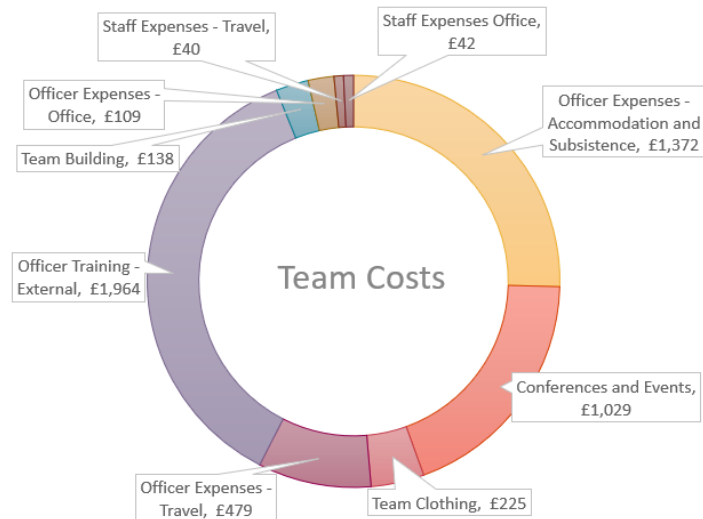
SRUCSA Events accounted for £8744 of the budget



3 Officer Projects broken down into individual costs.

Team Costs Accounted for £5397





4 Team Cost Broken down into individual areas

## External Affiliations

To aid us in our work, SRUCSA affiliates with organisations that share similar goals. This year we affiliated with the National Union of Students (NUS) who provide SRUCSA with training and understanding of national priorities of students. We also affiliated with British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) who provide national leagues for sporting activities for students that allows SRUC students to compete athletically.

## Membership on Boards, Committees and Meetings

SRUCSA has an important role as the representative and voice of SRUC students. As part of our partnership with SRUC, SRUCSA officers take roles on many boards, committees, working groups to provide an informed student view to SRUC. Below is a list of the groups we took part in this year.

### Internal Board/Committee Membership

- SRUC Board
- Remuneration and Appointments
- Academic Board
- Student Support and Engagement Committee
- Programme Approvals and Academic Standards Committee
- Learning and Teaching Committee
- Ethics Committee
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- Student Support Board of Studies
- Enhancement Themes Institutional Group

### Sub-Committees/Group Membership

- Trust Disbursement Committee
- Curriculum Review Steering Group
- Strategic Recovery Planning Group
- Student Mental Health Agreement (in development)
- IDS & SRUCSA
- CELT (The Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching)
- Peer Support
- Corporate Parenting
- Period Dignity
- Admissions to Induction (Academic year 21/22 steering group)
- Careers GAP Analysis
- Degree Awarding Powers Project (DAP)
- Annual Dialogues
- Climate Change Action
- Bursary Committees
- Change Your Path
- Going Further
- Centenary
- Climate Change Education Advisory Group (NEW 2022)

### External Committee/Board/Group Membership

- Enhancement Themes Student-Led Project Steering Group

## Staffing Update

In May 2023, the SRUCSA team grew to accommodate a second permanent member of staff. Jeroen Herk was appointed as SRUCSA Community Coordinator using leftover strike funds. We can't wait to see what he will accomplish on behalf of students across SRUC.

## Sabbatical Team 23-24

We are delighted to introduce the incoming sabbatical officers for 2023-24. Over the next year, SRUCSA will be helmed by Jeremiah Chibueze (Co-President North), Damson Ellen (Co-President Central), and Catherine Stewart (Co-President South & West).

### Co-President North

Jeremiah Chibueze is a distance-learning student pursuing his HNC in Poultry Production. We are hopeful that his experience of distance-learning will make him a valuable resource in Elmwood and Craibstone, where almost half of the student body study off-campus.

### Co-President Central

Damson Ellen is based in Edinburgh and currently studying towards her HND in Environmental Management. Damson served as our LGBT+ Students' Liberation Officer 22-23 and we are so excited to see her take on more responsibility over the next year.

### Co-President South & West

Catherine Stewart is based in Barony and is currently studying towards her BSc in Veterinary Nursing. Catherine has big plans to make SRUC campuses feel more community oriented.

## SRUCSA Election Winners

### Introducing your Co-Presidents 2023-2024:

#### North



Jeremiah Chibueze

#### Central



Damson Ellen

#### South & West



Catherine Stewart



**Thank you for  
voting!**

Got questions? Contact us at [elections@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:elections@sruc.ac.uk)



## **A Note from the Team 22-23**

Thank you to everyone at SRUC who supported us along the way. It is important for us to build and maintain positive relationships with staff and students in order for us to be efficient in our job role and carry out our manifesto aims.

We have also been really lucky and had huge support from external stakeholders, small businesses, and local communities. Check out some of the amazing organisations who supported our projects!

The incoming SRUCSA Team are looking forward to working together on new projects, fresh ideas and a year full of fun!

Please visit our website at: [www.srucsa.org.uk](http://www.srucsa.org.uk)

Follow us on social media to keep up to date with our projects!

Many thanks,

Roz Asli (Co-President South & West), Liam Thorpe (Co-President Central), Claire Williams (Co-President North)