

Election Manifesto for the University Board 2026-27

Styrk Garang and Hedda Simonsen



Dear fellow students at the University of Bergen,

We want to be your voice on the University Board in the coming year! We bring experience from various organizations and diverse backgrounds that we believe will benefit the board. Styrk has already served on the University Board this past year and is motivated for another term! He has also been the national deputy leader of the Norwegian Medical Students' Association (Nmf) and was elected to the Student Parliament for 2024-25. Hedda has experience leading AUF Vestfold (Labour Youth of Vestfold), has served on the board of LO Ung Vestfold-Telemark (Norway's largest union), and is the first deputy in the Culture and Sports Committee in Sandefjord Municipality. We are a team that brings both continuity and renewal, and we are ready to work for your interests and elevate student issues to the board!

For us, it's important that students are considered when the board addresses matters, while also maintaining an institutional view of the university as a whole. We have therefore selected three key issues to focus on, which we believe are beneficial for both the university and its students!

Our Key Issues

You can read more about our key issues below. However, we believe there is one initiative that all board members should prioritize in the time ahead: the realization of the new science building “Realfaghøyden”. This is not only important for UiB as a research university but also for our future competitiveness in attracting students. Additionally, it is crucial for Norway's knowledge preparedness and science community.

An Attractive Physical Campus

One of the most important tasks of a university is to produce skilled professionals for the workforce. A key prerequisite for fulfilling this task is having an active and vibrant campus that serves both as a space for academic development and as a social meeting place. We believe that a strong physical campus will contribute to student well-being and enhance the learning environment.

UiB is currently investing in a project aimed at first-year students, with the goal of improving completion rates. We support this initiative and believe that a campus that fosters belonging and community is a vital part of its success.

Currently, several faculties struggle to provide enough reading spaces for students. This not only creates challenges in keeping the campus accessible to all UiB students but also affects those whose living conditions make studying at home difficult. Therefore, we will advocate for the inclusion of reading rooms when new buildings are constructed or existing ones are renovated.

We want:

- Quality reading rooms that meet students' needs
- Good social areas that promote well-being and a sense of belonging during breaks and between lectures
- A universally accessible campus for all students and staff

A Green University

UiB is a research institution with strong academic environments in climate and marine research. When we contribute knowledge to society about the effects of climate change on our planet, we should also follow our own advice and contribute to the green transition. One thing that sets UiB apart from some other universities is its use of “climate accounting”. We see this as a positive step, as it helps us identify areas for improvement and pinpoint the largest sources of emissions. We aim to focus particularly on the climate accounts and the action plan for climate work during the next board term.

Additionally, we believe that climate considerations can be integrated into a wide range of issues, even those not directly related to the environment.

We want:

- To be strong advocates for improving the university's climate profile in relevant matters
- To promote ambitious yet realistic goals when the University Board considers a new climate action plan
- To explore solutions for reducing electricity consumption and sourcing less emission-intensive procurements

A Strong Student Engagement Culture

A good social environment outside of lectures is essential for student well-being and academic success. We want to support this by strengthening the training opportunities for students who wish to engage in student organizations at the university. Currently, the university's training offerings are insufficient. Taking on a position of responsibility can be demanding and overwhelming without adequate support and training. Therefore, we will work to ensure that all students who wish to start or contribute to a student organization have access to necessary courses and follow-up. This will make it easier to succeed in these roles and foster greater confidence, engagement, and organizational memory. We believe this will strengthen student engagement at the university and help create a more inclusive and active student environment. Additionally, we advocate for increased financial support for student organizations where appropriate.

We want:

- To strengthen student engagement at the university
- To improve training offerings for students in leadership roles within student organizations
- To advocate for increased financial support for student initiatives

Closing Words

To have a vibrant and functional student democracy, we depend on students voting. Of course, we hope you will vote for us, but we believe the most important thing is that you use your right to vote at all. Student elections have so far had a low turnout of around 10-12%. Regardless of who is elected to the University Board and Student Parliament, representatives stand stronger in discussions on behalf of students when they have a clear mandate from those we represent.

We also believe that participating in student democracy should be fun and engaging. That's why we will focus on keeping the campaign respectful, factual, and inclusive, while also daring to discuss our differences! With that said, we wish everyone a great election, and we look forward to meeting many of you during the campaign!

Sincerely,

Styrk and Hedda