

# CANDIDATES STUDENT COUNCIL 2024



FACULTY GF

## LUCA VALENTIJN SPIESSENS

I believe it's important for students to have a voice within the VUB. I hope to contribute to the critical thinking that VUB upholds. Henri Poincaré teaches us that thinking should never submit, and I believe this is only possible when we give diverse people from diverse backgrounds a voice (as is possible within the student council). My goal is to create more attention for inclusion and mental/physical well-being. I think that creating a safe inclusive space is inevitably linked to an individual's well-being and would be the first step towards achieving my goal.



FACULTY GF

## YNGWIE DERYCKER

From a young age, I have been instilled with the values of the VUB, and I wish to continue this legacy. I believe it is crucial to amplify the voices of students, as the university primarily revolves around them. Important topics for me include leisure activities, student well-being, and ensuring well-organized exam schedules.



FACULTY GF

## SANA SADAT MOHAMMAD RAFIEI NAZARI

My motivation for the student council elections is clear: I aim to unite the diverse voices of the students into one powerful, resonant voice that is not only heard but also taken seriously. My main drive is addressing the unfortunate lack of attention to the mental well-being of students at the VUB. Therefore, I am committed to bringing about concrete change by implementing accessible initiatives and raising awareness about the importance of mental health on campuses. Our students deserve an environment where their well-being is as important as their academic achievements.



FACULTY GF

## DIEWERT SEYNAEVE

I have been actively involved in the student council for the past 2 years, providing me with valuable experience. Communication remains challenging, but we have accomplished many things, even if they often go unnoticed. For instance, initial class schedules will appear online earlier, and we have kept the mass study sessions in Jette active. Apart from these visible achievements, there are numerous ongoing issues, both in the background and sometimes in the foreground, that I am eager to address and continue working on. There is still much work to be done in terms of student well-being and representation, but I am ready to take on this challenge!



FACULTY PE  
**WOUT VANHELDEN**

I find the participation and representation of students to be crucial in keeping our VUB community strong and healthy. The student council serves as a connecting body between the students and the institutions of VUB. I am eager to focus on student facilities on our campuses: housing, dining options, recreational activities, psychological and medical assistance. I aim to advocate for a VUB where studying is more than just academics. It's about the connection with the city, the commitment to taking care of one another, and the social framework that makes our university so unique.



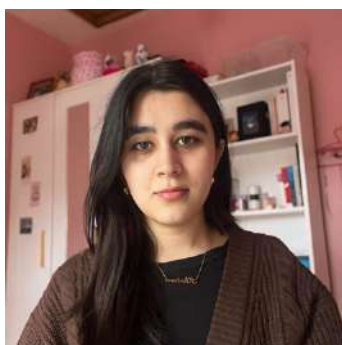
FACULTY PE  
**MARIEM NEGROUZ**

Last year, as vice-chair of the student council, I primarily focused on internal operations and aimed to foster an optimal atmosphere ;). This year, I would like to dedicate myself once again to the student council to ensure that all voices are heard within the policy and advisory bodies. I also hope to take action and make a positive impact, especially regarding mental health. Additionally, I aspire to improve communication with students and provide more opportunities for their involvement. Finally, I aim to foster greater cohesion within the VUB community.



FACULTY PE  
**MILA TODOROF**

I have been in the student council for a year now and have learned a lot from it. My main focus has been on preventing the further increase of study costs. Furthermore, together with other members, I have been working on projects concerning affordable evening meals and a quiet space/prayer room. I am looking forward to advocating for affordable studying and good student facilities in the coming year!



FACULTY PE  
**KHATERA HAMID**

As a psychology student, my greatest motivation lies in mental health and overall well-being. In the student council, I hope to represent my fellow students and their needs as effectively as possible, ensuring they feel good and comfortable on campus.

What I aim to achieve:

- More spaces for simply sitting and resting or for enjoying leisure activities with friends.
- Additional study spaces.
- Quiet rooms for individuals to have some time alone and recuperate from the busy life.
- Extended cafeteria hours for later closing times.



FACULTY IR

## **PEDRO ELEJABEITIA VELU**

My motivation to participate in the student council elections stems from my belief that students deserve a voice in decision-making and policy formulation that shapes their collegiate career. For the past 2 years, I have been extensively involved in the governance of the Polytechnische Kring, where I have experienced firsthand the importance of being engaged in improving our campus life.

My goal is to promote an inclusive environment where student well-being is paramount and sustainable practices are the norm. As a member of the student council, I am fully committed to working towards this.



FACULTY IR

## **JARID JACOB**

Throughout my academic career, our university has given me a tremendous amount. I have acquired knowledge, made lifelong friends, and gained a better understanding of myself. Now, I would like to give back to our alma mater. I am eager to contribute to the students and the university in general by serving on the student council next year. The values of academic freedom, sustainability, and attention to the mental health of all VUB members are deeply important to me and are principles I will always defend.



FACULTY IR

## **HELENA LEGIER**

I aim to be a point of contact for both the student community and non-student community alike. Students should be able to express their ideas and concerns in an accessible manner to those who represent them. Based on the input from my fellow students, I am eager to actively participate in policy-making and realize projects. I advocate for the expansion of student facilities, such as longer library opening hours, more picnic benches, and additional communal spaces. Furthermore, I want to focus on more transparent communication with students and better support for international students.



FACULTY IR

## **HEMANTH BALAJ**

My motivation to participate in the student council elections is to contribute my service to all national and international students equally. I aim to organise events for international students, ensuring they don't miss their home country. Similarly, for national students, make life on campus even more sustainable. As a student council member at VUB, my aim is personal growth and assisting fellow juniors and seniors in achieving their academic and personal goals. Acting as a connection between students and the university. Drawing from my experience as a secretary at the Rotaract Club, I will effectively address and manage their concerns.



FACULTY LW  
**BOB STOOPS**

I believe it's crucial for both VUB and Flemish-level policies to listen to the concerns of students. As students, we must not take it for granted that our voices are heard. We need to be aware of this and advocate for all levels of governance to listen to us.

A top priority for me in the student council is ensuring that study costs are reduced. Accessible education for students from all income levels is a fundamental right.



FACULTY LW  
**KIM FLORENCE GUTIERREZ**

As a student representative, I want to listen to the needs and concerns of students. I aim to promote communication and transparency between the VUB and the student body. Often, students are not well-informed about the decisions being made. Furthermore, I strive to promote the mental well-being of students. It is important to prioritize mental health awareness and ensure that students have easier access to necessary support. Lastly, diversity and inclusivity are of invaluable importance to me. It is essential that all students feel represented.



FACULTY RC  
**ESMERALDA GJONLULAJ**

I am determined to participate in the student council elections because I strive for an improved university experience for all students. It is my belief that everyone should feel at home and valued here, regardless of their background or choice of study.

What do I aim to achieve as a student representative? I want to advocate for an inclusive university where every student feels comfortable, improved support for first-year students to facilitate their integration, a diverse curriculum that caters to various learning styles, and increased awareness about the availability of psychologists at the VUB.



FACULTY RC  
**RIHAM BOUNOUH**

There are several areas I would like to focus on, such as expanding dining options on campus and enhancing campus safety.





FACULTY ES  
**ANASTASIIA BOLOTOVA**

I have always naturally been an advocate for students, having lived in many boarding schools and countries throughout my life I learn how to make students be heard and help them communicate their needs and wants. I believe that university is not only a place for our academics but a big part of our personal growth and self development journey, and I am passionate to help everyone get the most out of this time of our lives. This can only be done if the students are represented by those who are passionate about making meaningful changes - and I am.



FACULTY ES  
**HELENA VERSPAGEN**

Being part of the student- and school council in high school has helped me to understand the importance of listening to fellow students and subjectively sharing their opinions, even if they don't necessarily align with mine. Moreover, I have been a VUBuddy for two consecutive years now, and I have found a passion for listening to others and solving their problems together. I'd love to learn how to make the best decisions when dilemmas or conflicts of interest arise between the decision-makers and the people affected by their decisions and become a solid bridge between these two parties.



FACULTY ES  
**MARTHE VAN THEEMSCHÉ**

As a dedicated student, I am committed to increasing awareness of sustainability on campus. My goal is not only to initiate new projects but also to support student initiatives. For instance, I am currently collaborating with MARCOM to set up a project to provide reusable ashtrays for students. Furthermore, strengthening the bonds between the VUB and its students is essential. Let us strive together towards a thriving community where sustainability, student initiatives, and close collaboration between the VUB and its students are central, enabling both the university and its students to grow.



FACULTY ES  
**THEO DE PILLECYN**

My name is Theo De Pillecyn, and I am enthusiastically running for a position to represent your voice in the student council. I believe in the power of participation and dialogue to enhance our university. My main focus is on student well-being, promoting inclusivity, and optimizing study facilities. Let's work together towards a thriving academic community. I am counting on your support.



FACULTY WE  
**LEON JOS BAUWERAERTS**

Like many students, I struggled through the pandemic. During that time, I noticed that the VUB has a better support system than most universities, which I want to support and expand upon. Many students, including myself, found themselves on an individual path during that period, which is not always straightforward. This is therefore a topic worth evaluating.

Furthermore, as a member of the WE faculty, I aim to provide representation for a group of students who are not always involved in the Student Council. However, I also want to involve the entire student population as much as possible in policy-making, achieved through more efficient information flow.