

C1 Working proactively with trade unions

Proposer: Matthew Hull (Camden Green Party)

Agenda item: C Resolutions of Executive Committee Priorities (Closed 18th July)

Summary

A resolution noting the Green Party's shared values with the trade union movement, and the movement's importance to achieving progressive social change; restating our belief that a large and powerful trade union movement is indispensable in achieving the Green Party's key objectives, including a worker-centred Green New Deal; resolving that the Executive Committee will proactively build strong working relationships between the Young Greens and trade unionists, and will encourage Young Greens members to take action with trade unions.

1 The Young Greens notes that:

- 2 • The Green Party of England & Wales supports the mission of trade unions to
3 organise and represent working people;
- 4 • Trade unions have been and continue to be powerful organs of progressive
5 social change;
- 6 • A militant, member-led trade union movement is vital to achieving the
7 Green Party's objectives of social and environmental justice, including a
8 just transition away from fossil fuels;
- 9 • The Green Party shares with the labour movement core values of solidarity
10 and grassroots democracy, and tactics of direct action.

11 The Young Greens believes that:

- 12 • The Green Party must be a channel and a platform for radical trade
13 unionists, offering them direct support and solidarity;
- 14 • A large and emboldened trade union movement is necessary to achieving a
15 Green New Deal centred around the needs of working people;
- 16 • Green parties and campaigners must be firmly embedded in the struggles of
17 working people, including in the workplace;
- 18 • Trade unions and other workers' institutions are legitimate agents of
19 political change, and trade unions' interventions in politics are not
20 directly analogous to those of business associations or private interests.

- 21 The Young Greens resolves that the Executive Committee will:
- 22 • Proactively develop lasting working relationships with trade union
23 organisers and members, and the unions they represent;
 - 24 • Create and promote opportunities for Young Greens members to join,
25 campaign alongside, and take action with trade unions;
 - 26 • Encourage and support Young Greens members to play an active role in the
27 work of the Green Party Trade Union Group, including by liaising with the
28 group;
 - 29 • Encourage and support the Green Party leadership, spokespeople, and others
30 within the party to work closely with trade unionists;
 - 31 • Report on all work towards the above objectives to the Young Greens
32 membership at each general meeting and accountability session.

Supporters

Paris Hayes (Bolton Green Party); Robert Nixon (Oxfordshire Green Party); Tom Hazell (Oxfordshire Green Party)

C2 Widening Convention Participation and Accessibility

Proposer: George Morris (Manchester Green Party)

Agenda item: C Resolutions of Executive Committee Priorities (Closed 18th July)

Summary

Throughout the pandemic the Young Greens have had to adapt to the challenges of lockdown, having to move most of its activity online. Despite the challenges, this has shown us the potential of online organising and how this could help us engage more members in both the short term and long term. This is a resolution to explore how we can make convention more accessible and engage more members in years to come.

The Young Greens notes:

- That the executive committee is already elected through online voting.
- That due to exceptional circumstances 2020 convention is already using digital participation in full for convention using discuss.green.

The Young Greens believes:

- That face to face events are crucial to the democratic running and accountability of the young greens, but that digital participation is a necessary addition to these events to ensure participation is available to those who are limited by economic status, geography, or accessibility needs.
- That all voices should be given equal opportunity to be heard and that this needs to be reflected in the way convention is run.
- That any solution needs to facilitate debate and voting for in-person and digital attendees without preference for either.

The Young Greens resolves:

- That the Executive Committee explores the possibility of using digital participation in future exercises of internal democracy.
- That the Executive Committee presents amendments to the constitution and standing orders that would allow for digital participation in all future Conventions proceeding the passage of the submitted amendments.
- That the Executive Committee submit the required amendments to the constitution and standing orders no later than 2021 Convention and (subject to passage) digital participation is implemented in time for 2022 convention.
- That a cost assessment should be produced that considers the balance of increased costs with greater democratic participation.

Supporters

Kelsey Trevett (Three Rivers Green Party / Young Greens); Robert Nixon (Oxfordshire Green Party);
Patrick Nelson (Manchester Green Party)

C3 Ditch Corporate Financing of Universities

Proposer: Rosie Rawle (Oxfordshire)

Agenda item: C Resolutions of Executive Committee Priorities (Closed 18th July)

Summary

Over the last two decades, large corporations have played an increasing role in financing our universities and influencing our education. This is likely to rise as UK universities face increasing financial difficulties in the face of the Coronavirus crisis and are forced to look for new income streams. From the likes of BP, Shell and Exxon Mobil investing in longer term energy research, to Coca-cola investing in studies on health science and sugar intakes, these companies have proven that their investments are creating knowledge formation based upon their own unaccountable private interests. This must come to an end as we fight for free and fair education for all. This motion proposes that the Young Greens launch a new campaign across England and Wales to build power on our campuses and demand our universities ditch their corporate financiers.

Notes:

- UK Higher Education Institutions are estimated to face a £2.5 billion loss in tuition fee income due to the impact of Coronavirus (UCU, 2020a). At the same time, the UK government has denied a multi-billion pound bailout requested by UK universities (Guardian, 2020).
- Owing to neoliberal education reforms that have occurred in the last two decades, government funding to the Higher Education sector has been significantly reduced, and resulted in a funding model significantly propped up by private investment (UCU, 2020b).
- Much of this rising private investment has been in the form of fees paid by students, but also comes from investment in private companies. Increasingly, this has been done through the financing of investment through the private sector, using variants on the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), and now also through the use of public-private partnerships (PPPs). (UCU, 2020b)
- In recent years, private investment has played an increasingly significant role in the field of university research. Between 2014-15, 4% of UK university research income was received from businesses, and 10,859 research contracts were established with large companies (UUK, 2016).
- A number of UK universities have deep connections with the fossil fuel industry in the form of long-term research collaborations. In 2009, Shell, BP and Exxon Mobil spent 1.4 billion on research and development, which was 13 times the energy research budget of UK Research Councils (Lander, 2013).
- Corporate Watch and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign have identified numerous ways in which UK universities have established partnerships, sponsorships and other financial agreements with companies and

institutions complicit with Israel's occupation of Palestine (Corporate Watch, 2019).

- It was recently revealed that Coca-Cola funded research institutes through universities in the USA to suppress findings in health science on sugar intakes in beverages (Cambridge, 2017).

Believes:

- UK universities should not be forced to attract private investment in order to remain financially sustainable in the current crisis, and that the state should fund and protect our Higher Education Institutions.
- When swathes of funding for research and education is dependent on the ability to secure private finance, this will only increase instability in the sector, and make more and more core funding dependent on the short-term training needs and interests of private companies.
- The influence of private companies investing in education threatens the independence of academic research and learning, resulting in knowledge creation that is primarily based on the interests of corporations
- That independent and rigorous academic research is an indispensable tool in the struggles for climate justice, equality, and human rights.
- That education is first and foremost a public good and should be free and accessible to all throughout all our lifetimes.
- That the Young Greens is well placed to campaign on this issue in UK universities, as the most radical political youth wing across England and Wales, with a growing base of active and skilled Young Greens societies and student activists.

Resolves:

- To mandate the Executive Committee to work in collaboration with the Green Students Committee to design and deliver a new, grassroots campaign to build student power on campuses and leverage this to ditch corporate financing of universities.

Cambridge (2017) [Contracts give Coca-Cola power to 'quash' health research.](#)

CBI (2018) [Higher skilled roles rise, as skills gap grows.](#)

Corporate Watch (2019) [The role of British universities in supporting Israel's demolitions of Palestinian homes](#)

Guardian (2020) [Government refuses multi-billion pound bailout for universities.](#)

UCU (2020a) [Impact of Covid-19 on university finances.](#)

UCU (2020b) [Fighting privatisation in tertiary education.](#)

UUK (2016) [University Funding Explained.](#)

Supporters

Tom Hazell (Oxfordshire Green Party); Sarah Sharp (Bristol); Ellen Parry (North Surrey)