

# Board Candidate Guide

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This guide is a compact summary for those who are interested in getting involved in the work of the Finnish Student Sports Federation (OLL). In this guide, we will explain what OLL is, what you can do on the Board of the Federation, and how your candidacy will proceed. The current Board and staff are also happy to give you more information about applying for board positions and the work of the Federation.



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## The Finnish Student Sports Federation

The Finnish Student Sports Federation (OLL) is a national organisation promoting and lobbying for university sports and the wellbeing of university students. It is also the only organisation promoting the interests of university students in the area of sports. OLL's lobbying and advocacy work is carried out by the Board and the staff. In addition to advocacy, the Federation also offers other services, such as workshops and competitions.

*Our dream is for all students to exercise enough in terms of their health and wellbeing.*

*The main purpose of our Federation is to promote the wellbeing of students through exercise, and to strengthen a culture of exercise within universities.*

As an umbrella organisation, we work to develop the entire higher education sector, which includes both universities and universities of applied sciences. Our member organisations – the student unions (and their student members) and university sports services – are at the heart of our organisation.

OLL works in a varied field. Our stakeholders are student and youth organisations, higher education institutions, organisations in the sports, social welfare and health care sectors, government bodies, and international organisations.

We also collaborate closely with SAMOK and SYL, the other umbrella organisations for university students.

Our office is located in Sporttitalo in the Pitäjänmäki district of Helsinki. We share the building with the offices of the Finnish Olympic Committee and many national sports

associations. Moving to Helsinki is not a prerequisite for taking up a Board position.

The annual General Assembly is the Federation's highest decision-making body. At the General Assembly ordinary members, i.e. student unions and comparable student organisations, have a number of votes which is based on their size in terms of membership numbers. Supporting members, i.e. university sports services, have one vote per member. The General Assembly draws up guidelines for the Federation's work and finances and chooses the Board for the following year.

## Why apply to be on the OLL Board?

The Finnish Student Sports Federation works to promote wellbeing with a caring attitude and an inspiring team spirit. The Federation is a tight-knit workplace made up of experts, and as a board member you will get to work with different kinds of social issues.

**We promote the wellbeing of university students primarily from the perspective of exercise and physical activity. This is also our approach to other areas impacting on their wellbeing.**

In student sports advocacy, we need expertise in student healthcare, equality matters, and the development of exercise and study infrastructures.

This means that we collaborate with SYL and SAMOK on the entire student movement's lobbying work in the areas of social and welfare policy. Whether or not your term on the Board falls on an election year, our work will allow you to dive deep into both local and international lobbying.

Alongside our advocacy work, we also take part in student sports competitions, and the daily life in the Federation covers many areas of organisational activity. You will get to travel abroad, strengthen your skills as a communicator and public speaker, and dig deep into the inner workings of our administration. Thanks to the small Board and three-person working committee, you will be closely involved in all our activities, regardless of your area of responsibility.

During your term, you will have time to learn a great deal about advocacy and organisational activities. During your year on the Board, you will also gain useful skills for working life in a safe and encouraging environment. You will also be able to build an extensive network with influential people in the worlds of sports, exercise, and youth work.

## What does the OLL Board do?

### The work of the Board

The Board of the Finnish Student Sports Federation consists of the President, one to two Vice Presidents and no more than two members. The term of the Board is one calendar year. The Board is the organ which draws up policy, makes decisions, and works with the OLL staff to lead the work of the Federation with a mandate from the General Assembly.

The President and Vice Presidents make up the working committee, which works for the Federation full time during their term. The members of the working committee act as godparents to the member organisations. The working committee divides up the godparent responsibilities and meets with their allocated organisations during their term in

collaboration with the Special Advisors. The godparent setup means that you will get to know representatives of our member organisations and the universities better and inspire the Finnish higher education field with the glad tidings of sports on a local level.

Board Members take part in the decision-making of the Board, and in the other work of the Federation if they so wish. Each Board decides on how responsibilities should be divided at the beginning of their term. Below you can find some *examples* of how responsibilities can be divided on the Board.

## President

The President coordinates the work of the Board and presides over Board meetings. The President leads the work of the Federation in close collaboration with the Secretary General and acts as representative of the Federation. The President also works with international affairs, participates in the Federation's lobbying work, and meets representatives of interest groups.

The salary of the President is currently €1,700 per month.

## Vice Presidents

The main role of the Vice President is to support the President and to be part of the working committee. The Vice Presidents share the major areas of responsibility, such as sports policy lobbying, Universities on the Move, events and communications, as well as smaller areas of responsibility, such as the work of the sports tutors and harassment contact persons. Each new Board can divide the responsibilities as they see fit.

The salary of the Vice Presidents is currently €1,250 per month.

## Board Member

The job description of the Board Member involves participating in the decision-making of the Board, and currently also being responsible for the Network of university sports services. If they wish, the Board Member can also take part in other activities of the Federation, such as planning the Federation's strategy and other current projects. Board membership takes up 5–10 hours per week, depending on the Member's interests, so it is possible to work or study while holding this position.

The Board Member receives an annual fee which is currently €2200 per year.

## Staff + Board = sectors

The Board and staff together form sectors which delve into specific areas of the Federation's work in more depth. Several members of the Board can work in each sector. The Federation currently has five permanent members of staff: a Secretary General, a communications specialist, a Special Advisor for University Sport, a Senior Special Advisor for University Sport, and an events and training specialist.

The traditional division of the sectors is described below. The allocations of sectors and responsibilities vary each year depending on the focus of the Federation's activities.

## Main sector

The main sector is made up of the Secretary General and the President. The main sector leads the work of the Federation, deals with administrative matters, and acts in a managerial capacity. The main sector is also responsible for financial and international



affairs. The President and Secretary General are also responsible for developing the work and organisational culture.

### **Sports policy sector / Universities on the Move**

The Special Advisors for University Sport and one or both Vice Presidents make up the sector for sports policy and advocacy, and it is also supported by the main and communications sectors, particularly in the lobbying work. This sector works with members, stakeholders and political activists to promote the wellbeing of university students. The advocacy work takes the form of lobbying for elections, collaborating with the FSHS, and the work within Universities on the Move.

### **Communications sector**

The communications sector is made up of the Federation's communications specialist and the Vice President who is responsible for communications. The communications sector is in charge of planning and producing the Federation's communications, as well as coordinating between other sectors.

### **Events and training sector**

The events and training sector is made up of the Federation's events and training specialist and the Vice President who is responsible for events. The events and training sector coordinates the arrangements for the Finnish Student Championships and other competitions. The events and training which are offered to member organisations are also the responsibility of this sector.

# What is the application process for the Board?

## Before the General Assembly

Anyone can stand for the Board of the Finnish Student Sports Federation. The official proposal is made during the General Assembly (see the section During the General Assembly), but the Federation's member organisations often pick their candidates during their own meetings well ahead of the General Assembly. If you want to stand for a board position, it is a good idea to ask your student union or the Federation's office for help at an early stage. You can also ask OLL's communications specialist for help when you want to inform other member organisations of your candidacy.

After making the announcement, it makes sense to actively promote your activities in and goals for OLL. Before the General Assembly, we offer all candidates equal visibility on our channels. We will contact any candidates that we have been notified of when the General Assembly approaches.

## During the General Assembly

It is recommended that candidates attend the General Assembly, as there will be an opportunity for the members to hear from the candidates and learn about their thoughts at the General Assembly. Candidates are officially proposed at the General Assembly. At the agenda point "Election of the President of the Federation" and/or "Election of Board Members of the Federation" on the first or second day, a General Assembly delegate who is

eligible to vote must propose you as a candidate. We encourage candidate proposals to take place on the first day. The proposal is done via electronic form and by making an address at the correct point of the agenda. Candidates also have the opportunity to address the General Assembly to introduce themselves as the last point on the agenda of each day.

In the morning of the second day there is a candidate panel where the member organisations can hear the candidates' thoughts. The panel discussion is organised by the Board of the Federation, and at the end, the members can also ask questions. In addition to proposed candidates, people who are considering standing for election can also take part in the panel discussion.

After the event, the General Assembly continues as normal. During the day, the points "Election of the President of the Federation" and "Election of Board Members of the Federation" will be covered again, and at this point it is still possible to stand for election. This discussion is also where decisions are made, so before this point is opened is the last opportunity to propose a candidate (done as on the first day, as detailed above). At the start of the discussion of these points, the General Assembly will go through any new proposals. Then those proposed on the first day and new candidates have time to introduce themselves to the General Assembly. After these addresses a vote will take place if there are more candidates than available board positions. Alternatively a direct selection will be announced. After the election those who have been elected have the opportunity to say a few words to the General Assembly.

According to the rules of OLL, the General Assembly can also take a hybrid format, where some of the delegates and candidates participate remotely. Standing for election, the panel discussion and other General Assembly procedures are the same regardless of whether a

delegate is participating remotely or in person. Before and during the General Assembly, attendees are given more detailed instructions. At this point it is a good idea to ask about anything that is unclear, which will make the General Assembly more pleasant.

If you are participating remotely in the General Assembly as a candidate, you should put a lot of effort into your campaigning before the General Assembly. Participate in Federation events where you can meet people, and contact Federation staff and Board members to gain visibility on social media. This way you will become familiar with representatives of the member organisations, and it will be easier to find people to make a supporting address or propose you at the General Assembly.

As a candidate, you do not have to worry about the running of the General Assembly. The Federation staff and Board and the President of the General Assembly will give instructions for how the General Assembly should proceed and try to help everyone keep up. Do not be afraid to ask questions ahead of time and at the General Assembly if you are unsure of a point or procedure.

## After the General Assembly

It is important to us to help the new Board to adjust to their upcoming term softly and smoothly. After the General Assembly we will take contact details from the new Board and give them the dates for the orientation, which will take place in December. The orientation usually takes a few days, and the Federation pays for accommodation for Board members who come to the orientation from outside the capital.

**In addition to the orientation, the current Board and the staff of the Federation are also happy to answer any other questions you may have.**

**Do not hesitate to get in touch even before the orientation!**

The new Board starts working with the Federation staff in January, and spend their first month getting to grips with their new roles. Joining the Board of OLL does not require you to move to Helsinki, as everyone can participate in the work of the Board from wherever they live.

## Candidate support from the OLL office

OLL's current Board members are happy to discuss the application process with anyone who is interested. The candidates who have stood for election before the General Assembly can use the Federation's social media and mailing lists to support their campaigns.

If you have any questions about OLL's work, sitting on the Board, standing for election or something else, do not hesitate to get in touch with the members of the working committee or the Secretary General. Board members are happy to answer questions about the work of the Board and the related tasks. The Federation's staff are also happy to talk about the tasks they are responsible for. You can find all contact details on our [website](#).

**Fantastic that you are considering standing for election!**

