

Candidates' manifestos for Executive JCR roles

Emily Insanally, Vice President

Hi Everyone! I'm Emily Insanally, I'm a second year economist and this year I'm running for the role of JCR Vice President. First of all, I'd like to say congratulations to Ellie for being elected President. If I'm elected VP I'm really looking forward to the opportunity to work with you and support you in any way I can to put into practice the positive changes you want to bring to Fitz. I'd also like to say thank you to Rachel for a job well done, she has been a great VP and especially in terms of the housing ballot, there is little left to improve.

I have been on the JCR for a year now, in the position of Ents Officer. This has given me experience and knowledge of how the JCR works, I know what is expected of me and how to get things done. In addition to this, working on Ents has been a high commitment role so I am used to dedicating my time to the JCR and am fully prepared to devote large amounts of my time to the role of VP. A large part of Ents is organizing events such as FULS and Freshers Week to name a few. To this end, I believe I would be well-suited for the role of VP given this organizational experience which I would translate into organizing the housing ballot and college families. Working on the Ents team has involved a large amount of coordinating with the rest of the Ents and the wider JCR which is something I plan to take forward into the role of VP through being involved with the Subcomms such as Ents, welfare and Target and Access.

As well as being on Ents, this term I am the Women's Novice Captain which has also taken up large amounts of my time. This involves coordinating the boats and organizing outings, coaches and subs. This has therefore improved my organizational skills as well as my time management, however, Novices ends this term so if I were elected VP, I could fully commit to the role.

College Families:

The college family system is a great way to provide a support system to incoming freshers as well as way to integrate the year groups and to improve this integration, I would suggest organizing more college family events throughout the year. Yes, we've got family brunch at the start of the term but then some college families just fade out. My idea is to have a week 5 college family brunch catch up scheduled as an event as well as another college family event, either a brunch or a formal or something more low-key like a pizza evening in the JCR in the second and third terms to help keep the college family connections strong.

Another thing would be to build on the 'pub/tub/club' questionnaire that Rachel introduced. While Pub, Tub and Club rather accurately describe the three options for what you can do in the evenings at Cambridge, there are people who can fall into two of the three slots. My idea would be to introduce a slightly more in depth questionnaire, without over-complicating the system, with questions such as "Are you interested in playing sports while at Cambridge?", "How many nights a week do you like to go to the Club/stay in" and a question to help distinguish between which club nights people prefer because Wednesday Cindies has rather different music and a different vibe to Turf at Junction. This way we could also match people's interests outside of just whether or not they like to go out, this could be in terms of playing instruments, sports, or writing for example.

Housing Ballot:

As I said earlier, Rachel has done an amazing job this year organizing the ballot and based on how smoothly it ran, it needs little to no improvement. What I would do to help it run smoothly, is be available in the bar on some scheduled evenings to answer any questions people have about how the ballot works as well as perhaps run a talk if there is enough demand to explain the system to the freshers and anyone else who would like some clarification.

Food and Bev:

In order to bring about changes in the food and bev committee, we need suggestions from the student body. In addition to sending around a google form for people to give their suggestions, I would introduce a physical suggestion box outside the buttry that I would empty every few weeks. Hopefully by having an actual box with pens and paper available, this would prompt people to write down their comments and feedback as they leave the buttry. Some suggestions I already have to take to the Food and Bev Committee are: greater variation of food at formals especially in terms of the starter (moving away from soup being the go to starter), larger portions for the main course, bringing back the vegan brownie desert, working to reduce the price of the vegan/vegetarian formal based on the relative costs of meat compared to vegetables, improving the labelling of allergens in food – for example, there have been times when the main has been labelled as vegan but has then also said “includes egg or dairy”, and more vegan, vegetarian, halal and kosher options. These are just a few suggestions and hopefully with the suggestion box as well as the form I would be able to get more points to take the Food and Bev Committee.

On the topic of working with the Subcomms, one thing I have been working on this term as part of Ents, is hosting Bops with other colleges. (We’ve got one this Saturday at Cindies with Catz and Churchill!!) This is something that I’d really like to take forward and I would be keen to work with the next Ents team to make events like this more regular. I’m also working to secure Wednesday Cindies tickets so would continue to build on this. Also, as I said earlier, as VP I would be involved with all the other groups, not just Ents, and would work to support Ellie and the rest of the JCR.

As a final point, I would like to improve the JCR’s social media presence with the set-up of a Fitz JCR Instagram page. There already is a JCR Facebook page but recently it has fallen out of use so I would like to bring it back. This would be a way to centralize all JCR related information and while Official Fitz is a great way to spread the word about events and other JCR business, sometimes important posts can get lost. I would also like to introduce via these platforms very short, informal ‘Meet the JCR’ and ‘Welcome to Fitz’ introduction videos in the buildup to freshers week. (I really like social media so can promise that I will be very on it with these ideas especially the JCR Instagram).

To sum up, I’m committed, organized and very keen to represent you all and I’m not afraid to stand up to college for what we, the student body, want. I’m really looking forward to representing you and working with Ellie and the rest of the JCR if you choose to elect me. Thank you so much for listening!