

Pangaea Festival

This January I have been mostly working on preparation for Pangaea Festival. Whilst coordinating the extensive team, I've put special emphasis on learning from and avoiding some of the problems encountered in previous Pangaeas, to make sure that the event is run cleanly, efficiently, and organised to an extent where the relevant students and staff all know what they need to know. The event is sold out of tickets (4000 students), and being such a large event with full capacity presents a new series of challenges from some previous years, and these must be tackled accordingly.

Pangaea is the largest student-led festival in Europe, something that really puts our Students' Union on the map (none of the other students unions I have encountered have anything quite so ambitious to compare). The event reaches more students than any other individual project that the Students' Union puts on, with the exception of the Student Fair at the beginning of the year. Most of these students are also not frequently engaged in other Union activities, so this may be the one time when they receive something tangible from their Students' Union.

Because it is not-for-profit and volunteer-led, the event can explore many areas unavailable to commercial events, and can also keep ticket prices down to a minimum for students, with alternative options for people who are strapped for cash such as early birds (half price) and earning free entry on one of the teams. It's a much needed break for students after a hard month of exams.

...But all of this is not the most exciting element of Pangaea. Pangaea recruits a team of around 500 student volunteers and artists, to fill every possible role from organising the big stages, to putting up decorations, to planning the event's promotion. Every role that can conceivably and practically held by a student volunteer is done, and students find opportunities to be both creative and responsible. The levels of experience students can gain with some of the higher-responsibility positions are quite impressive, and they can learn everything from budgeting to technical skills, to marketing and event-planning.

Societies Training

I've organised a lot of new society training sessions, this time recruiting trainers from society committees who are particularly skilled in their area of training.