

I, Fatih Erol Tuncer from VU's Communities and Government team, submit my nomination for University Council with a strong commitment to principled governance, advancing academic excellence, and ensuring our University remains responsive to the evolving needs of staff, students, and the wider community. My career and experience spans across community, local government, juvenile justice and over ten years in higher education. As someone connected to the multicultural mosaic of Melbourne and it's West, I bring a perspective that is shaped by a lived experience of diversity, family stories of migration, and the strengths and challenges within communities often underrepresented in institutional decision-making.

My aim is to serve the University Council, with a focus on three core priorities:

First, I will work to ensure decision-making processes are transparent, accountable, and informed, with staff voices represented in a meaningful way. Universities are becoming increasingly complex, financially pressured, technologically dynamic, and have changing expectations, making governance processes critical in balancing innovation with responsibility. I will carry my principled approach to my day-to-day work; clear communication, genuine consultation and processes that recognise the expertise of those delivering the university's core mission that include diverse perspectives.

Second, I am dedicated to the well-being, growth, and recognition of staff. The strength of any university lies in its people. I will advocate for policies that promote fair workloads, opportunity for employment pathways, and inclusive workplace cultures that include all staff. Furthermore, I will advocate for increased equity and participation for students from diverse, first-in-family, and vulnerable backgrounds. This includes fostering inclusive, safe environments, and support systems that enable all students to thrive and feel a sense of belonging.

Third, I will be a voice for sustainable futures, which include financial, social, and institutional sustainability with a focus on staff. This year, we will be celebrating a key milestone of a project I have been leading which will see the 20,000th tree planted at our Werribee Campus. Sustainable universities invest in their staff, promote inclusive leadership, and have a responsibility to the communities they serve. I will advocate for outreach, research, and employment pathways that are accessible and meaningful.

With a strong commitment to equity, inclusion, and staff wellbeing, I will listen carefully and represent staff, students, and community to ensure their perspectives inform Council deliberations.

Representation matters, and I seek to bring those voices into spaces where decisions are made.