

# National Executive Council Elections 2023: Nomination requests

## Shazziah ROCK

**Sandwell LG Branch  
Membership No. 8226386**

**Standing in the  
National Black Members'  
Female seat**



## Julia Mwaluke

**Salford City Branch  
Membership No. 19128411**

**Standing in the  
National Black Members'  
Reserved seat**



Dear Branch Secretary,

We are writing to ask your branch to consider nominating us for the following seats for the 2023 NEC elections:

- **Shazziah Rock, National Black Members Female Seat**
- **Julia Mwaluke, National Black Members Reserved Seat**

All UNISON members face the threat of a spiralling cost-of-living crisis and now we face further austerity from a Tory Government which is determined to make us pay for the economic crisis. These elections are hugely important in determining the way that UNISON tackles these issues. We are standing in solidarity with the Time for Real Change majority on the current NEC. We fully support the democratisation of the union and making the union's strategy and organisation fit the needs of the current situation facing our members.

### **Our experience and background**

#### **Shazziah Rock**

I work as a Customer Service Officer at Sandwell Libraries. **I have been an active member of UNISON for 23 years holding numerous positions at Branch, Regional and National level.**

As a committed activist, **I have spoken out against racism and poverty** at Parliamentary lobbies, conferences, picket lines and demonstrations – that is how I see leadership.

As a committed activist **I led industrial action winning better pay for library staff** – that is how I see leadership.

When Tory Government failures embolden the far right to march, as a committed activist – when the racists march, **I organise resistance in my local community and we stand up to the far right** – that is how I see leadership.

As a frontline worker I face racism daily. As a committed activist I call it out when it happens, **supporting colleagues and demanding change from my employer** – that is how I see leadership.

I am standing for the NEC Black Members Seat to highlight issues that directly impact many of us low paid, frontline public sector workers facing discrimination. I make no false promises other than to listen, learn and lead and **be a voice for the marginalised on our NEC**.

## **Julia Mwaluke**

I have been UNISON activist for many years at National, Regional and Branch level and as a low paid, Black woman, fully understand the daily challenges faced by marginalised and oppressed groups of workers.

I am a support worker and **a member of the National Black Members Committee** as well as being the Health Care representative for Salford City UNISON.

**I lead the North West campaign on The Foundation Living Wage**. This raises the issues of fair pay for health care workers, the ethnicity pay gap and fighting racism in the workplace. I am proud to be **the winner of Foundation Living Wage Champion 2022**.

Nationally and regionally, I was at forefront of the anti-racist campaign, 'Enough is Enough', 'Care for Calais' and 'refugees are welcome here' as well as the 'Stop and Search Campaign' for young black members. **I do not believe in taking up positions and being idle or invisible**. I am an active activist who believes in getting things done, raising the issues that matter to Black workers and making a real difference. If re-elected to the NEC, **my promise is to continue being a real activist, listening and leading**.

## **What we stand for**

**UNISON must be a member-led union** – We believe this means that elected members should run our union, not selected full-time officials. We want to work with all our paid officials, but it is members and their elected representatives that should be the real leaders. **We need to be an organising, not a servicing, union** – we cannot solve all of our members' problems on a one-by-one basis. Members will always need individual support, but the focus should be on collective action. We need to increase UNISON's collective and organising activities and to empower our members. **Every large city and county** should have a proud UNISON resource centre in the high street: we need to make it as easy as possible for members to find us. We must present UNISON as a vibrant, democratic, fighting and organising union.

**The pay crisis** – UNISON must end the scourge of low pay. For too long UNISON has failed to adequately fight poverty pay, pay freezes and below-inflation deals. We cannot simply approach pay negotiations the way that UNISON's leadership has done in the past. Hikes in the price of fuel, heating and food are seriously impacting our members. No UNISON member should have to rely on food banks. We need fully funded and staffed public services. Members should not pay the cost of Tory austerity. To achieve this, we want **more cooperative relationships with other unions**. We should work together whenever we can.

**We must support members needing to take industrial action**. Strike pay rates have increased substantially, but there is more to do. UNISON only has a national strike fund of £21 million. This must change if we are to show employers and government we mean business. Also, we need to ensure

that every region supports branches who need to carry out effective strike action.

**UNISON's finances** – We need full disclosure and transparency as to how members' money is spent. We must make best use of the surpluses made nationally and locally during the pandemic. Also, we must review UNISON's large property estate and where appropriate, free up resources for organising. We must continue to bring the UNISON Staff Pension scheme deficit down to manageable levels. Members' subs should not be required to keep the scheme afloat. **We should insource all outsourced UNISON services wherever feasible**, based on our trade union values and our aspirations for our union. **We need a green agenda within UNISON**, including an audit of UNISON company cars and the proliferation of meetings requiring members and staff to travel long distances.

**We believe that UNISON should play a positive but challenging role in the Labour Party.** UNISON resources and influence should be used to promote the removal of anti-trade union laws, public delivery of public services and a green new deal that tackles the climate emergency through the creation of green, well-paid, union jobs.

**Equalities in UNISON** are central to our vision. There have been some major developments over the last two years. But there is much more to do to make equality a reality through our entire union, not just its NEC but at all tiers of our union, including within its staffing.

**Legal advice** – We must review UNISON's main legal services contract and particularly the difficulties branch secretaries have accessing timely employment law advice.

**We need a robust and effective review of staffing** to ensure that the great work our staff do is as efficient and meaningful to members as it can be. **We believe UNISON members should decide whether our most senior roles should be elected.**

**We must end once and for all the punitive culture of disciplinary action.** Disciplinary investigations into members take far too long, with no regard for welfare. We must continue to look at these processes from top to bottom and end their use to resolve political differences.

We are confident that the ideas we support will build on the progress made over the last two years. We urge all UNISON members to vote for Time for Real Change candidates in these NEC elections and, if you are able, to help us campaign for real change in UNISON.

Yours sincerely

**Shazziah Rock**  
**Julia Mwaluke**

**PS** You might be interested to attend an event with speakers from the current NEC seeking re-election, including our UNISON President Andrea Egan, alongside some who are standing for the first time. The meeting will be chaired by long-time UNISON member John McDonnell MP and also speaking will be the fantastic MPs Nadia Whittome and food poverty campaigner Ian Byrne. Find out more about our campaign, what the NEC has achieved so far since June 2021, and what we want to do going forward. Our campaign is committed to transparency: you're invited to the meeting so do please come along and find out for yourself how we can change and build our union for the better.

**Tuesday 17 January 2023, 6.30-7.30pm**

More information and to register for a Zoom link:

<https://nec2023-change-the-union.eventbrite.co.uk>