FROM THE OFFICE OF THE

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER

Elections Report

2026 By-Elections

November 6, 2026

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On Behalf of the Elections and Referendum Committee

TMSU ELECTIONS

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1. ELECTIONS SUMMARY

This report sets out the administration and results of the October 2026 Toronto Metropolitan Students' Union (TMSU) Faculty Director By-Elections. Four eligible candidates proceeded through the nomination process, and all four were acclaimed. Voting participation was low. No complaints or appeals were received.

Eighteen (18) prospective candidates participated in the nomination process. Thirteen (13) did not collect sufficient nominations. Five (5) met the nomination threshold; however, one (1) was not enrolled in an eligible program and did not proceed. The remaining four (4) candidates represented The Creative School, the Faculty of Science, and the Lincoln Alexander School of Law.

The election followed a four-week schedule covering nominations, an interim period, campaigning, and voting. Administrative improvements included a daily voting window of 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM and voting receipts confirming recorded selections. The principal priorities for future elections are stronger recruitment and communications, more accessible explanations of election rules, and additional voting stations where campus restrictions permit.

2. ELECTION OFFICIALS AND SUPPORTING STAFF

In accordance with the TMSU Elections Procedures Code, Election Officials refer to individuals appointed under the authority of the Elections and Referenda Committee ("ERC") for the purpose of administering the election. These roles are established within the governance framework of the Union and are responsible for ensuring that the election is conducted in a fair, impartial, and procedurally compliant manner.

The ERC exercised oversight of the election, including the administration of the process, determination of candidate eligibility, and enforcement of the Elections Procedures Code. The Office of the Chief Returning Officer was responsible for the day-to-day administration of the election, including operational coordination, regulation of campaign activity, adjudication of complaints, and the conduct of voting.

The individuals who served as Election Officials and supporting staff for the 2026 TMSU By-Elections are set out below:

Role	Name	Status
ERC Chair	Scott Miller Berry	Chair
ERC Member	Zain Baig	Voting
ERC Member	Kayla Stephenson	Voting
ERC Member	Eli Eusebio Ramon Arce	Voting
ERC Member	Polly Yang	Ex-Officio
Chief Returning Officer	Ghallia Hashem	Non-Voting (ERC)
Deputy Returning Officer	Vivian Azouz	Election Official
Deputy Returning Officer	Farhan Malek	Election Staff

All Election Officials and supporting staff were required to act impartially and in accordance with the Elections Procedures Code. Their roles were carried out under the direction of the Chief Returning Officer and subject to the oversight of the Elections and Referenda Committee, with the objective of maintaining the integrity, transparency, and fairness of the election process.

3. TMSU 2026 BY-ELECTIONS CALENDAR

The 2026 TMSU By-Elections were conducted in accordance with a structured election schedule established by the Elections and Referenda Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Each stage of the election process was designed to ensure clarity, accessibility, and procedural integrity, while providing candidates and members with a fair and transparent framework for participation.

Election Stage	Dates
Nomination Period	October 5-9, 2026
Interim Period	October 12-16, 2026
Campaign Period	October 19–23, 2026
Voting Period	October 26, 27 and 28, 2026 10:00 AM–5:00 PM each day; voting closed outside these hours.

4. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF POSITIONS

The By-Election provided an opportunity to fill vacant Faculty Director positions on the TMSU Board of Directors. Faculty Directors represent students in their respective faculties and participate in the Union's governance.

After the 2026 General Elections, there were a total of 7 vacancies: 2 in the Creative School, 2 in the Lincoln Alexander School of Law, 2 in the School of Medicine, and 1 in the Faculty of Science.

The four candidates who proceeded were distributed across three faculties: one in The Creative School, one in the Faculty of Science, and two in the Lincoln Alexander School of Law.

5. CANDIDATE VERIFICATION

Nomination review involved both the collection of sufficient nominations and confirmation of eligibility for the position sought. Of the eighteen (18) prospective candidates, thirteen (13) were unsuccessful in collecting enough nominations to proceed.

Five (5) prospective candidates met the nomination threshold. One (1) of those five was not enrolled in an eligible program and therefore did not move forward. Four (4) eligible candidates remained. The number of eligible candidates did not exceed the available positions in their respective faculties, and all four were acclaimed.

The difference between initial interest and completed nominations highlights the need for earlier and more targeted recruitment, clear explanations of eligibility, and practical guidance on completing the nomination process.

6. COMMUNICATIONS AND CAMPAIGN PERIOD

The Campaign Period ran from October 19 to October 23, 2026. Candidate communications emphasized the distinction between campaigning and voting, including the restriction on campaigning during the Voting Period.

Candidates were advised to repost only CRO-approved TMSU voting instructions and direct voting questions to the CRO. Communications also addressed receipt confidentiality and the prohibition on requesting, collecting, or accessing students' receipts.

7. VOTING PERIOD AND POLLING OPERATIONS

Voting took place on October 26, 27 and 28, 2026, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM each day. The voting system was not open outside this daily window. Eligible students could access online voting through my.torontomu.ca, with an in-person voting option at The Shift Centre on the third floor of the Student Community Centre.

The daily window established consistent hours for voting and election support. Voting receipts confirmed that ballots had been recorded and included ballot details, recorded selections, a timestamp, a receipt reference, and a verification code. Email receipts were cryptographically sealed, with instructions that changes would prevent verification. Students were instructed to keep receipts confidential because they contained recorded-choice information, and to contact the CRO with concerns.

8. ELECTION RESULTS AND PARTICIPATION

All four candidates were acclaimed. The recorded vote counts are set out below.

Faculty	Candidate	Votes Recorded	Declined to Vote	Percentage of Eligible Voters	Outcome
The Creative School	Alonzo Reyes	13	2	0.26%	Acclaimed
Faculty of Science	Hamza Chaudhry	8	3	0.24%	Acclaimed
Lincoln Alexander School of Law	Ian Lin	8	0	0.24%	Acclaimed
Lincoln Alexander School of Law	Anjalique Raghunauth	7	0	2.23%	Acclaimed

Overall voter turnout across positions remained low, ranging from approximately 0.24% to 2.23% of the eligible voting population. This level of participation reflects a continued challenge in achieving meaningful engagement with the student body in the electoral process.

The Office of the Chief Returning Officer notes that low voter turnout has implications for the perceived legitimacy and representative nature of election outcomes. While efforts were made to increase awareness and accessibility through communications, outreach initiatives, and in-person polling options, these measures did not result in a substantial increase in participation.

Accordingly, the Office of the CRO recommends that the TMSU consider implementing more robust and targeted strategies to increase voter turnout in future elections. This may include earlier and more sustained outreach efforts, enhanced collaboration with academic faculties and student groups, and the exploration of additional engagement mechanisms designed to encourage participation in the electoral process.

9. REQUEST TO REVIEW: Nomination Validation

On October 13, 2026, Maya Lisboa (the "Applicant") requested a review of the CRO's decision not to validate her candidacy, pursuant to section 6.1.6 of the Elections Procedures Code. Her request for an individualized Nomination Signature Form had been submitted on October 9, less than three hours before the Nomination Period closed. The published processing timeframe was up to 24 hours. The form was not provided, and the CRO acknowledged that the request had not been processed within the advertised timeframe. No completed Nomination Signature Form was received before the deadline.

The ERC considered the request and related correspondence on October 15, following an additional opportunity for the Applicant to submit information. The Committee upheld the CRO's determination under section 5.3.4, concluding that requesting a Signature Form did not constitute a valid nomination or extend the nomination deadline. The published processing timeframe did not guarantee that requests received shortly before closing would be processed before the deadline. The ERC's final decision was communicated to the Applicant on October 16, 2026.

10. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

No complaints or appeals were received during this by-election. Accordingly, there are no complaint rulings or appeal decisions to summarize or append to this report.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Expand Focused Voting Stations.

The Office of the CRO recommends additional voting stations in locations regularly used by students in participating faculties. Campus restrictions currently limit these options. The Office of the CRO intends to consult with Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) administration to identify permitted locations, required approvals, and workable arrangements.

B. Establish A Three Part Social Media Plan.

The Office of the CRO should establish a social media plan covering nominations, candidates, and the running of the election. Nomination content should explain positions, eligibility, signature requirements, and deadlines. Candidate content should provide

equitable introductions. Election operations content should explain voting access, daily hours, receipts, and assistance. Posts should be planned before nominations open and coordinated with TMSU communications.

C. Make The Elections Procedures Code Easier To Understand.

Social media campaigns should explain the Elections Procedures Code (EPC) in short, accessible segments covering nominations, campaign rules, voting restrictions, and complaints. TMSU should also explore a plain-language companion with practical examples and references to the relevant provisions. This companion would support understanding while the EPC remains the governing document.

D. Use More Targeted Nomination And Voting Outreach.

Marketing should reach students in faculties and programs with vacant positions. Early outreach should help prospective candidates understand the role and collect nominations, followed by candidate information and voting reminders. Faculty and program contacts, approved classroom announcements, and relevant student groups could help reach eligible students. Recruitment and voting outreach should have distinct messages and deadlines.

E. Retain And Review Voting Improvements.

The daily voting window and voting receipts should be retained and reviewed. Communications should explain voting hours, what receipts confirm, how to raise concerns, and why receipts must remain private. Participation data should help assess whether additional stations and targeted communications improve engagement.

12. CONCLUSION

The October 2026 Faculty Director By-Elections concluded with four acclaimed candidates and no complaints or appeals. The daily voting window and introduction of voting receipts provided clearer voting procedures. Low participation and the number of unsuccessful nominations identify recruitment and student engagement as priorities for future elections.
This report is respectfully submitted to the Elections and Referenda Committee and the Board of Directors for consideration and ratification.