

# GET INVOLVED

with your SPA

STUDENT  
PUBLICATION  
ASSOCIATION







Welcome back to another SPANC - **our first one in Scotland.**

We're thrilled that not only were we able to make it north of the border but this is **our biggest SPANC yet** with the highest number of tickets sold and a record number of award entries.

Thank you for making our **10th anniversary year** so special and being part of this incredible event.

We know you're all here to listen to our brilliant speakers, network with each other, and win awards, but none of this could happen without our dedicated team of volunteer executive committee members and trustees, or without **your engagement.**

In the next few pages you'll find out how you can be **more involved** with the UK and Ireland's biggest student media organisation.

## **What do we do?**

The SPA represents more than 175 student publications.

Throughout the year we put on training, events, and provide advice and support to our members.

Whether defending our publications against unfair censorship by their university or union, or putting on free media law seminars, we're there for you throughout the year.

## **How can you get involved?**

- Engage with the SPA year round, attend our events, and let us shout about your achievements.
- Propose motions at our annual general meeting to shape the charity how you want it.
- Stand to be part of our executive team or as a trustee to be part of the team that makes it all happen.





# It's all about you

One of the most important parts of this weekend is our annual general meeting, which this year will be held on Sunday April 2 at 11am.

We know you might be tired or nursing a hangover, but this is your opportunity to tell us what you need from your SPA next year.

The AGM gives you a brilliant opportunity to find out a bit more about the charity, what we've been doing to support student publications over the academic year, and have your say on the direction of the organisation. You can also stand for election yourself/

We run through important matters, vote on policies for the year ahead, and elect a new committee.

We know that there's a lot of detail involved with the AGM, and that's why we've put together this booklet to make it easier for you to find out more about what's involved and how you can participate, whether that's submitting motions, standing for election, or just hearing what your peers have got to say.

All member publications are invited to attend and vote at the AGM, while individual members can attend as non-voting observers. Each member publication is entitled to one vote on each motion and in each election, with the rules on each vote to be explained in more detail on the day.

As well as voting on any motions proposed by the Executive Committee, Trustee Board or members themselves, we will also be electing for the five Executive Committee positions and a Trustee, and hearing the latest Trustees' report and statement of accounts.

If you have any questions, please do feel free to reach out to us on [chair@spajournalism.com](mailto:chair@spajournalism.com) or [communications@spajournalism.com](mailto:communications@spajournalism.com), or on social media, and we'll do our best to help.





# The AGM

In general, at the AGM, the SPA's members do the following:

- Scrutinise the work of the SPA, by receiving reports and accounts;
- Steer the direction and strategy of the SPA, by discussing and then voting on motions; and
- Stand for election, and vote to appoint officers and trustees to lead the SPA in future years

## But what do all of those actually entail?

### Scrutinise

Although the SPA does its best to keep you up-to-date with what we've been doing, there's lots that goes on behind the scenes. The AGM is a vital opportunity for members to understand what the SPA has been up to in the last 12 months, and why they've taken the actions or decisions that they have.

The SPA Constitution says the AGM must be presented with a copy of the trustees' annual report, and the latest financial accounts.

The SPA's Executive Officers also present individual oral reports to discuss what they did over the course of their term, and how this aligns with goals they set themselves when they were elected.

Copies of written reports will be provided to members in advance of the AGM, and time will be allotted to ask questions to the exec and trustees.

### Steer

Motions can be proposed to change how the SPA operates and what our aims are. Amongst other things, these motions could even update the SPA Constitution, Bye-laws or induct new honorary lifetime members.





Motions are brought forward by members of the SPA, and will be put to the floor by the Chair. It's then up to members to ask questions, or argue their point & convince other members to vote one way or the other

To finish, each member publication is entitled to one vote, either for or against the motion (there is also an option to abstain).

More detail about how to submit motions later on pages 5/6.

### Stand

One of the most important tasks at the AGM is to elect the next team of SPA officers, and a trustee. These are the individuals who will lead the organisation for the coming year.

Candidates who wish to run for election are invited to stand at the meeting, give a short speech, and field questions from all members. Voting takes place in a similar fashion as for motions, with each member publication entitled to one candidate, and having the option to vote to Reopen Nominations.

**You don't have to register to run for a role in advance, just turn up and put yourself forward.**

At the 2023 AGM, we will be electing five Executive Officers, and one member of the Trustee Board (who will serve a term of four years).

To find out more about the roles up for grabs, check out pages 7/8.





# Make a change

The AGM is at its best and most informative when our members choose to get involved.

However, getting involved and having your say, especially in front of lots of people you don't know from all around the country, can be a little scary. So, we've prepared the guidance below to give you a helping hand in figuring out how you can get involved!

## Propose a motion

Do you have a burning idea that you think could improve how the SPA should run, and make sure we're continually improving the way we serve our members, and student journalists around the UK and Republic of Ireland?

At each AGM, we take motions submitted by the members and put them to a vote, helping determine the path and strategy the SPA should follow. You don't need to have any history with the SPA in order to propose a motion, you just need to have ideas for how the SPA can fix problems we and our members face!

There isn't a specific format that your motion should follow, but we recommend that a short explanation followed by clear actions the SPA should take will suffice. Remember, you will have the opportunity to argue your motion further, on the floor of the AGM.

If your motion would amend the Constitution or Bye-laws (our Governing Document), then you must identify which text is being replaced, and provide the exact text that you want to be added. Similarly, if you wish to remove something from the Governing Document, then you must specify the exact text you wish to remove.

To submit a motion, you must be an individual member, and your motion must be seconded by another individual member.





An individual member is:

- Someone who is a member of an SPA member publication, or who was in the past 12 months; or
- Somebody who is a current student of journalism and has registered as an individual member.

You can submit your motion by emailing it, along with details of the proposer and seconder, to [chair@spajournalism.com](mailto:chair@spajournalism.com) by **Saturday, March 18.**

### Example motion

Proposer: Geri Scott

Secunder: Jem Collins

The SPA constitution currently dictates that only blue pens can be used on official charity documents.

We propose changing page 5, paragraph three of the governing documents so it adds "black pens are also permitted".

We believe this will widen participation in the SPA.

If you submit it after this date, it cannot be debated at the AGM. Once submitted, the Chair will review your motion to ensure it is in order and compliant with constitutional and legal requirements.

Although the Chair will attempt to liaise with proposers if issues arise, they reserve the right to rule motions out of order or to rule any vote indicative until the Trustees determine if it is in order or not.

### Stand for election

Elections at the SPA are fairly relaxed and we encourage anyone who thinks they have something to offer to give it a go! A lot of people only decide they want to run during the course of the meeting, which is absolutely fine.

You don't have to do anything ahead of time, but we do recommend considering:

- Speaking to current SPA Officers to learn more about the roles; and
- Preparing a short speech outlining your goals, and why you believe that you are the right person for the role (maximum 2 minutes for Chair, 1 minute for all other roles)

We'll also be hosting informational sessions throughout the weekend, giving you more information about how to get involved.





# The next SPA team

We have a variety of roles available this year. Find out more below, and feel free to contact the current office holder through their email address on our website's Meet The Team page with any questions.

## **Chair**

The Chair is the public face of the Student Publication Association. Additional responsibilities include overseeing and supporting the other Executive Officers to help them accomplish their goals, supervising the team of Regional and Project Officers, chairing General, Executive and Trustee meetings, and oversee SPA campaigns and lobbying.

## **Communications Officer**

The Communications Officer is the Executive Committee lead on membership. This means their main responsibilities are recruiting new members, processing applications, and maintaining both public and private lists of members. They also keep up two-way communications with members, including sending round a monthly newsletter and taking and sharing minutes of SPA meetings.

## **Conference & Events Officer**

The Conference & Events Officer's responsibilities are paramount throughout the year, from one-off events held during the year all the way up to the set-piece National Conference and Awards at the end of their term. They serve as the Executive Committee lead on organisation of SPANC, while also overseeing the activities of all officers who are organising any other events for the SPA.

## **Sponsorship Officer**

The Sponsorship Officer coordinates efforts to secure advertising and sponsorship revenue, as well as donations, for the SPA to continue its work. They also manage event sponsorship and budgets, in order to ensure obligations to corporate partners are met, whilst they also support other officers, including Regional Officers, in securing sponsorship for their events where appropriate.

*All terms until May 1, 2024.*





## **Elected Trustee**

At the 2021 SPA AGM, members will elect one Trustee to join the Board. The Trustees oversee the work of the organisation, with an eye on strategy as well as the long-term future of the SPA. Ensuring the financial viability of the SPA is a vital part of the role. There are currently four elected Trustees, who sit alongside three appointed Trustees, and two members of the Executive Committee, who sit as Trustees ex officio.

*Term: Four years*

## **Regional and Project Officers**

**These roles are appointed by the new committee after they have been elected. Keep an eye on the SPA website and social media channels for when applications open.**

# **Just show up**

Even if you don't want to propose a motion or stand for election, you have a valuable role to play in the AGM by just showing up, speaking where you want to, and casting a vote.

Everything you do shapes the future of how we support student journalists across the country.

