

Trustee

Application pack



Who we are

The [Student Publication Association](#) (No. 1187383) is a charity wholly committed to advancing the education of student journalists around the United Kingdom and the Republic Ireland.

Newly incorporated in January 2020, our story began at the University of Southampton in 2012, and our aim is to provide support, training and recognition to print and online student publications around the country.

As well as advocating on behalf of our 125 (and growing) publication members and producing training and guidance, we also run National and Regional Conferences each year, featuring dozens of awards open to all members.

#SPANC20, held at the beginning of October 2020, was our biggest National Conference yet, with 450 tickets sold and more than 1,200 nominations for the myriad awards. Going forward, with a likely greater focus on online events rather than physical, we want to increase our base of skills, to ensure these are as diverse as possible, providing an ever-improving experience for our members.

What we do

What we offer our members is constantly changing, in line with the fast-paced development we see in the media industry from year to year. Nevertheless, our main activity includes:

- We provide training materials free to our members, always working on new guidance to help our members get to grips with the latest developments
- With a network of regional and national officers, we aim to liaise with any member needing advice or support, as well as creating a strong community of like-minded student journalists.
- We support the voice of member publications, as they aim to hold their universities to account and represent their students
- From our annual National Conference to training days and conferences around the country, we aim to present a range of affordable, accessible and useful events for student journalists
- We hold our prestigious SPA awards every year, as well as keeping track of scholarships and competitions across the UK and Ireland

In a changing COVID-19 world, our members are facing new challenges, with cuts to their funding and struggles to attract new members, hampering their ability to conduct journalism. Moving forward, we aim to provide more advocacy support to our members, and Trustees can play an active role if they so wish.

Role description

The SPA Trustees play a vital role in the governance of our work, ensuring we stay clear in our aims, and everything we do furthers the education of student journalists around the country. Trustees:

- Ensure the SPA is carrying out the purpose for which it was formed
- Make sure the charity is complying with the SPA's governing document and charity law requirements
- Act in the SPA's best interests, taking decisions by bearing in mind both the short and long-term implications
- Manage the SPA's resources responsibly, ensuring they are used only to further our purpose, and aren't over-committed
- Act with reasonable care and skill, giving enough time and thought to ensure you are carrying out your role in the best interests of the SPA
- Ensure the SPA is accountable to the Charity Commission, the SPA's members, and – where necessary – within the charity itself
- When required, assist the Executive Committee, Regional Officers and Project Officers in advocating for members and helping organise our Conferences
- Attend meetings of the Executive Committee and Trustees

Expected average time commitment of around 1-2 hours per week, although this may increase during busy periods for the SPA

This role is for an up to three-year term and all activities are being conducted remotely for the time being.

Person specification

We are looking to appoint up to three Trustees to our board, widening the base of skills we can draw upon in supporting our members and ensuring that, as a new charity, we are undertaking best practice.

The ideal candidate has a good understanding of the issues facing students, with prior experience of advocacy or student journalism, although it is not essential to currently be working in the field of journalism, media or related industries.

Essential characteristics:

- A commitment to the advancement of student journalism
- An ability and desire to work as part of a dedicated team of volunteers
- Willingness to devote the time and effort necessary to fulfil the duties of the role
- Respects diversity of thought and the benefits of collaboration, whilst being willing to propose alternative ideas or solutions
- Builds and sustains successful working relationships with interested stakeholders

Desirable characteristics for this role include:

- Prior knowledge of charity law or financial management
- Previous experience of student journalism, or advocacy efforts

- An insight into the world of media and student journalism
- Contacts within the fields of journalism or media
- Experience of working as part of a team
- Some experience of professional journalism, although this is not essential

We strongly encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds, including BAME, LGBT+ and disabled communities to consider applying for this role.

Application

To apply, please send a CV and cover letter (of no more than one side of A4) covering why you would be suitable for the role to chair@spajournalism.com, by the end of **Friday 6 November**. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an informal interview over Zoom by a panel of current Trustees.