

09
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Welcome talk

PANEL
Getting to know the patch on your doorstep

From knowing which issues are important to your area to keeping up your contacts' book, local reporting can take you from the village fete to a murder scene all in one day.

Martin Booth (Bristol24/7), Ella Woszczyk (Torbay Weekly), Lowri Lewis (Solent News Agency), Josh Sandiford (Freelance)

KEYNOTE
In conversation with...
Sophia Smith Galer

Sophia Smith Galer is a multi-award-winning journalist and content creator credited with pioneering journalism on TikTok in the UK. She balances traditional journalism with engaging over 850,000 followers.



PANEL
Breaking stereotypes in reporting

Getting your foot in the door can be difficult enough, so how do we break down the barriers in our industry and create newsrooms where everyone can thrive? Find out from four people who've been there and done it.

Andy Leake (Bristol24/7), Siraj Dattoo (Bloomberg), Jo Crawford (Times Radio), Umanga Perera (Freelance)

KEYNOTE
In conversation with...
Nuala McGovern

Nuala has been the host of Woman's Hour on BBC Radio 4 since May 2024. With a career reporting from more than 30 countries, presenting huge global moments and interviewing game-changers.



PANEL
Just made it in the media

How do you grab that first gig? What's the best way to climb the ladder and make a good first impression in the newsroom? Our panel will guide you through those terrifying first steps and give you the secrets to success.

Serafina Kenny (Business Insider), Charlie Watts (Bristol World), Naryan Branch (ITV), Maddie Parker (Bloomberg)

KEYNOTE
In conversation with...
Nadine White

As the UK's first dedicated Race Correspondent, Nadine has led agenda-setting investigations and told powerful stories amplifying underrepresented voices. Her work has reached millions, influenced policy, and contributed to research.



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TALK
How to work with PRs **PLMR**

How do you turn an inbox full of press releases into a run of exclusives and engaging reads? This session will give you an insight into working with PR teams to ask the right questions, foster good relationships and seek out the stories you need.

Kevin Craig (PLMR)

PANEL
Culture, connection, and storytelling

Culture, lifestyle and travel writing are key features of many student publications. Hear from top culture reporters about how to craft the best pieces you can.

Freya Parr (National Trust Magazine), Tiwa Adebayo (Bloomberg), Alice Henderson (Business Traveller), Queenie Shaikh (Insurance Day)

WORKSHOP
Mock press **PA MEDIA ACADEMY** conference

Build your news reporting skills and get the line with an interactive mock press conference, delivered by the team at one of the country's top journalism training institutions.

Sean Howe (PA Training), Ali Kershaw (PA Training)

Swap shop, careers fair, and lunch

TALK
The art of sketchwriting

The headlines can sometimes feel heavy, so how do you cut through the gloom and get your readers amused and informed with your cutting wit and odd observations? Rob will show you how to turn hard news into humour.

Rob Hutton (The Critic)

PANEL
Coffee, climate or **Bloomberg**
Citigroup: Why everything is a business story

Learn how Bloomberg covers issues from the cost of coffee and climate change, to immigration and corporate governance, all through the business reporting lens.

Siraj Dattoo, Tiwa Adebayo, Saksha Menezes (Bloomberg)

TALK
Managing online abuse

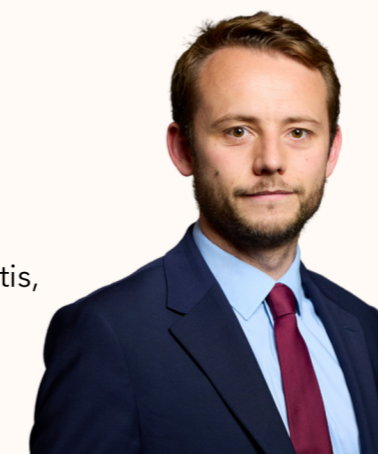
Building your public profile to make it in the media can be tough, attracting abuse and criticism from social media to the comment section. We'll show you how to switch off and manage being in the audience's eye.

Flora Carmichael & Rolf Andreason (BBC News)

WORKSHOP
Interview A to Z with **Chris Curtis MP**

Want to test out your questioning skills and maybe even get a scoop to boot? Chris Curtis, the Labour MP for Milton Keynes North and Exeter alumni is throwing himself to the mercy of some plucky student journalists.

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.



PANEL
Finding your feet in journalism

Your first few years as a journalist, even as a student, can be a lot, we know! Let the NUJ chat you through how to get started, handle your workload and crucially how to make sure you protect your rights as you enter your career.

Paul Breeden, Christina Zaba, Simon Chapman & Kate Pearce (NUJ)

WORKSHOP
News photography

Stunning images can make your story stand out. Try your hand at photographing a live news conference with tips from the best in the business.

Stefan Rousseau, PA Media

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

WORKSHOP
IPSO complaints committee

In this interactive session, you'll step into the shoes of the press regulator's complaint committee and analyse a high-profile case, weigh up key arguments, and decide whether a major newspaper crossed the line.

Elena Richards Coldicutt, Rosemary Douce & Emily Houlston-Jones (IPSO)

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

WORKSHOP
Perfecting your podcast

Join our expert workshop with Ellie Ajao to get tips and tricks on how to create or improve your publication's podcast!

Ellie Ajao (Debut Podcasts)

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.



WORKSHOP
How to run your team

Running a student publication isn't just about delivering brilliant journalism. If you're newly elected or appointed, this session will help you become a better leader, set shared goals and manage conflict.

Richard Brooks (SPA Trustee)

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

ONE-TO-ONE
Speed mentoring

When it comes to your future in journalism, our mentoring drop-in is here to help. Our trustees have experience in a variety of local, national & international publications, and come with bags of knowledge they're happy to pass on.

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

ONE-TO-ONE
Sparkling your CV

A good CV can be what gets you into the room and onto the career ladder for your future in journalism. Bring or submit your CV, come along to the SPA clinic, and we'll go through it with a fine tooth comb.

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

ONE-TO-ONE
Your free byline photo

Sign up, bring your face, and get a new professional headshot. Ollie Cole, journalist and photographer, will put you at ease, snap a few photos, and send you a link to your new byline photos - easily downloadable & free to use.

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

Awards from 6.45pm in the Exeter Suite!

WORKSHOP
Open-source intelligence masterclass

Learn how to use open-source intelligence (OSINT) techniques such as geolocating to collect, exploit and analyse data which will boost your investigations and elevate your reporting.

Sam Doak (Sky News)

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WORKSHOP
Data journalism: How to Excel

What is the 'data' in data journalism? And how can you get data to find stories for your audience? In this practical workshop we will show you how to get started using data and how you can continue to develop your skills afterwards.

Aidan O'Donnell (Cardiff University)

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

Estuary Suite

PANEL

Political thinking: From councils to Westminster

From parking and planning, to leadership battles and laws, political journalism is never a quiet beat. Our experts will tell you how to spot a story, build that contacts books and cover the political world that impacts your readers.

Alex Seabrook (Bristol Live), Geri Scott (The Times)

KEYNOTE

In conversation with...

Ben Bradshaw

What is it like for poacher to turn gamekeeper and swap life as a journalist to being an MP? Ben Bradshaw reflects on how his pre-politics career helped him in Parliament.



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Baxter Suite

TALK

Media law 101

Keeping yourself out of trouble in journalism can be hard but to make sure you don't end up with a big legal bill, or worse, you'll need to know your basics of media law. Defamation, copyright and knowing your legal rights are all key skills for any student journalist to learn.

Sandra Loy (Cardiff University)



PANEL

Alternatives to journalism

Crafting those creative skills can lead to all sorts of careers, even ones you might not expect. This session will get you prepared to turn your publishing eyes to new opportunities.

David Gilani (Middelsex University), Ashwika Kapur (BBC Natural History Unit), Richard Brooks (Ipsos)

SUNDAY

Breakout Room 1

WORKSHOP

SPA coffee morning

Kick off your Sunday at conference with a chance to meet other student journalists from across the UK and Ireland – we'll bring the tea and coffee! This is a chance to make connections, talk through issues your publication is facing, and come up with ideas.

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

ONE-TO-ONE

Sparkling your CV

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Breakout Room 2

ONE-TO-ONE

The SPA copy clinic

Got some copy you're keen to pitch or publish? Wondering how you might make one of your pieces even better? Submit your copy in advance, then come along to our copy clinic for hints, tips and coaching on how to make your writing even better, with advice from members of the SPA team writing daily for national outlets.

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

ONE-TO-ONE

Your free byline photo

Sign up, bring your face, and get a new professional headshot. Ollie Cole, journalist and photographer, will put you at ease, snap a few photos, and send you a link to your new byline photos - easily downloadable & free to use.

You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

AGM and lunch

KEYNOTE

In conversation with...

Megha Rajagopalan

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Megha Rajagopalan will share what she's learned from her investigative work for The New York Times, reporting on human rights, labour and conflict around the world.



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PANEL

Investigative journalism in the modern world

How do you secure a scoop, make your sources feel secure, and dive through the data to uncover the next big story? Our panel will take you through the key steps of navigating an investigation from idea to outcome.

Katie Tarrant (The Times & Sunday Times), Poonam Taneja (BBC News), Pieter Snpvangers (The Telegraph)

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PANEL

Journalism in the age of the influencer

In the modern world, word travels fast. Our team will take you through getting ahead in a social media age, and ensuring the news, rather than the rumours, gets to readers where they're already scrolling.

Tristan Werkmeister (Reuters), Lucy O'Brien (The Times), Annabelle Ariyanayagam (BBC News)

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PANEL

Getting match ready to cover sport

It's game on in the battle for the back pages. This session will give you the lowdown on covering your club, serving fans well, and sizzling storytelling even on a day full of nil-all draws. From match reports to insider accounts, our sport panel will get you match fit.

Julia Belas Trindade (Freelance), Toni Afoke (Freelance), Owain Evans (PHNX)

PANEL

Behind the curtain of entertainment journalism

Take your seats as our panel brings you into the world of news, reviews and reaction in the entertainment world. We'll find out how to get readers to trust your take, deal with some big personalities, and emerge award-winners.

Morgan Jeffrey (Radio Times), Adam Quarshie (Clash/Bristol Cable), Sukaina Benzakour (Freelance)

PANEL

Making your features sing

Features writing requires different skills to those found in hard news. On this panel our speakers will examine the style of long-form writing, learn the tricks of the trade, and get the inside track on how to craft a stand-out feature.

Meera Dattani (Adventure.com), Amy Beecham (Stylist), Isaac Muk (Huck)

WORKSHOP

Magazine masterclass

Rosie Maggs will take you through what the magazine industry in Britain looks like, how to dream up and manage content, and how to write for a specialist magazine audience. Come armed with ideas!

Rosie Maggs (The Historians Magazine)
You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.



PANEL

Making sense of global affairs

Events overseas are increasingly driving the news agenda whether you look to the White House or to conflicts around the world. Learn how to report from the frontline and relay repercussions for readers in the UK.

Simon Newton (Forces News), Yasmeen Serhan (Reuters), Michael Drummond (Sky News), Sally Patterson (Freelance)

WORKSHOP

Finding and applying for jobs no-one knows about

If you've got your eyes set on a journalism job after graduation, this interactive workshop will give you all the insider knowledge you need to succeed.

Jem Collins (JournoResources)
You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.

TALK

How to harness AI

Learn how to embrace AI in your journalism while also balancing ethical concerns and control over your work. Will AI be writing the articles of the future, or will reporters be able to harness those skills to help our workflow and boost productivity?

Charlie Beckett (Polis at LSE)

DROP IN

How to make journalism your job

Love student media so much you want to make this your career? Whatever degree you're studying, there's a role in journalism for you. Come along to this drop-in session to find out how training for a journalism qualification can get you into a fantastically exciting and challenging career.

Jane Bentley (Cardiff University)

WORKSHOP

So you want to start a Substack?

Want to help people scroll less and understand more about the topics you care about? This practical session will show you how and why you should be setting up an email newsletter right now. Bring along a laptop or just take notes.

Jane Bentley (Cardiff University)
You must have a booked space to attend this workshop.