



GET INVOLVED
with your **SPA** STUDENT
PUBLICATION
ASSOCIATION

WELCOME

We're delighted so many of you will be joining us in Bristol for this year's National Conference. As well as hearing from industry professionals, picking up tips and tricks from our hands-on workshops, connecting with colleagues from across the country and our prestigious awards, #SPANC24 is also the chance for us to hold our Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The SPA is a student-led charity, acting in the interests of its members. Our AGM gives you the perfect chance to shape our future and make sure we act in your interests. You can do this by proposing motions on how you want the SPA to run, electing new leaders to make the SPA reflect your priorities, or by simply questioning the SPA's reports and accounts.

We'll be on the ground throughout the SPANC weekend to answer questions about any aspect of the AGM. You can also field any questions to Matt, on chair@spajournalism.com, or Justine, on communications@spajournalism.com, and they'll do their best to help.

WHAT DO WE DO?

The SPA represents more than 200 student publications in the UK & Ireland, and a host of individual members across the country.

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.

200+ member publications, with thousands of keen student journalists.

Newsletters sent directly to the inbox of highly engaged editors and writers.

558

11,544 student & industry figures reached through social media.

Conference attendees made up of budding young journalists.

200+

HOW YOU CAN 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 a trustee

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

We know that having your say, especially in front of lots of people you don't know, can be a little scary. So, we've prepared the guidance below to give you a helping hand in figuring out ways to get involved so you can get stuck straight in!

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 as well. The AGM is a vital opportunity for members to understand what the SPA has been up to in the last 12 months, and why we've taken the actions or decisions that we have.

The SPA's governing documents say the AGM must be presented with 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 at the beginning of their term.

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

You can find those [here](#).

STEER

Motions will be proposed which change how the SPA operates and what our aims are. Among other things, these motions could change the SPA's governing documents, 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 and 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 (or they can choose to abstain).

More detail about how to submit motions can be found further down.

STAND

One of the most important tasks at the AGM is to elect the next team of SPA officers. These are the individuals who will lead the organisation for the coming year, either as a member of the executive committee, or as a trustee of the charity.

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 for motions, with each member publication entitled to one candidate, and having the option to vote to Reopen Nominations.

At the 2024 AGM, we will be electing five Executive Officers, and one member of the Trustee Board (who will serve a term of four years).

You can see our current executive and what they get up to [here](#).

JUST TAKE PART

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.

All member publications are invited to attend and vote at the AGM. (Individual members are able to attend as non-voting observers.) We operate a one member publication, one vote policy. This means that a member publication's team must discuss how to vote, then cast their vote as a collective on each issue.



HOW TO PROPOSE A MOTION

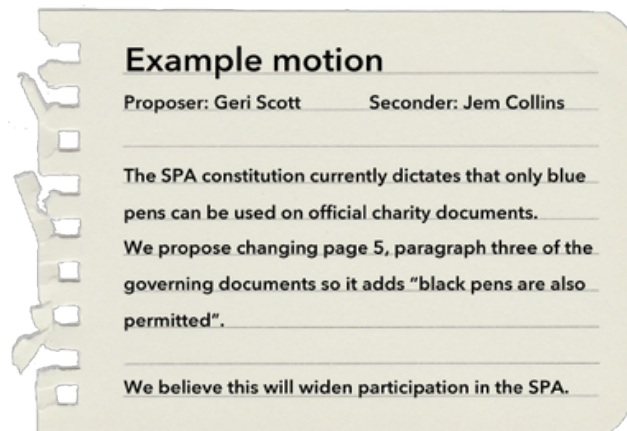
Do you have a burning idea that you think could improve how the SPA should run, and make sure we're continually improving the way we serve our members, and student journalists around the UK and Republic of Ireland?

At each AGM, we take motions submitted by the members and put them to a vote, helping determine the strategy the SPA should follow.

There isn't a specific format that your motion should follow, but we recommend including:

1. A short explanation of why this motion is important
2. Clear and tangible actions the SPA and members should take

Remember, you will have the opportunity to argue your motion further, on the floor of the AGM.

An example of a motion form with a spiral binding on the left. It contains the following text:

Example motion

Proposer: Geri Scott Second: 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 your motion would amend the Constitution or Bye-laws ([our governing documents](#)), 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

Documents, then you must specify the exact text you wish to remove.

To submit a motion, you must be an SPA member, and your motion must be seconded by another SPA member. A 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 by 17:00, Monday 25 March. 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.

HOW TO STAND FOR ELECTION

Elections at an SPA AGM are fairly relaxed affairs, and we do 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 the following if you're interested in running:

- Speak to current SPA Officers to learn more about the roles; and
- Prepare 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)

WHAT ROLES ARE UP FOR GRABS?

Chair

The Chair is the public face of the Student Publication Association, and alongside this has a number of additional responsibilities. These 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 overseeing SPA campaigns.

Term: Until 1 May 2025

Communications officer

The Communications officer is the Executive Committee lead on membership and external communications. Their responsibilities include recruiting new members, processing applications, and maintaining contact. They keep up two-way communications with members, hearing what they're up to and how the SPA can help, plus sending round a monthly newsletter and taking and sharing the minutes of SPA meetings.

Term: Until 1 May 2025

Conference & events officer

The Conference & events officer's responsibilities cover 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 the organisation of SPANC, while also overseeing the activities of all officers who are organising any other events for the SPA.

Term: Until 1 May 2025



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.

Term: Until 1 May 2025

Training & opportunities officer

The Training & opportunities officer's responsibilities are wide-ranging, covering a number of different areas, including the production of training resources for SPA members, and ensuring these adapt to the ever-changing needs of student journalists. They also supervise the SPA Alumni Officer, and maintain contact with industry professionals to benefit SPA members at the National Conference and beyond.

Term: Until 1 May 2025

Elected Trustee

At the 2024 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





For more information, email Matt on
chair@spajournalism.com