

EQUITY



# DERRY CONFERENCE

GUIDE 2025

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Paul W Fleming

## General Secretary's Address

They say good things come in threes. Our Derry conference is the third conference in its reformed format, and the third time we've met in Ulster. Since 2020 we've tripled our collective agreements in the North of Ireland, and our membership has grown by 16% - more than three times the average growth of Equity membership.

Like the trefoil shamrock, however, the Northern Ireland triples aren't just about 'good luck'. The dogged determination of depts, branches, and committee members have grown our membership and brought engagers to the table. Our conference attendees, motions, and fringes look more and more like the conversations had in green rooms across the country precisely because Equity's internal democracy is more powerfully linked to our industrial agenda than ever before.

The story in Derry and the North of Ireland is the same as around the UK. A de facto cut of 50% in arts funding here over a decade is familiar in every local authority, nation, and region. Anxieties about continuing drama, and of precarious variety venues, are the fights we are taking on everywhere. Equity may now have an office in Belfast, opened in 2021, but unlike anywhere else we organise, there's no drama school here. As we prepare to open our first South West Office in Bristol, we're faced with cuts to drama courses across institutions, in the South West and beyond.

So we meet with a backdrop of unprecedented challenges. But we won the first battle to save Oldham Coliseum. We're winning at Bethnal Green Working Men's Club. We're winning at the Welsh National Opera. We won countless tribunals and county court cases for missed payments, holiday pay, and the national minimum wage. And we've stopped major international productions to win better terms on AI too.

2025 is a massive year - the climax of our TV and film negotiations, the beginning of negotiations in every area of theatre, the Spotlight hearing in July. I'll be using this conference to gear up for those fights, reflect, refresh, and renew the zeal we need to make our 95th year the best yet.

Welcome to conference, the beating heart of our union.

**Paul W Fleming**  
**GENERAL SECRETARY**

Welcome to your Equity Conference in the proud city of Derry. The furthest west that we can hold our conference and the home of one of Equity's newest branches, the Foyle and West branch. Since the opening of the new Equity office in Belfast, I've witnessed both staff and activists in Northern Ireland campaigning hard against arts funding cuts and gaining support from politicians across the board. It has proved to be a very productive and successful period for our team in Northern Ireland, we can all celebrate that since the Belfast office opened, 11 new standard house agreements have been signed in Northern Ireland, and 2 new director's agreements.

Alongside our International work and building on the success of the Birmingham conference and the more recent regions and nations meetings, the conference motions continue to focus on industrial matters, defence of jobs, better terms and conditions at work and making our workplaces safer, more accessible for all our members.

Of course serious challenges do remain in the industry; we continue to witness the threat to security of employment in indigenous TV and audio production. Last year it was the closure of Doctors in Birmingham; the most recent is the decommissioning of River City in Glasgow. Those working in opera companies across the UK continue to campaign to retain their jobs, and in the subsidised sector funding cuts both from local and national governments have meant a drastic reduction in theatre programming. Our student deputies point to the challenges in performing arts education and the cost of audition fees which create a barrier to entering the industry.

That's exactly why we are here, to debate the problems facing our members and to offer solutions that the union can then action to make our industry a better place to work in.

The new slimline conference agenda allows for more detailed, in-depth debate at our fringe events, which again reflect the concerns of many of our members. Last year members were spoilt for choice and I anticipate that this year will be no different. I sincerely hope that this year's offer will appeal to you and maybe even ignite your interest in campaigns in other sectors of our industry.

Can I also ask that those who have attended conference before extend a warm welcome to new attendees and please, if there is anything that is confusing or unclear, do not hesitate to ask.

Arriving at conference can be daunting for a first-time attendee; it is up to all of us to ensure that it is a memorable, supportive and rewarding experience for those members.

We want you all to leave here enthused by your experience, keen to return to a future conference, ready to take on the challenges facing our industry, and most importantly consider standing for a committee or council.

This is your union, get involved and make your voice count.

In solidarity,

**Lynda Rooke**  
**PRESIDENT**



Lynda Rooke

## President's Address

# Timetable and Agenda

## SATURDAY 10 MAY

13:00	Doors open and registration begins for Councillors and Conference Business Committee only
13:15	Registration begins for all other attendees
13:25	Council meeting convenes (Councillors only), Council Room
14:00	Chair formally convenes conference, Guildhall
14:05	Report from the Conference Business Committee
14:10	Obituaries
14:25	President's address, including declaration of the General Secretary Election Result (Lynda Rooke)
14:45	General Secretary speech introducing 2024 annual report (Paul W Fleming)
15:00	Comfort break
15:15	Motions on Equality and Inclusion
16:45	Equity motion to TUC
17:00	Report from AGS, Recorded Media (John Barclay)
17:10	Motions on Recorded Media
17:45	Conference adjourns
18:00	Council meeting if necessary (Councillors only), Council Room
19:30	Welcome Reception, St Columb's Hall

## SUNDAY 11 MAY

09:30	Conference resumes, Guildhall
09:35	Guest speaker
09:50	Motions on Recorded Media (continued)
10:20	Report from AGS, Live Performance (Adam Adnyana)
10:30	Motions on Live Performance
11:00	Comfort break
11:15	Motions on Live Performance (continued)
12:30	Honorary Treasurer's submission of 2024 accounts (David John)
12:40	Report from AGS, Finance and Operations (Beccy Reese)
12:50	Appeal from the International Solidarity Committee
13:00	Conference adjourns
13:00-15:00	Lunch, Guildhall
13:30-17:30	Fringe events, Guildhall
19:30	Dinner, Guildhall

**MONDAY 12 MAY**

09:30	Conference resumes, Guildhall
09:35	Guest speaker
09:50	Motions on Variety
10:05	Report from AGS, Policy and Communications (Sian Jones)
10:15	Motions on Policy
11:00	Comfort break
11:15	Report from Deputy General Secretary (Louise McMullan)
11:25	Motions on Policy (continued)
12:25	Formal motions to adopt the 2024 annual report and accounts
12:30	Conference closes



## Conference Business Committee

Julia Carson Sims (Chair), Ian Barritt (Vice-Chair), Laurence Bouvard, Dan Edge, Su Gilroy, Marina Hampton, Isabella Jarrett, Nana St Bartholomew-Brown, Sam Swann.  
Secretary: Sam Winter.

Representatives with questions on this agenda or on conference procedure can visit the Conference Business Committee (CBC) at any time during Conference. During conference sessions, the CBC will be available at a table just outside the main hall. Also, the CBC will be in formal session and available for advice in the CBC room (the Green Room, on the same level as the main conference hall) at the following times:

**Saturday 10 May**  
17:45-18:00

**Sunday 11 May**  
13:00-13:15

**Monday 12 May**  
11:00-11:15

All motions submitted for inclusion in the agenda have been vetted and (where required) amended by the CBC for punctuation, grammar and style in accordance with CBC protocols.

Issues relating to whether a motion is in or out of order were considered by the March CBC and Council meetings, following discussion with the union body submitting the motion.





# Motions

## Equality and Inclusion

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### MOTION 1: LGBT+ Committee

Conference notes that Equity has a strong tradition of supporting members' health and wellbeing by working with engagers and employers, as well as exploring beneficial partnerships with service providers.

Physical and psychological help is available via the British Association For Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM) and members can further access support through Equity for menopause and childcare advice, legal advice, and the pension scheme. Conference believes that these established support avenues set a precedent regarding the provision of health and wellbeing services for members.

Conference further believes that, in the current political climate, transgender and queer union members are being disadvantaged by a lack of access to fundamental resources and advice. Those members are increasingly targets of a populist, authoritarian right-wing political movement that seeks to undermine and discredit trans voices, and use any avenue to make our healthcare harder to access.

Therefore, Conference calls on Council to -

1. develop guidelines for engagers on working with and supporting members accessing gender-affirming care;
2. work with BAPAM to explore how it could help members access gender-affirming care; and
3. explore new partners who may help members access gender-affirming care.

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### MOTION 2: Merseyside and Cheshire Branch (selected at the North West Regional Meeting)

Conference notes Disabled artists are disproportionately affected by poor health and safety in venues and on sets. Poor health and safety in these settings creates further barriers for Disabled artists to access and thrive in our industry.

A 2022 report by the Creative Diversity Network found that, despite 18% of the population having a disability, only 8.3% of on-screen contributions were made by Disabled people.

Conference further notes that venues and production companies are legally required to make reasonable adjustments and take reasonable measures to protect performers and creatives from disability discrimination. Reports from members working in our sector suggests this is not happening and often Disabled workers are scared to enforce these rights for fear of victimisation.

Furthermore, these barriers are often strongly felt before Disabled artists have arrived at a venue or started working on a contract, with one in four Disabled workers stating that inaccessible public transport limits their employment opportunities.

Conference calls on Council to -

1. strive to ensure that venues work with Disabled artists to carry out person-centred risk assessments as default when a performer discloses a health condition or impairment;
2. call on venues to cover additional travel and accommodation costs faced by Disabled artists;
3. carry out regular health and safety inspections of venues and sets; and
4. promote the access passports/riders and support Disabled workers in acquiring these.

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### **MOTION 3: Deaf and Disabled Members Committee**

Conference calls on Council to campaign for arts councils across the UK to fund, create, roll out and support a nationally recognised mandatory Disability and Deaf Awareness Training within the theatre sector for key staff members of theatre productions and companies in receipt of funding from arts councils, while ensuring input from Equity, Federation of Entertainment Unions (FEU) members and disabled people's organisations are a part of its creation.

This is in response to a lack of understanding and meeting of minimum legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010, alongside lack of knowledge around wider best practice models for companies to support, reach and employ artists and creatives who are Deaf, Disabled and/or neurodivergent.

There are successes and adoption of similar ideas in film and TV via ScreenSkills in giving an easy, free access to a base line of knowledge for all.

We believe a theatre-based equivalence is desperately needed to help fill gaps in the theatre industry.

This training, if freely available, would benefit artists and organisations alike, encouraging best practice even for those who are not in receipt of such funding, as it shows future preparedness should they ever apply.

A lack of awareness and understanding about disability and deafness, and the legal requirements around them, can result in unintended barriers to our members. We need to remove barriers to getting work, whilst in work and even after work.

We request that Council supports such an initiative and a campaign for the creation of this training across all UK arts councils.

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### **MOTION 4: North East England Branch (selected at the NE, Yorks. & Humb. Regional Meeting)**

Conference calls on Council to take a leadership role in addressing fatphobia in the entertainment industry and to strive to ensure that fat performers and creatives are given equal opportunities and fair treatment.

65% of the UK population are overweight and obese. If stage and screen were to be representative, 6.5 actors in a cast of 10 would be fat. This is never seen.

Fatphobia seems to be the last characteristic that is open to ridicule and discussion in our industry.

Conference asks Council to challenge fat bias and break down the barriers for fat people to be represented and working on stage and on screen. It is time for meaningful action to challenge the systemic biases that have long marginalised talent and to create an industry that celebrates all bodies, including adequate provision for costume and hair (understudy roles especially) providing safety and dignity in all work.

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## **MOTION 5: Race Equality Committee**

Conference notes that incremental improvements have been made in the representation of Black and Asian people across screen and stage industries in the last 10 years.

As a result, the resurgent far right movement is pressuring our cultural industries to be less diverse, agitating with baseless propaganda to restrict the presence of Black and Asian people on our stages and screens, calling for boycotts of Boots over the presence of an all-Black family in their Christmas advert, shouting loudly on social media about the (historically accurate) presence of Black characters in the World War II film Blitz, and issuing death threats to theatres programming powerful race-conscious work.

As a result, Equity should attempt to ensure that all efforts to challenge this pressure are co-ordinated as part of wider, national efforts during a period of a resurgence of the far right in the UK and internationally.

As of result of this situation, Conference calls on Council to -

1. resource the affiliation to organisations actively challenging the far right (for example Stand Up to Racism) to allow for a co-ordinated movement-wide response to the presence of the far right in the industry;
2. support the co-ordination of joint responses from all relevant equalities committees where organised far right groups mobilise against diverse artists working across the industry; and
3. endeavour to develop the co-ordination of joint trade union efforts via the TUC to respond to the far right including joint campaigns, support for marches, etc.

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## **MOTION 6: Stage Actors Committee**

Conference notes that Global Majority workers do not always have access to the same standard or suitability of wigs, hair and make-up (WHAM) provision as white counterparts when working in theatre.

Conference further notes that it is discriminatory for Global Majority workers to be asked or expected to provide their own products/materials where their white counterparts have been provided with what they need. Specifically, we also note that people of Global Majority heritage sometimes require additional resources to keep their hair protected from the demands of theatre. At the point of costume and WHAM design, measures should be taken to ensure the resources required of the full company are accounted for.

Conference affirms that equity in access to WHAM provision, skin tone appropriate physio tape, plasters, and other related products is a key industrial priority for our union. Therefore, Conference calls on Council to strive to ensure that clauses in Equity's industry standard agreements for theatre reflect Equity's expectation of equitable WHAM and other provision for all workers and to oversee the creation of guidance for members about their right to equal treatment at work.

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## MOTION 7: Women's Committee

The unrestricted use of AI technology poses threats to a fair and equal representation of protected characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, race, age, all hard won over many years.

UCL (University College London) research, 2024, showed: 'People interacting with biased AI become more likely to underestimate women's performance and overestimate white men's likelihood of holding high-status jobs... AI algorithms learn the human biases embedded in the data... and AI then tends to exploit and amplify these biases.' Algorithms also dull critical thinking. These biases historically have favoured cisgender wealthy white men.

We risk reducing women and non-binary people to becoming stereotypical products seen only through a sexist, ableist and reductive lens.

AI casting tools trained on unauthorised past trends will continue to sideline women of colour, plus-size women, those belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community, Disabled people and those who are older, reinforcing exclusionary beauty standards and erasing diverse storytelling. Deepfake technology threatens to exploit our members by altering their bodies, voices and appearance without consent, risking unwarranted behaviours, promotion of unrealistic ideals over authenticity, alongside removing paid future in-person work for women, Global Majority and Disabled artists.

Conference calls on Council to -

1. seek to negotiate collective agreements to include measures such as equalities monitoring, to counteract inherent AI bias;
2. raise awareness of the disproportionate loss of paid future work for those with protected characteristics; and
3. identify and work with ethical AI providers, who work to counteract bias and give fair remuneration on AI licensing deals.

## Equity Motion to TUC

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### MOTION 8: Council

Conference supports Council in sending the following motion to TUC 2025 on behalf of Equity:

Generative AI and creative workers' rights  
Congress notes that:

- i. creative workers are the backbone of the UK's world-leading performing arts and entertainment industry, yet often find themselves in precarious working conditions;
- ii. generative AI continues to transform work in the industry, as engagers turn to AI to create, for example, synthesised voice content, a digital replica of a performer or to train foundational AI models;
- iii. artists frequently find that their image, likeness or voice has been used in generative AI without consent or remuneration, for uses beyond those originally agreed, and for which engagers rely on broad transfers of intellectual property rights;
- iv. meanwhile, the government intends to weaken the protection provided by the copyright regime, by introducing an exception to copyright where content is used for the purpose of training AI.

Therefore, Congress calls on the TUC to:

1. campaign for the implementation in full of 'AI for Creative Workers: a TUC Manifesto';
2. lobby government to introduce a regime of personality rights, under which artists could better protect and license their voice, likeness and other aspects of their personal image;
3. work with the government and its newly-created Information Commissioner to push for improved enforcement of data protection rights in respect of generative AI; and
4. campaign against the government's intended introduction of a 'text and data mining exception' to copyright protection.

## Recorded Media

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### MOTION 9: Screen and New Media Actors Committee

With improved technology and the global power of the streamers making far more non-English content available to UK audiences, dubbing is increasing in importance as a sector within the UK entertainment industry. This should be good news for Equity members, promising new prospects for work. However, since there is no Equity dubbing agreement in place with the major dubbing providers, terms, conditions, and pay in this area remain unregulated, leaving members open to exploitation. At the same time, and more ominously, this traditionally overlooked sector of the UK industry is now in the crosshairs of AI tech companies, which are keen to capitalise on dubbing's growing opportunities and its lack of regulation. Thus, what could be a promising area of ongoing work for members is in imminent danger of being choked off by AI.

In the absence of a collectively bargained agreement with dubbing providers, Conference calls on Council to consider promulgating Equity guideline minimum rates. Alongside this, Conference also asks Council to seek to establish a Dubbing Code of Conduct that, while not binding as a collective agreement would be, would at least clarify best practices around terms, working conditions, and the ethical use of AI.

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## **MOTION 10: Continuing Drama Deputies Committee**

Continuing drama in the UK is under threat. In the past 18 months, the BBC has cancelled *Doctors*, citing rising costs in drama production; Channel 4 has made significant cuts to *Hollyoaks*' cast, budget, and number of episodes due to budget cuts; and ITV has announced cuts to episodes on *Coronation Street* and *Emmerdale* from 2026.

The government has identified the creative industries as one of eight key sectors that will be prioritised to drive economic growth in the UK. We want to see targeted funding and policy support to facilitate this promised growth and believe domestic TV production must be the focus.

Additionally, Conference believes that broadcasters need to increase investment in their continuing drama series which are so integral to the UK production landscape in providing a training ground for cast and crew, which in turn supports the wider production ecosystem and makes the UK such a successful centre for global production. In redirecting their spending away from continuing dramas in order to compete with streamers and their high production levels, the UK broadcasters are in danger of destroying the very productions that sustain them.

Conference calls on Council to resolve to -

1. support the committee's campaign to defend continuing drama;
2. identify and work with our allies, including our sister trades unions;
3. call for the broadcasters to support the campaign's aims; and
4. lobby government for measures that protect and enhance domestic and public service broadcast television production in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

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## **MOTION 11: Birmingham and West Midlands Branch / East Midlands Branch (selected at the Midlands Regional Meeting)**

Whilst 25% of the BBC licence fee comes from the Midlands region, in 2023, the BBC allocated a paltry 2.7% share of its network television expenditure to the region – the lowest share of anywhere in the UK, as it had been for nine of the last 10 years!

Allied to this is the loss of *BBC Doctors*, a devastating blow to the freelance creative workers of the Midlands region, as well as the wider screen industries freelance workers ecology. Equity has an opportunity to support the growth of BBC production in the region as the existing BBC Charter is due to expire on 31 December 2027, and the government will be reviewing the BBC Charter and public broadcasting from 2025.

Conference requests that Council strives to ensure that -

1. the historical underfunding of the region is centred in its contribution to the Charter review consultation; and
2. work for Equity members in scripted production is made equally available in all regions and nations and commissioned and managed from those regions and nations.

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## **MOTION 12: Audio Committee**

In a time when audio drama is having an upsurge in popularity, continued cuts to its BBC funding significantly decrease the work opportunities for our members and remove vital opportunities for the trainee actors who win the Carlton Hobbs or Norman Beaton Awards.

Conference calls on Council to investigate why the BBC's Radio Drama Company (RDC) is mothballed and currently employs zero actors and to campaign for its protection.

Additionally, we urge Council to join the Audio Committee in asking the BBC to give an undertaking that -

1. there will be no further cuts to audio drama output for the duration of its current charter;
2. it will actively explore opportunities to expand audio drama on both its radio and BBC Sounds platforms; and
3. it will actively support the continuation of the RDC and of the Carlton Hobbs and Norman Beaton prizes of a five-month long contract with the BBC Radio Drama Company.

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## **MOTION 13: Edinburgh and East of Scotland Branch (selected at the Scotland National Meeting)**

The Internet Movie Database (IMDb) includes information relating to creatives across films, television programmes, and a range of digital content. As of September 2024, the site holds over 620 million records, including over 13.8 million records relating to individuals.

Many Equity members have a page on IMDb, which will list their acting credits and other personal information. GDPR legislation requires information to be accurate and kept up to date.

Numerous members of Equity have reported inaccuracies in their data. In one case, this disqualified a member from eligibility for a BAFTA award, based on inaccurate credits which overstated acting roles. In a further case, one member's former marriage was recorded as still existing, erasing a later relationship with a partner they had been with for several decades. For trans members, old credits are recorded under names they no longer wish to be associated with, and the records cross-referenced. Members have reported that they cannot either approve information before it is added to their profiles or correct existing inaccuracies.

Conference calls upon Council to meet with the Information Commissioner and relevant representatives of IMDb to strive to ensure that -

1. members do not have to pay for an IMDb Pro subscription to have control of the data recorded against their profile;
2. all information added to individuals' profiles is approved by the individual, or their authorised representative, before it is viewable by subscribers or the public; and
3. all inaccuracies are corrected when reported by members.

## Live Performance

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### **MOTION 14: Northern Ireland Committee (selected at the Northern Ireland National Meeting)**

Equity staff and activists in Northern Ireland have been campaigning to ensure that our members are fairly treated when taking part in productions where they form part of ensembles.

The use of community casts, students and unpaid casual performers in shows has often led to blurred lines as to what constitutes a worker and who is genuinely a volunteer. This can, in turn, result in casts combining paid and unpaid performers who are often being asked to do the same job – all vital to the realisation of the productions. Conference calls on Council to create a set of guidelines for members, along the same lines as previous booklets on subsidised and commercial theatre, laying out the rules of what can and can't take place when it comes to ensemble work – when is someone a volunteer and when are they a worker – and how this affects rehearsal, performance and payment arrangements.

For too long our members, especially those in the early stages of their careers, have been exploited through bad practice in this area, and we call on the union to act now to protect all of us.

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### **MOTION 15: Brighton and Sussex Branch (selected at the East and SE Regional Meeting)**

Conference notes that when it comes to subsistence and relocation allowances it has long been recognised that London is a special case. However, there are some regional theatres in tourist hotspots where accommodation for industry professionals is both limited and expensive.

Currently, many industry professionals working in these theatres are having to use a substantial part of their basic wage to help pay for expensive accommodation which is not covered sufficiently by the extra allowances.

We believe regional theatres and touring producers in these areas need to recognise this, take responsibility and either -

- a) pay allowances that realistically take into account local conditions or
- b) provide subsidised affordable accommodation for all industry professionals.

Conference calls on Council to strive to ensure that negotiations with regional theatres and touring producers around relocation/subsistence take these factors into account, so that members working in these locations do not find these extra costs eating into their weekly pay.

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### **MOTION 16: Stage Management Committee**

Conference acknowledges that most of Equity's industry standard collective agreements include provisions ensuring higher minimum weekly pay rates for senior members of the stage management team. These provisions guarantee pay differentials that reflect the greater responsibilities of senior roles, especially when producers offer only the minimum rates.

Conference further notes that where specific collectively bargained clauses enshrining these differentials are absent in our collective agreements, differentials have either been eroded over time or do not exist at all.

Conference believes that this presents a barrier for members of the stage management team seeking to negotiate rates of pay commensurate with the responsibilities and workload for their grade.

Conference therefore calls on Council to seek to negotiate that stage management team differentials are codified and protected within all of Equity's industry standard agreements.



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### **MOTION 17: Directors and Designers Committee**

Conference notes that theatrical productions requiring fight sequences/fight movements require the engagement of a suitably qualified, skilled and experienced fight director to ensure these are safely choreographed and that the performers engaged in fight sequences/fight movements feel confident in the performance they are required to give.

Conference also notes that, as a member of the creative team, the fight director will not be engaged on the production for its duration but will instead be hired for a limited period in rehearsals. It is therefore common practice for the fight director to appoint a 'fight captain' whose role is to maintain the standards of fight sequences/movement as risk assessed and signed off by the fight director.

Conference further notes that Equity's industry standard collective agreements contain no defined fight captain responsibility fee or definition and no guidance for either Equity members or producers as to what the role should involve. Just as importantly, the agreements are also silent on the limits of a fight captain's responsibility and when the fight director must be brought back in.

Conference therefore calls on Council to seek to negotiate that, in conjunction with the Equity Register of Fight Directors, the fight captain role is formally defined within the union's collective agreements for theatre and that guidance is created for performers who are appointed as fight captains in theatrical productions. This guidance should include stipulation that responsibility for appointing a fight captain sits with the fight director, and that a fight captain should have appropriate training.

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### **MOTION 18: Singers Committee**

Conference notes the vital importance of collective agreements in protecting and furthering the rights of Equity's members across the industry. However, Conference notes that the terms of the SOLT/UK Theatre Agreements in opera have not been substantively renegotiated in recent years and that rates associated with those agreements have fallen dramatically in real terms. Furthermore, many opera companies – both established and emerging – do not offer work on Equity-negotiated agreements, leaving members more vulnerable at work.

Conference calls on Council to support -

1. recruitment efforts to bring more 'freelance' opera singers into union membership, to build the necessary power required to negotiate for change;
2. the encouragement of existing members to become active in the union, and in campaigning for improved terms and conditions;
3. the re-negotiation of SOLT/UK Theatre Opera Agreements to seek improvements to rates, terms and conditions, including the development of an appendix to the agreement covering summer festival work;
4. the development and negotiation of an opera appendix/opera singers contract for the Equity/ITC Agreement; and
5. the development of a template Opera Singers Equity Fringe Agreement.

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## MOTION 19: Opera Deputies Committee

Conference notes that cuts to arts funding have been made by successive governments. Managements have, in many instances, chosen to pass these cuts on to the artistic and creative workforce. In opera and elsewhere in the subsidised sector, this has had devastating impacts – permanently employed members have seen their terms and conditions threatened and cut, and job opportunities for ‘freelancers’ have been significantly reduced.

Conference also notes that, despite the election of a new Westminster government in summer 2024, there has been an absence of significant additional funding or other substantial policy announcements which would improve the working lives of Equity members, including those working in opera.

Conference calls on Council to -

1. campaign for increased public funding of the arts at local, regional and national level, including funding for opera specifically;
2. campaign for a proper industrial strategy for the arts – including opera – to be developed with input from the artistic workforce via their trade unions. This should include a plan for arts spending to reach the European average of 0.5% of GDP, and should include planning beyond the three-year funding cycles which currently limit scope for growth, artistic and workforce development;
3. continue to lobby government and major funding bodies to make it a condition of funding that work is produced on an appropriate Equity-negotiated agreement and adheres to employment law; and
4. continue to negotiate and campaign to improve workers’ terms and conditions and to resist management attempts to pass cuts on to Equity members.

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## MOTION 20: Dance Committee

Equity rates and agreements are regularly incorrectly adapted and applied to engagements that differ significantly from the contexts in which they were originally negotiated. Consequently, many dancers, choreographers, and movement directors do not feel the direct benefit of working on an Equity agreement, despite many engagements claiming to adhere to ‘Equity rates.’

Low budget, short-term, and one-off projects form a significant portion of the working lives of dancers, choreographers, and movement directors. However, the agreements in place in these areas of work do not specifically reference dance artists/dance work.

To encourage dance artists to engage with the union, Equity must have a greater presence in these everyday projects. This involvement would demonstrate to dance artists and engagers that no gig is too small for Equity to advocate for fairer pay, terms, and conditions.

Therefore, Conference calls on Council to -

1. develop draft agreements for low budget, short-term, and one-off dance engagements, such as scratch nights, private events, and music videos;
2. review and adapt existing resources that educate engagers on how to meaningfully connect with Equity (e.g. materials from variety and fringe theatre) to ensure their relevance to the dance sector; and
3. establish a strategy for connecting with dance artists and engagers to ensure these resources are widely accessible, understood and effectively implemented.

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### **MOTION 21: West End Deputies Committee**

Conference notes that, in recent years, there has been a huge increase in the amount of publicity that West End theatre workers have been asked to undertake to promote their shows, especially on social media. This expansion has left workers unsure of what can be asked of them and feeling exploited by increasingly onerous demands.

Conference believes that promoting a show is work and that all work to publicise a show should be conducted within the bounds of the relevant collective agreement and remunerated appropriately.

Conference calls on Council to -

1. determine the severity of the problem in the West End through surveying the membership;
2. educate theatre workers about the parameters of the agreements, how work should be logged, what constitutes a reasonable request and what is exploitative via a new code of practice; and
3. confront producers directly where bad practice is exposed.

## **Variety**

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### **MOTION 22: Variety, Circus and Entertainers Committee**

Conference notes a number of initiatives by local authorities around the UK which affect the work of Variety members but for which there has been no meaningful consultation with either performers or trade unions.

Notable examples of this are Manchester City Council's action plan which seeks to preserve and protect the character of Manchester's Gay Village but has not engaged with drag performers working in Canal Street. These performers are the heart of Canal Street and their cultural contribution to the Gay Village and the City of Manchester is immeasurable.

Similarly in London, there is the London Nightlife Taskforce instigated by the Greater London Authority and Mayor of London, whose goal is to protect, retain and grow London's nightlife. The taskforce does not have any representation from relevant trade unions and workers in what is an absolutely vital initiative for our Variety members.

Council is urged to engage with both of these bodies to strive to ensure that the views of nighttime entertainment workers are taken into account.

## Policy

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### MOTION 23: International Solidarity Committee

Whether because of the rise of the far right across the Americas, conflict in the Global South – including genocide and ethnic cleansing in Palestine – or the demonisation of migrants in fortress Europe and the UK, this conference takes place at a pivotal time for artists and workers everywhere.

As trade unionists, it is our duty to support our international comrades facing conflict, persecution or climate disasters which make free collective action by workers difficult or impossible. Equity has engaged in international solidarity work since it was founded. We believe that all artists deserve good work, all workers deserve good art and all people deserve equity. As Fannie Lou Hamer said during the civil rights movement: ‘Nobody is free until everybody is free.’

We urge Council to -

1. work with the International Federation of Actors (FIA) to build on their Ukraine Emergency Fund, by establishing a general fund to support post-war reconstruction, material wellbeing, and trade union development in other areas of conflict or oppression, such as Palestine, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo;
2. through FIA, support other affiliated unions to establish new committees with a similar remit to the International Solidarity Committee, to campaign together on international solidarity issues;
3. support or affiliate to other solidarity organisations across the continent of Africa and ensure those creative workers are represented in the solidarity work of both Equity and FIA; and
4. support the establishment of an International Solidarity Network within Equity, to shape and amplify the campaigning work of our committee.

AMENDMENT: Council

Amend the third ask to include ‘across the continent of Africa and the Global South’.

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### MOTION 24: Young Members Committee

Conference notes that in February 2024, an Equity investigation drew clear links between political interference with Arts Council England and the censorship of artists, specifically in relation to the genocide in Gaza and Palestine solidarity. There have since been further examples highlighting the threat to arts workers’ freedom of expression, including the abrupt cancellation of a high-profile theatre production following the alleged censorship of phrases including ‘Free Palestine’ and ‘Trans Rights’.

With the ongoing ethnic cleansing and apartheid against Palestinians, and an increasingly violent climate for trans people in the UK, Conference believes Equity must escalate its work to protect members’ ability to stand in solidarity with marginalised communities without fear of censorship, loss of work or withdrawal of funding. We hold that this is an industrial issue in that it impinges on our members’ ability to work freely and confidently, and that it places particular pressure on young and marginalised arts workers.

Building on the Race Equality Committee’s 2024 motion, and the work of the International Solidarity and LGBT+ Committees, Conference calls on Council to -

1. work with the TUC towards a clear roadmap for the implementation of the TUC’s 2024 Motion 24, protecting arts workers’ freedom of expression;
2. launch a national, public campaign to clearly communicate and further Equity’s work to lobby government, the Charity Commission funders and organisations to safeguard freedom of expression and prevent political interference; and
3. devise an intersectional political programme which educates members on their rights to freedom of expression regarding censorship and activism in solidarity with marginalised people.

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## MOTION 25: Student Deputies Committee

Conference notes that -

- Equity's Break Down Barriers campaign has ignited a national discussion on audition fees, with national media coverage, and thousands of supporters signing a petition;
- 'A Class Act,' a Sutton Trust Report, has recommended that the government bans publicly funded training institutions from charging audition fees; and
- the current crisis in higher education funding has put performing arts courses at risk, with undergraduate courses at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School recently cut.

Conference believes that -

- with 69% of creative workers holding a degree, compared to 26% of the entire workforce, performing arts education is crucial for access to the sector; and
- the current higher education funding model fails to adequately support students or institutions to deliver the courses they need.

Conference calls on Council to -

1. support local campaigns to save performing arts education and reduce barriers to access;
2. call on the government and education institutions to accept and implement all the recommendations of the Sutton Trust's report, especially to have 'a specific review of access to conservatoires and other specialist arts institutions'; and
3. work with stakeholders, such as the National Union of Students and Sutton Trust, to lobby government for a public funding model for performing arts education, which expands access to students from working class and marginalised backgrounds.

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**MOTION 26: London North Branch (selected at the London Regional Meeting)**

Drama and other arts students are the future of our creative life and industry. We should remove obstacles to their development. We welcome the new Labour government's stated commitment to 'grow the industry' and 'raise the next generation of creatives.' Unfortunately, their overall plans appear hollow and inadequate after 14 years of Tory arts devastation and a 15% contraction in the creative arts since they took office in July 2024.

We ask for arts funding at the European level of 0.5% of GDP. Labour offers 'a private finance model' to boost funding. We want renewal of arts education in schools after a decline of 47% in GCSE arts entries since 2010. Labour suggests one mandatory arts or vocational subject within the EBacc-led curriculum and says nothing about a 22% decline in drama teachers.

Conference calls on Council to urge the Westminster and devolved governments to accept our Performance For All and Conference policies, and to -

- 1) rescind the Tory 2021 cut of 50% to funding of higher education (HE) arts students;
- 2) offer free HE tuition fees (as in Scotland), stop audition fees, and restore maintenance funding to assist with training and industry costs;
- 3) promote radically reduced theatre ticket prices for drama students and professionals;
- 4) offer seed money for arts graduate training and projects;
- 5) encourage careers advice in the arts in all secondary schools; and
- 6) abolish EBacc and Progress 8, restore a rich, varied curriculum including all arts, and promote funded visits to and by performing companies.

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**MOTION 27: Bristol and West of England Branch (selected at the SW Regional Meeting)**

Conference notes that Equity recently published new analysis of the trends in national arts councils funding by parliamentary constituency in an 'arts tracker tool'.

It shows, for instance, that across all Bristol parliamentary constituencies, average annual Arts Council England funding has been cut by £14.4m over the last five years, in real terms.

Conference believes that this is an amazing piece of work but that we need to go further.

Many people know that local government funding is a totally separate budget to national arts councils funding. What people do not realise is that the amount of money given out by local government authorities per year to arts funding is more than the arts councils give.

Yet in terms of local government funding, Bristol City Council has also cut arts funding from £1,015,960 in 2018 to £635,960 to 2024 – a 40% cut.

We have recently won a reprieve to a 100% cut to culture funding, but this decision hangs by a thread.

We must combat the narrative that arts councils funding could possibly fill the gap left when local authorities cut culture funding.

Conference calls on Council to -

- 1) create a similar tool to show what is happening to local government authority funding;
- 2) create a campaign which can be adopted nationally for a cohesive approach; and
- 3) communicate the campaign to members.

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**MOTION 28: London South Branch (selected at the London Regional Meeting)**

Conference welcomes our union's campaign to improve the new government's Employment Rights Bill by ending the distinction between 'employee' and 'worker'. However, we note that most of the bill's existing improvements are to individual rights and leave out the collective rights that give trade unions their strength.

The current bill leaves most of the Tory anti-union laws intact. There is also insufficient strengthening of collective bargaining, key to improving workers' rights after decades of erosion under successive governments.

Conference believes the bill leaves loopholes that employers and engagers will exploit to undermine union organising. We also believe the delay in implementing the bill and its measures, especially the limited repeal of anti-union legislation, is unacceptable.

Conference calls on Council to also campaign for -

- 1) the bill's amendments to include collective bargaining for all workers;
- 2) the bill's amendments to include repeal of all anti-union legislation;
- 3) as a minimum, the promised repeal of the industrial action ballot thresholds in the Trade Union Act 2016, as well as the Minimum Service Levels Act 2023, to be separated from the bill and immediately voted through parliament as fast-tracked legislation;
- 4) fellow unions and the TUC to launch a national campaign to demand these changes, including ending the employee/worker distinction, with protest action and potential industrial action as appropriate; and
- 5) the TUC to implement its 2024 congress policy to call a special congress to review the bill and demand its strengthening as part of that campaign.

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**MOTION 29: Kent Branch (selected at the East and South East Regional Meeting)**

Conference urges Council to collaborate with the Arts & Mind campaign led by the National Education Union. Conference urges Council to lobby the government to make creative arts a core component of the national curriculum and avoid cutting funding or sidelining these crucial subjects. This motion emphasises the significance of creative arts – such as theatre, drama, variety, music, dance, and circus – in the school curriculum. The multifaceted benefits of the arts for young people, especially non-academic students who struggle with traditional studies, cannot be underestimated. The creative arts provide alternative paths to success and build confidence, essential for all students' holistic education.

Creative arts nurture well-rounded individuals who can think critically and creatively – skills necessary in today's rapidly changing world. Many emerging industries, like digital media and entertainment, heavily rely on these creative skills, which contribute significantly to the UK's economy.

Furthermore, the creative arts foster teamwork and communication. Theatre and drama workshops, in particular, enhance listening and speaking skills and allow young people to express their emotions and identities in a safe environment, positively impacting their mental health and development.

In summary, the creative arts are essential. Investing in them is investing in the future. We believe every child should have the opportunity to experience the transformative power of the creative arts, and we ask Council to urge the government to reconsider their proposed budget cuts.

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**MOTION 30: Wales National Committee (selected at the Wales National Meeting)**

Our campaign against Spotlight has highlighted other significant and unjust practices that hinder our members in the creative industries from securing fair employment. Entertainment agencies are, under current law, permitted to charge our members fees for securing work by taking a commission from their earnings. In some sectors, such as film/TV and theatre, this commission – sometimes with VAT added – can push our members' earnings below the National Living Wage. This occurs even though the agreed Equity minimum rates are above the legal minimum.

Conference firmly believes that our members are entitled to a fair and living wage, and it is time for change.

Therefore, Conference calls on Council to take action by -

1. investigating ways to permanently remove the legal exemption for entertainment and modelling agencies that allows our members to earn less than the National Living Wage after commissions are deducted;
2. launching a public awareness campaign, with materials for members, to shed light on this issue and garner widespread support; and
3. collaborating with the union's industrial committees to develop a strategic plan that addresses this problem with employers and works towards negotiating Equity minimum rates that, even after accounting for the 15-20% agency fees, ensure our members receive a legal and fair living wage.

It's time to ensure that our members are paid fairly for the work they do. Let's make this change together.





# Standing Orders

A summary is included below. For the full Standing Orders, please go to:

<https://www.equity.org.uk/about-us/how-were-run/rules-of-the-union/standing-orders>

## TELLERS AND STEWARDS

The tellers and stewards are union staff. They examine the credentials of those attending and count the votes.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDINGS

Only the union's official communications team may take videos or any form of audio recording in the conference hall. Photography is permitted during Conference sessions, but not during voting.

## FLYERS

No Councillor, Representative, other member or guest shall place any flyer on the tables in the conference hall.

## AGENDA

**Compositing motions** The movers of motions and amendments shall be asked to co-operate with the Conference Business Committee to composite (join together) motions where possible.

**Remitting motions** Remitting a motion means asking Council to decide it instead of Conference. A motion which has been moved and seconded may not be remitted by the mover without the consent of Conference.

**Withdrawal of motions** or amendments A motion or amendment which has been moved and seconded may not be withdrawn by the mover without the consent of Conference.

**Unfinished business** All matters on the agenda not reached at the conclusion of the last day of Conference shall be remitted to Council.

## ORDER OF DEBATE

**Limitation of speeches** The mover of a motion can speak for up to five minutes. The seconder and subsequent speakers, including the right of reply, can speak for up to three minutes. One minute before the end of each speaker's time a warning shall be given, and again at the end of the speaker's time.

**Amendments** No amendments will be accepted at Conference. Requests to withdraw a motion, to composite (join) motions, or any other request that may alter the timetable must be made to the Conference Business Committee in its committee room and not from the floor of the meeting.

**Rules of debate** See Rule V in the Union's Rulebook: [Rules of the Union | Equity](#)

## ADDRESSING CONFERENCE

- Representatives and Councillors shall indicate they wish to speak by holding up a voting card.
- Representatives and Councillors shall speak to motions only when called by the Chair. They shall address the Chair and give their name and the part of the union they represent. All speakers may remain in their seat in the body of the hall, rather than speak from the rostrum, if they wish. All speakers are encouraged to speak from the rostrum, if possible, so that they can be seen by those in the hall and on the screen transmissions. Speakers who remain in their seats must wait for a roving microphone to be provided before they start speaking.
- For points of procedure, questions and formal moving/seconding of motions, Representatives and Councillors shall stay in their place when speaking and not come to the rostrum (unless invited by the Chair). They must wait for a roving microphone to be provided before they start speaking.
- No Representative or Councillor shall interrupt a speaker except on a point of procedure. In particular, there shall be no heckling of speeches.
- If the Chair stands during a debate, the Representative or Councillor speaking shall immediately give way and shall wait for the Chair's permission to continue.
- No speaker shall ask those present in the conference hall to identify themselves by means of a show of hands as a member of any group or category.

## VOTING

- Only elected Representatives and members of Council shall be allowed to vote.
- All voting shall be by a show of voting cards.

# What is Equity Conference?

Conference takes place each year, usually in May. Every year it is held in a different Equity nation/region.

Conference is for members to discuss and decide matters of general policy and/or any rule changes. The agenda and timetable can be found in this guide.

We also hold social events so you can meet other members, and a fringe programme to educate, empower and engage members in the industrial and campaigning work of the union.

Each type of member attending the conference plays a different role:

- **REPRESENTATIVES** are elected by branches and committees, and attend on their behalf (though they cannot be mandated to vote in any particular way by their branch or committee). They can vote and speak on the conference floor.
- **COUNCILLORS** (including the Officers) can all attend, vote and speak.
- **CONFERENCE BUSINESS COMMITTEE (CBC) MEMBERS** are responsible for managing the business of the conference. They support aspects of the conference and give procedural advice. They cannot vote, and they can only speak to conference about procedure.
- **TRUSTEES** are invited to attend. They can speak but not vote.
- **OBSERVERS** are members who have applied to attend the conference, to experience the event and see what goes on. They cannot vote or speak.

Some members will be at the conference in multiple roles. For example, some CBC members are also Councillors. They carry all the rights of each role with them.

Each member attending plays a vital role in the running of the conference, and more importantly in strengthening the union. We thank every one of you.



# Arriving at Conference



## Conference venue

The main venue is the Guildhall, Guildhall Square BT48 7BB. The Fringe and the Conference Dinner on Sunday are also at the Guildhall.

The Welcome Reception on Saturday evening is at St Columba's Hall at the corner of Newmarket St and Orchard Street BT48 6EG.

## Hotels

There are four. If you do not know which hotel you are staying in, contact Sam Winter at [swinter@equity.org.uk](mailto:swinter@equity.org.uk). The hotels are:

- The Ebrington Hotel, 69-72 Ebrington Sq BT47 6FA
- City Hotel, Queens Quay BT48 7AS
- Holiday Inn, 31 Strand Rd BT48 7BL
- Maldron Hotel, Butcher St BT48 6HL

## Travel to Derry

Members travelling from across the UK can claim reasonable expenses in line with our expenses policy. By the time you read this guide, you should already have received travel guidance and have booked your travel to Derry. For most conference attendees, the fastest way to travel will be to fly directly to Derry, or to fly to Belfast and then take a train or coach to Derry.

For any questions about travel, contact Sam Foster at [sfoster@equity.org.uk](mailto:sfoster@equity.org.uk).

## Getting to the hotels/venue

It's a 5-10 minute walk between most conference locations. Arriving from the airport: You can either take a taxi or a bus to get to your hotel or to the venue. The taxi takes about 20 minutes (see below for taxi companies, or you can take an Uber). To get the bus to the City Hotel, Holiday Inn, or Maldron Hotel take the 144 or 152 and get off at the Peace Park. The hotel is a five-minute walk from the bus stop. To get the bus to the Ebrington Hotel, take the 144 or 143 (get off at May Street) or 152 (get off at Glendermott Road). The hotel is

a five-minute walk from the bus stop.

Arriving from the train station: From the train station, the Guildhall is a 15 minute walk, the City Hotel, Holiday Inn, and Maldron Hotel are a 15-20 minute walk, and the Ebrington Hotel is a 15-20 minute walk. The bus station is in close walking distance from the conference venue and the hotels.

Bus journeys: For more information on bus journeys, use Google Maps ([www.google.com/maps](http://www.google.com/maps)), go to [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk) or call Translink on 028 9066 6630.

Taxi journeys: To claim a taxi journey as an expense, please get this cleared in advance by contacting Sam Winter at [swinter@equity.org.uk](mailto:swinter@equity.org.uk). The exception to this is that you do not need pre-approval to claim a taxi to or from the airport, as the buses are infrequent.

See below phone numbers for available taxi services. You can also take Uber.

Foyle Delta Taxis: 028 71 279999

City Cabs: 028 71 264466

Taxi Co: 028 71 262626

## Parking

There is on-site car parking at the City Hotel and the Ebrington Hotel. Other than this, there are a number of car parks available in the vicinity of the conference venue and hotels, for example on William St and Queens Quay. See here for a list (or Google "Derry city area car parks"): [www.derrystrabane.com/services/car-parking-information/derry-city-area-car-parks](http://www.derrystrabane.com/services/car-parking-information/derry-city-area-car-parks)

Parking cannot generally be claimed as an expense, unless you're required to drive for accessibility reasons. To request for parking to be paid as an expense, contact: [swinter@equity.org.uk](mailto:swinter@equity.org.uk)

## Arriving at the hotel/venue

If you are staying in the hotel, please check-in at the hotel front desk with a member of hotel staff. Please use your Equity name to check-in.

On arrival at the conference venue on each day, please register at the Equity registration desk with an Equity member of staff.

On the first day you attend, you will be provided with your name badge. For Representatives and Councillors, this name badge is also your voting card. Please wear it at all times, both for security and so that other members can see who you are.

## The Local Area

The hotels and venue are all close together in the centre of Derry, among an array of cafés, shops and amenities.

### Travel connections

From Derry Airport, you can either take a taxi or a bus to get to your hotel or to the venue. The taxi takes about 20 minutes. You can take an Uber, or one of the following taxi services:

- Foyle Delta Taxis: 028 71 279999
- City Cabs: 028 71 264466
- Taxi Co: 028 71 262626

The bus takes about 30 minutes. Buses come about once an hour. City Hotel, Holiday Inn or Maldron Hotel: Take the 144 or 152 and get off at the Peace Park. The hotel is a five-minute walk from the bus stop. Ebrington Hotel: Take the 144 or 143 (get off at May Street) or 152 (get off at Glendermott Road). The hotel is a five-minute walk from the bus stop. For more information on bus journeys, use Google Maps ([www.google.com/maps](http://www.google.com/maps)), go to [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk) or call Translink on 028 9066 6630.

### Pharmacy

Close to the venue, Gordons Chemist (Waterloo Place, 3A-B Strand Road BT48 7BH) is open on Saturday 9am-5.30pm and H Sweeny Chemist (24 Strand Rd BT48 7PX) is open on Saturday 9am-6pm.

On Sunday, open pharmacies are a little further out. You could go to:

- Bradley's Pharmacy, 8 Lisnagelvin Shopping centre, BT47 6DF (close to the hospital, a 15 minute drive or 35 minute walk from the venue), open 1pm-6pm Sunday; or
- Bradley's Pharmacy, 130A Northland Road BT48 0LX, open 11am-6pm Sunday (an 11 minute drive or 22 minute bus journey from the venue)

### Hospital/Accident & Emergency

In case of any emergency, please call 999.

Altnagelvin Area Hospital is a 15 minute drive from the venue. It is also serviced by the 2a, 4c, and 5a buses from the Foyle Street bus station. The entrance to the A&E department is on Dudley Road, BT47 6SB.

### Emergency dentist

For emergency dental care over the weekend, you should contact the Emergency Dental Clinics (EDCs) directly at 028 2566 3510. Telephone lines are open from 8.00am to 12 noon.

### Coffee shops

There are a variety of coffee shops and cafes in the area.

Near the Guildhall: The Scullery Café, 48 Waterloo St BT48 6HF and The Coffee Pot, 24 Foyle St BT48 6AL

Near the Holiday Inn and City Hotel: The Lounge, 61 Strand Rd BT48 7BN

Near the Maldron Hotel: Terra Artisan Bakehouse, 2 Waterloo St BT48 6HE

Near the Ebrington Hotel: The Bakery Ebrington, 102 Hill Avenue, Ebrington St BT47 6HF

### Dinner

The conference dinner on Sunday will be at St Columb's Hall, located near the hotels and the venue at the corner of Newmarket Street and Orchard Street, BT48 6EG. The journey on foot from the hotels is between five and 15 minutes. From the Guildhall, it is a five-minute walk – head down Foyle Street opposite the Guildhall and take a right at Orchard Street. St Columb's Hall is on your right.

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## Hotel Information

Accommodation has been arranged in line with the form you returned. For most members living outside of Derry, this means a room has been booked on the evenings of Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 May (unless alternative arrangements have been confirmed for you).

We will be using four different hotels - details will be confirmed with each individual directly. Breakfast is included at all hotels.

Luggage storage is available at the Guildhall (the main conference venue) on the Saturday and Monday.

A buffet lunch will be provided at the Guildhall to everyone attending on the Sunday, and a packed lunch will be available on the Monday as you leave.

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## Accessibility

Everyone attending has been asked for their full requirements in order to attend and participate in the conference. If you have access requirements which you have not informed Equity of through the Conference Attendee Form, please contact [swinter@equity.org.uk](mailto:swinter@equity.org.uk) as soon as you can.

- The main stage is wheelchair accessible via a ramp.
- The main conference business will have BSL interpretation and will be subtitled.
- A hearing loop is installed in the main conference hall.
- Copies of papers on coloured paper (required by some with dyslexia) and large print copies can be provided if requested in advance.
- We produce an audio version of the agenda/guide.
- There will be a quiet room available at the Guildhall.
- For more information on accessibility at the Guildhall, please go to: <https://guildhallderry.com/>

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## Expenses

Expenses will be reimbursed by bank transfer, after the conference. Every member will be sent a digital expenses form in advance, or you can collect a paper form from the information desk. Please remember to include copies of receipts.

Claims will be processed within seven days of receipt of forms. If you cannot wait until after the conference, you may submit your travel expenses in advance, providing they are properly receipted.

You can send them digitally to:  
[financeoffice@equity.org.uk](mailto:financeoffice@equity.org.uk)

or by post to:  
Finance Office, Equity,  
FREEPOST RTKS-BRUB-LYJR, Guild House, Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9EG (no stamp required).

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## Annual Accounts 2024

A copy of the 2024 Annual Accounts has been provided to every member attending the conference. Each member has the right to submit a written question to the Honorary Treasurer regarding the accounts. These questions will be then be dealt with as part of his speech at the conference. In order to submit a question, please write to:

David John, Honorary Treasurer  
[cllrjohn@equitycouncillors.org.uk](mailto:cllrjohn@equitycouncillors.org.uk)

By the deadline of 12 noon on Tuesday 6 May

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## Safe Spaces

We are committed to making the conference a safe space for everyone. We therefore ask everyone taking part or working at the conference to abide by our safe spaces statement:

“Every single one of us attending this conference is entitled to work in a safe space: a space free of fear, a space free of bullying and harassment of any kind. We will work together honouring our differences and celebrating the gifts we each bring to the table.

“We will treat one another with politeness and respect at all times and, if we are subjected to or witness bullying and harassment, we will speak out knowing that our voices will be heard and we will be taken seriously. Together we can create a safe space.”

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## Key Contacts

Sam Winter  
Conference Organiser  
[swinter@equity.org.uk](mailto:swinter@equity.org.uk)  
07850 539 031

Sam Foster  
Assistant Conference Organiser  
[sfoster@equity.org.uk](mailto:sfoster@equity.org.uk)  
07522 185 022

### **Conference Business Committee**

If you have any queries around conference business/procedure, you can visit the Conference Business Committee in the hallway outside the main conference hall, or in the CBC room (the Green Room) . Or you can contact the Secretary to the CBC: [swinter@equity.org.uk](mailto:swinter@equity.org.uk)

In an emergency, please call 999

## Fringe Events



Fringe events are organised by different parts of the union, independently of the main conference – for example, by a committee, branch or campaign group. They're a great way to discover new ways to get involved with the union and hear about the work of other members.

There are 15 fringe events taking place at conference 2025, our largest ever programme. All events will be subject to capacity and we would strongly encourage everyone attending conference to attend as many events as you can.

They will all be taking place on the Sunday afternoon at various spaces around the Guildhall. A buffet lunch will also be served at the Guildhall from 13:00-15:00.

## SUNDAY 11 MAY

### **Pact Negotiations: Power in the Film and TV Industry**

*13:30-14:20, Conference Hall*

Please come along to find out about the ongoing Pact negotiations in Film and TV, understanding the power dynamics at play in the industry and how we can harness them for change. We look forward to discussing your ideas on how to drive campaigning around these Pact negotiations and what meaningful action can be taken to win much needed improvements.

### **No Pasaran! Combatting the Rise of the Far Right: Joint Fringe Event between Equity's Race Equality Committee and Stand Up to Racism**

*13:30-14:20, Whittaker Suite*

We must unite to fight the rise of the global far right. Equity's REC and Stand Up to Racism will outline their respective strategies to challenge the increasing influence of the far right in UK politics, culture and wider society. The threat to artists and freedom of expression is greater than ever. Please attend the workshop to learn more of how you can play an active role in this critically important work.

### **Trade Unionism in a New Ireland**

*13:30-14:20, Green Room*

A panel discussion and Q&A about the future of trade unionism in Ireland, in the event of constitutional change on the island.



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### **Comrades Not Competition**

13:30-14:20, Ceremonial Room

In times of hardship, it is not an outside enemy that does us in but the fighting from within. The arts are under attack and we must maintain community and support for all artists to thrive. Come be in community as we discuss the splintering tactics old and new that are being used to turn us against one another and how you can fight back.

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### **What Does it Mean to be Working Class and What Do We Expect from the Industry?**

14:30-15:20, Conference Hall

Equity's Class Network presents their Class Manifesto which will be launched industry wide on (need to set this date and will let you know ASAP!). Panellists include David John, Paul Valentine (2 more to be confirmed). Hosted by Equity Class Network Chair, Stephanie Greer.

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### **Branch Meetings, Like Going to a Festival**

14:30-15:20, Whittaker Suite

Do you have what it takes to run a festival? Join together with activists from around the country to turn your branches into a festival. This session will be interactive, creative, fun and thought-provoking and give you the chance to share your ideas and hear from other activists on how to make your branch meetings an event everyone wants to go to and come back to! Together we will share ideas during a hands-on session with activists from other areas of the union, using a festival as a way to think differently about your branches. You'll come away from this session full of ideas and glitter; it will be just like going to Glasto. You will leave ready to energise your branches, and with a network of contacts to keep sharing what works for members, together.

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### **Equality as an Industrial Issue**

14:30-15:20, Green Room

Do you have what it takes to run a festival? Join together with activists from around the country to turn your branches into a festival. This session will be interactive, creative, fun and thought-provoking and give you the chance to share your ideas and hear from other activists on how to make your branch meetings an event everyone wants to go to and come back to! Together we will share ideas during a hands-on session with activists from other areas of the union, using a festival as a way to think differently about your branches. You'll come away from this session full of ideas and glitter; it will be just like going to Glasto. You will leave ready to energise your branches, and with a network of contacts to keep sharing what works for members, together.

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### **Dismantling Professionalism: Making the Industry More Accessible**

14:30-15:20, Ceremonial Room

A session looking at the key elements of 'professionalism' in our industry, and why these qualities can exclude deaf, disabled and neurodivergent performers from rehearsal spaces and from entering the industry. Chaired by DDMC & YMC member Lucy Turner, the panel will include speakers from different areas of the union, such as members with lived experience as well as access co-ordinators.

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### **Sustainable Practice in the Arts**

15:30-16:20, Conference Hall

In the current climate we all need to make our work more sustainable – come along to a discussion on how this works in practice. We'll be hearing from projects in Northern Ireland and across the UK, as well as best practice from international work.

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### **Bethnal Green Working Men's Club as a Case Study: Social Clubs, Shared Ownership, and Revitalisation**

15:30-16:20, Whittaker Suite

Strategies for worker ownership of cultural spaces and infrastructure, and how to protect social clubs for future generations. Panel discussion with Lenny Watson, Jonothan Gordon-Farleigh and members from the Bethnal Green Working Men's Club campaign.

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## **Women at Work: Be Strong, Be Safe, Be Savvy**

15:30-16:20, Green Room

Essential tools and advice for women and all genders in the creative industries – learn about your rights from day one. How we can increase representation of women in all our diversity on screen and stage, and how we can deal with inappropriate behaviour, particularly in the face of the Far Right and misogyny towards women.

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## **Student Workshop: Fight for the Future of Performing Arts**

15:30-16:20, Ceremonial Room

Britain's broken higher education funding model is putting major performing arts education providers at risk, with undergraduate courses at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School recently cut. Access to higher education is crucial for access to the sector: 69% of creative workers hold a degree, compared to 26% for the entire workforce. Yet a recent report from the Sutton Trust has shown that financial barriers such as audition and hidden course costs stop working-class performers from accessing this education. Join us to discuss how we win a fully funded performing arts education which expands access to our sector for those from working-class and marginalised backgrounds.

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## **What is International Solidarity?**

16:30-17:20, Conference Hall

Equity has always engaged in international solidarity work as part of the trade union movement. Over the last century, our members have supported Spanish republicans fighting for freedom, Chilean artists fleeing fascism, and the boycott against racist apartheid in South Africa. For fifty years, our International Solidarity Committee (formerly ICAF) has helped countless individual artists in states of oppression and persecution. Why does Equity do this work? What does international solidarity mean in practice? And how can Equity members get involved in international solidarity work today? Come along to this fringe with the International Solidarity Committee, special guest speakers Rafeef Ziadah (Senior Lecturer at King's College London and Organiser for Workers in Palestine) and Khalid Sidahmed (Organiser for TUC, Unite and the MENA Solidarity Network), alongside Equity's General Secretary Paul W Fleming.

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## **Follow the Money: Who's Getting Rich off Your Labour?**

16:30-17:20, Whittaker Suite

Join Equity's political education team for an exploration of power and money in our industry; who's got it, and how Equity members can organise to win a bigger piece of the pie.

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## **Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Stage Management (but Were Too Afraid to Ask)**

16:30-17:20, Green Room

Meet the SMC for an open discussion about what Stage Management actually do, what's in their job descriptions and what is commonly imposed on their day-to-day duties. We discuss how to move forward with the industry - what change does our union need to make and how do we challenge our employers to change their behaviour towards stage managers?

# CONFERENCE DINNER

DRINKS RECEPTION AND DINNER WITH A CASH BAR

19:30

SUNDAY 11 MAY

Guildhall  
Derry  
BT48 7BB  
United Kingdom

With thanks to Chester Rose  
Financial Planning, Pattinson &  
Brewer and Verlingue  
for their kind support





The International Solidarity Committee (formerly the International Committee for Artists' Freedom) has supported artists facing persecution throughout the globe for over 50 years.

Since the conference last year, the International Solidarity Committee has supported:

- the Valencian Dancers' Union and Valencian Artists' Union following the devastating flooding in the region which damaged artistic venues and halted work;
- Our Colombian sister-union ACA who needed support to facilitate their industrial negotiations for TV in Colombia, the major source of work in their industry;
- Six artists affected by the devastating genocide in Gaza. The committee also campaigned against the detention of Oscar-winning director Hamdan Ballal, who has subsequently been released;
- Artists fleeing persecution in Angola, Belarus, Ukraine and Zimbabwe.

The International Solidarity Committee's work is partially funded through donations and bequests from Equity members and branches. Any members, branches, committees and other networks within the union can donate to the International Solidarity Committee at any time (bank details are included below). Committee members are available to come and speak about their work at any time.

All donations go directly to supporting artists internationally who are facing oppression or persecution. We are incredibly grateful for the generous support we have had from Equity conference over the years which represents a crucial part of our income.

Account name: EQUITY - I.C.A.F. ACCOUNT

Account number: 70582639

Sort code: 089061

## RECEPTION: SOLIDARITY ACROSS THESE ISLANDS

It is a demonstration of solidarity to all our Union communities that members from Scotland, England and Wales are arriving in Ireland to join Equity's Conference in Derry City. This event, hosted at the historic St Columb's Hall, 'a refuge for the local community, creative thinkers and cultural organisations' is in an inspiring setting where Emmeline Pankhurst, Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Éamon de Valera have all left their mark.

Speakers at Equity's evening will provide examples, from Foyle to Lagan, which should serve to inspire members and guests as they promote solidarity in campaigns which take place across these islands. We're promoting safer, better paid and inclusive workplaces in all nations.

Food and drinks will be served. Are you up for the craic?

**SATURDAY 10 MAY**

**19:30**

**ST COLUMB'S HALL**



# Guide to Conference Procedure and Jargon

These notes have been prepared by the Conference Business Committee as guidance only. They are based on Equity's Rulebook, the Equity Conference Standing Orders and Walter Citrine's ABC of Chairmanship. The Rules governing the Conference are Rule T: Equity Conference, Rule V: Rules of Debate, Rule X: Conference Business Committee and Rule Z: Rule Changes.

Equity Conference brings together members of the Council and elected Representatives of the union's committees and branches to make decisions about Equity policy and any Rule changes.

The formal purpose of the Conference is to debate and vote on motions and amendments submitted by the Council, branches and committees, and to receive reports from the Officers, staff and guest speakers.

*Rules T2-3*

Each industrial and equalities committee is entitled to submit one motion to be included on the agenda. Each branch and national committee is entitled to submit one motion (or two in the case of the London branches) to their national/regional meeting. Each national/regional meeting may then select one motion (or two in the case of the East & South East and London regions) to be submitted to the Conference on behalf of their nation/region. The Council may submit more than one motion.

*Rules T17-20 and T23*

If a motion is passed at the Conference by two-thirds of those voting for and against, it is binding on the Council. This means that the Council must either carry out the motion or put the motion to a referendum of the entire membership. If a motion is passed by a simple majority but not by two-thirds, it will be passed to the Council for their decision at a later date.

*Rules T14-16*

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## Making a speech at the conference

All Representatives and Councillors are encouraged to contribute to the debates at Conference. The more different viewpoints that are heard, the better. This is, after all, your Conference.

Making a speech for the first time can be a potentially intimidating experience. However, you will find that if you announce that you are giving your first speech at a Conference, your listeners will be particularly receptive to hear what you have to say.

On the other hand, if you overuse the privilege of making speeches, your listeners will gradually become less receptive and the Chair may cease calling you to speak. Before volunteering to speak, always ask yourself first if what you have to say adds a new perspective or idea to the debate.

*Standing Orders*

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## Agendas

Motions which have been sent in by the closing date set by the Council and which are not in breach of the rules will be included in the Agenda. The Agenda will be sent to all Representatives.

*Rules T21-22 and T24*

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## Conference Business Committee

The Conference Business Committee (CBC, previously called the Standing Orders Committee or SOC) is made up of five members elected by the membership and four members elected by the Council. Its role is to arrange the business of the Conference. The CBC decides in what order the motions and amendments will be debated and at what time the reports from officers and staff will be taken. The CBC is responsible for changes to the business or timetable for the Conference.

*Rules T27-30 and X*

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## Motions

The purpose of a motion to the Conference is to get the union to do something. Motions should therefore propose some action. While motions may outline the reason for proposing the action, the arguments in favour should not be included, but should be saved for the proposing speech.

Equity's Rules state that motions must be about matters of general policy or rule changes. The Council decides which motions do not deal with matters of general policy and therefore are not allowed on to the agenda. The Council's guidance on what constitutes general policy gives two examples: motions can properly set broad aims for negotiations but should not include specific levels of fees to be achieved; motions should not make proposals on detailed matters of the staffing of the union.

Rule T22: The term “general policy” means the Union’s policies that concern the Union as a whole. It encompasses those policies that provide for its political and industrial aims, its governance and democratic structures, and its services to members. It excludes day-to-day operational, financial and administrative functions and decisions.

*Rule T22*

Motions must be moved and seconded before they can be debated. The mover of the motion, who will normally (but not necessarily) be a member of the body in whose name the motion stands, is allowed up to five minutes to move the motion. The seconder and each subsequent speaker are allowed three minutes.

*Standing Orders*

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## Amendments

An amendment seeks to change some part of a motion. An amendment usually adds some words to a motion, takes some words away from a motion or takes some words away and substitutes some new words. A direct negative to a motion is not an amendment and will not be allowed. Under the new Rules, only the Council can submit an amendment.

*Citrine and Rule T23*

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## Late motions

A committee, branch or the Council may submit a late motion (previously called an emergency motion) after the closing date set by the Council. Late motions shall not be accepted unless the Council decides that the motion concerns an urgent matter that arose after, or could not reasonably have been known about prior to, the deadline. If the Council decides that a late motion qualifies, the CBC will decide where it should be placed on the agenda.

*Rule T25*

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## Composite motions

If two or more motions deal with similar subject matter, the CBC may ask the committees or branches concerned to agree to them being composited into a single motion. If this is agreed by all the branches/committees involved, the motions will be composited by the CBC. The resulting composite motion can exceed 250 words in length.

*Rule T26*

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## Remitting a motion

A committee or branch may choose to remit their motion to the Council at any time before the motion has been moved at the Conference. “Remitting” means that the motion will be decided by the Council at a later date, instead of being debated at the Conference. It is allowable for the Representative chosen to propose the motion to use the time allotted to their speech to argue for the merits of the motion but (at the conclusion of their speech) to announce to the Conference that the motion is being remitted to the Council – provided that the Representative has not used the words “I move” (or any variation of those words) in the speech. In such an instance, the motion will be remitted to the Council, there will be no further debate on the motion and the Chair will immediately move on to the next business on the Conference Agenda.

Once a motion has been moved at the Conference, it cannot be remitted by the mover. All that the mover can do is to make a request to the Conference that the motion be remitted (which they can do up to and including their right of reply). If the request is made, the Chair shall immediately proceed to a vote as to whether the motion shall be remitted or not. If there is a simple majority in favour of remittance, the motion will be remitted to the Council, there will be no further debate on the motion and the Chair will immediately move on to the next item on the Agenda. If the Conference votes against remittance, the debate and subsequent vote on the motion shall proceed.

*Standing Orders*

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## Withdrawing a motion or amendment

A motion or an amendment may be withdrawn at any time before it has been moved and seconded at the Conference, but thereafter it requires the consent of Conference. A motion or an amendment that has been composited with another motion or amendment may not be withdrawn.

*Standing Orders and Rule V8*

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## Debate

Speakers must address the Chair at all times and no member shall interrupt a speaker except on a point of procedure or a question (with the Chair's permission).

*Rules V2-3*

Once a motion has been moved and seconded, the Chair will open the matter for debate and invite contributions. The order in which speakers are taken is at the discretion of the Chair.

*Standing Orders*

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## Right of reply

Movers of motions are allowed three minutes at the end of the debate and before the vote has been taken to reply to issues raised during the debate. No further contributions to the debate will be taken after the right of reply. Movers of motions may not use the right of reply to introduce new material into the debate. Movers of amendments do not get a right of reply.

*Standing Orders and Rule V9*

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## Point of procedure

If a Representative believes that the procedures of the Conference have been breached, they may raise a point of procedure at any time.

*Standing Orders and Rule V3*

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## Question

If a Representative wants to ask a question (also known as a point of information), they may ask the Chair if they can do so. A question may not be used to make a contribution to the debate.

*Standing Orders and Rule V3*

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## Curtailing debate

A member who has not previously spoken in the discussion of a motion may move that it has been sufficiently debated and should now be put to a vote. If accepted by the Chair and carried (without discussion), the mover of the motion may reply before it is put to a vote.

*Rule V12*

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## Motions debated together but voted on separately

In some instances, the CBC timetables two or more motions for debate together since they are on a common subject and this will save members from having to make the same points more than once in debate. When motions are timetabled in this way, the mover and seconder of the first motion speak first, followed by the mover(s) and seconder(s) of any amendment(s) to that motion. Then the mover(s) and seconder(s) of the subsequent motion(s) shall be invited by the Chair to speak in the same order with the motion preceding any amendment(s) to it. Only after they have all had the opportunity to speak shall the Chair invite contributions to the debate from others.

After the Chair has declared the end of the debate, the mover of the first motion shall be offered the right to reply. After the right of reply on the first motion, the mover(s) of the subsequent motion(s) shall be asked to exercise their right(s) of reply. Only after all the rights of reply have been taken shall the Chair proceed immediately to take the votes on the motions (and any amendments) in the order in which they were moved originally.

*Standing Orders*

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## Voting

Representatives and members of the Council vote by holding up their lanyard passes.

*Standing Orders*

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## Chair's ruling

A ruling by the Chair on any matter is binding unless it is challenged by at least ten members who are entitled to vote, in which case the motion "that the Chair's ruling be upheld" is immediately put to the vote by the General Secretary without discussion.

*Standing Orders and Rule V4*



# Speakers' Guide

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## Key things to remember

- Your contribution is important. We are stronger as a collective if all voices are heard.
- Please remain respectful at all times, in line with our Safe Spaces policy (included in this guide).
- Anyone can speak on any issue, but the Chair does not have to call you every time. If you've spoken already or it's time to move on, you might miss out.
- If you do want to speak, please consider whether your point has already been made by someone else.
- Before every speech (except for a Right of Reply), always start by giving your full Equity name and who you're representing (e.g. your branch/committee).
- Proposing speeches are a maximum of five minutes and all other speeches are a maximum of three minutes.
- If you know you're going to give a speech, please prepare in advance. You may want to bring a printed copy of your speech (in case your phone/laptop runs out of battery).
- If we run ahead of time, your speech could come sooner in the timetable (including the day before!).

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## Who can speak?

Everyone attending as a Representative or Councillor can speak and vote at Conference. It doesn't matter how long you've been active within the union or what status you may hold – if you've been elected to attend, you have the same rights as everyone else to take part in the debate and make your voice heard on any issue.

We would really encourage those who are attending for the first time to speak. This is your conference, and you have as much right to the space as anyone else. You have been elected to attend on behalf of your branch/committee for a reason and we would encourage you to feel able to use your voice.

If you've attended before, please think about how you could encourage those who may be newer to a conference environment to speak.

For everyone attending, we would ask you to think carefully about the number of contributions you make. We are stronger as a collective if everyone's voice is heard, and it is important that we all think about how we can make space for others and ensure that Conference hears from a diverse range of members in every sense. It is up to the Chair to manage this and decide who to take contributions from. If they feel that you have already made a number of contributions and the Conference might benefit from hearing from others, they have the right not to take you again.

If you are attending as an observer, then you cannot speak or vote at Conference. Conference Business Committee (CBC) members can speak, but only on procedural matters, and they cannot vote. Trustees can speak, but they cannot vote.

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## How do the debates work?

Branches, committees and the Council submit motions and the Council may also submit amendments. These are reviewed by the Conference Business Committee (CBC) and put together to form the agenda for Conference.

At Conference, we will then move through the agenda in order. When we get to a motion, the Chair will ask the proposer to come up to the lectern and make the case for the motion (up to five minutes). The proposer will usually be from the part of the union that submitted the motion, but they don't have to be if those who submitted it agree this in advance.

The seconder will then be invited to come up. Their role is to give additional support to the motion (up to three minutes). Sometimes, a member will formally second, which means they're recorded as the seconder but don't want to make a speech.

This process will then be repeated for any amendments to the motion. Proposers and seconders will be invited to come up (up to three minutes each) and make the case for the amendment.

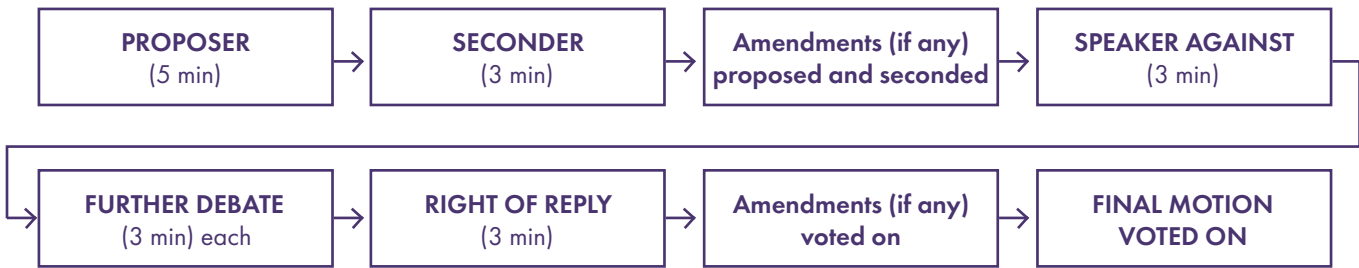
Once that's all done, the Chair will ask if anyone would like to come up and speak in opposition to the motion (up to three minutes).

After that, the Chair will open it up to debate. If you want to speak, please raise your voting card (your red name badge). If the Chair acknowledges you, please move to the front so you're ready to speak when it's your turn (unless you'd rather speak from your place).

The Chair can take as many or as few contributions as they decide but will attempt to balance the debate as they consider appropriate. (Each contribution can be up to three minutes.)

The debate is over when the Chair decides that both sides have been given a fair hearing. This may mean that some who want to speak on a particular item will not get the chance. Once the Chair has decided the debate is over, they will offer the proposer a Right of Reply (up to three minutes). This is their chance to respond to some of the points raised and make the final case for their motion.

Next, the Chair will call for the vote to be taken. Any amendments will be voted on first, to determine the final content of the motion. That final motion (which is now called a substantive motion if it has been amended) is then voted on. All votes take place by showing your voting card (your red name badge). The Chair will call the result of the vote and we will then move on to the next motion.



**Should I prepare anything?**

If you know you'll be proposing or seconding a motion, then we would recommend preparing a speech in advance.

We would also recommend preparing if there are any items on the agenda on which you know you would like to speak.

You are absolutely free to speak without preparing anything, and we would encourage you to do so if you feel you have a meaningful contribution to make which adds a new perspective or idea to the debate.

If you need any help preparing a speech, we would recommend speaking to other activists (perhaps within your branch/committee) for support and feedback.

**Do I have to go up to the lectern if I want to speak?**

The Chair will invite members proposing, seconding or contributing to the debate to come up to the lectern. However, if you would rather not, you're very welcome to ask for one of the roving mics to come to you instead.

If you're making a point of procedure or asking a question, please stay where you are and a roving mic will come to you.

If you're using a roving mic, please wait for it to arrive before you start to speak so that everyone can hear you.

**Representatives, not delegates**

Conference uses a representative structure, as opposed to a delegate structure. This means you cannot be bound to speak or vote in a particular way by your branch/committee.

In the past, some members have said they are speaking "in a personal capacity." Please note that this is not strictly possible – members are always speaking as a Representative of the part of the union that sent them. You are there because some part of the union elected you to be there, and not as an individual in your own right. Councillors may sometimes want to clarify when they are speaking on behalf of the Council as a whole.

**Further information and questions**

If you're interested in some of the finer details, the Equity Conference Standing Orders for the Conference are available online: Standing orders | Equity. These are the formal rules for how the Conference will be conducted. The CBC also provide a helpful Guide to Conference Procedure, which is included in this book, pp38-40.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to write to the Conference Organiser (Sam Winter: swinter@equity.org.uk), your Branch Official or Committee Secretary. Once we're at the Conference, you can also approach the CBC to ask for advice.

Thank you for contributing to this year's Conference!

## Council's attitude to motions/amendments

It is the Council's policy to publish its attitude to motions and amendments submitted for consideration at the conference. Where it is suggested that a motion/amendment should be opposed, remitted, etc., the reason is included underneath.

	Attitude
<b>EQUALITY AND INCLUSION</b>	
MOTION 1: LGBT+ Committee	Support
MOTION 2: Merseyside and Cheshire Branch	Support
MOTION 3: Deaf and Disabled Members Committee	Support
MOTION 4: North East of England Branch	Support
MOTION 5: Race Equality Committee	Support
MOTION 6: Stage Actors Committee	Support
MOTION 7: Women's Committee	Support
<b>EQUITY MOTION TO TUC</b>	
MOTION 8: Council	Support
<b>RECORDED MEDIA</b>	
MOTION 9: Screen and New Media Actors Committee	Support
MOTION 10: Continuing Drama Deputies Committee	Support
MOTION 11: Birmingham and West Midlands / East Midlands Branches	Support
MOTION 12: Audio Committee	Support
MOTION 13: Edinburgh and East of Scotland Branch	Remit to Council
<i>Suggest that the branch and staff work together to build up a body of evidence and approach IMDb directly.</i>	
<b>LIVE PERFORMANCE</b>	
MOTION 14: Northern Ireland Committee	Support
MOTION 15: Brighton and Sussex Branch	Support
MOTION 16: Stage Management Committee	Support
MOTION 17: Directors and Designers Committee	Support
MOTION 18: Singers Committee	Support
MOTION 19: Opera Deputies Committee	Support
MOTION 20: Dance Committee	Support
MOTION 21: West End Deputies Committee	Support
<b>VARIETY</b>	
MOTION 22: Variety, Circus and Entertainers Committee	Support
<b>POLICY</b>	
MOTION 23: International Solidarity Committee	Support
AMENDMENT: Council	Support
MOTION 24: Young Members Committee	Support
MOTION 25: Student Deputies Committee	Support

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MOTION 26: London North Branch	Support
MOTION 27: Bristol and West of England Branch	Support
MOTION 28: London South Branch	Support
MOTION 29: Kent Branch	Support
MOTION 30: Wales National Committee	Support

**Sam Winter**

**SECRETARY TO THE CONFERENCE BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

## Motions Glossary

This glossary provides definitions for words or phrases in this year's Equity Conference motions.

<b>Word or Phrase</b>	<b>Definition</b>
AI (Artificial Intelligence)	Artificial Intelligence refers to the ability of machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. Information can be found on Equity's website on 'Understanding AI' and the union's 'AI Toolkit'.
Arts and Minds campaign	Arts and Minds is a coalition of organisations calling for the restoration of all arts and creative subjects as a crucial part of the curriculum.
Arts Council England (ACE)	The arts council for England since 1994 when the Arts Council of Great Britain was divided into three separate national bodies.
Arts Council of Northern Ireland	The Arts Council for Northern Ireland since 1964 when it replaced the Committee for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA).
Arts Council Wales	The arts council for Wales since 1994 when the Arts Council of Great Britain was divided into three separate national bodies.
Arts councils	National public funding bodies for arts organisations and individuals.
Arts funding tracker	Equity's data tracker to see how arts councils' funding - covering the four nations - has changed in different constituencies since 2014.
BAPAM (British Association for Performing Arts Medicine)	British Association for Performing Arts Medicine. A unique health charity that is part-funded by Equity.
BBC Charter (The Royal Charter for the continuance of the British Broadcasting Corporation)	The BBC Charter sets the arrangements for the governance of the BBC including recognising its editorial independence and sets out its public obligations.
The Charity Commission	A non-ministerial department of government that regulates registered charities in England and Wales. In Scotland they are regulated by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, and in Northern Ireland it is the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.
Creative Diversity Network	The Creative Diversity Network is an organisation that exists to enable the UK Broadcasting industry to increase diversity and inspire inclusion.
Creative Scotland	The arts council for Scotland since 1994 when the Arts Council of Great Britain was divided into three separate national bodies.
D/deaf	Those who refer to themselves as Deaf with a capital D generally see themselves as culturally deaf; generally sign language will be their first language. People who have experienced a loss of hearing throughout their life may refer to themselves as deaf with a lower case d, or deafened or "hard of hearing", generally indicating that they are less likely to share this cultural identity.
DCMS (The Department for Culture, Media & Sport)	A department of government responsible for arts, culture and sport.
EBacc (English Baccalaureate)	The English Baccalaureate is a school performance indicator in England linked to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) results.
Employment charters	Employment charters set standards of "what good work should look like in local areas or sectors, above the legal requirements" (TUC website). They may, but do not necessarily, have input from trade unions.
Emergency Motion	(See Equity Council's Standing Orders point 10) A motion sent to Equity Council (our union's governing body) that could not have been sent before the deadline for the first circulation of council papers. The subject matter shall be a genuine emergency.

Employment charters	Employment charters set standards of “what good work should look like in local areas or sectors, above the legal requirements” (TUC website). They may but do not necessarily have input from trade unions.
Equity agreements	Collective agreements negotiated between the union and the employer.
Fatphobia	Fatphobia, or anti-fat bias, is discrimination against people perceived as fat, often leading to unfair treatment and negative stereotypes.
FEU (Federation of Entertainment Unions)	The FEU is a joint representative body of which Equity is a member alongside the NUJ, MU, BECTU, Unite, and the WGGB.
Ffilm Cymru	The development agency for Welsh film.
FIA (Fédération Internationale des Acteurs)	A global federation of trade unions representing actors. Equity established the federation in 1952 alongside the Syndicat Français des Artistes-Intèrètes
GDP (Gross Domestic Product)	A monetary measure of the total market value of services and good produced in a country or countries in a specific timeframe.
GDPR (the General Data Protection Regulation)	A European Union regulation on data privacy and data protection in the EU and the European Economic Area, which came into effect in 2018.
Global Majority	“Global Majority” is a term that refers to people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, and/or have been racialised as “ethnic minorities,” representing over 80% of the world’s population.
HE (Higher Education)	Higher Education refers to post-secondary education. Typically university, drama schools, or other specialist colleges.
ICAF (International Committee for Artists Freedom)	A group formed over 50 years ago - originally named the International Solidarity and Aid Committee, then renamed ICAF in 1978. ICAF campaigned on behalf of artists who would be eligible for Equity membership were they based in the UK and Northern Ireland. The group has helped countless individual artists suffering oppression, persecution or hardship around the world, often in countries with no union to support them. In 2024, ICAF was made an official committee within the union, renamed the International Solidarity Committee (ISC), given £10,000 a year to do its vital work rather than relying on donations, and now has the ability to pass motions to go to Council and Conference.
IMDb (Internet Movie Database)	An online database of information related to films, television series, video games, etc. Since 1998 it has been a subsidiary of Amazon.
Industry management associations	The Information Commissioner’s Office is responsible for upholding information rights in the public interest. It is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology.
ISC (International Solidarity Committee)	Equity’s International Solidarity Committee formerly ICAF (see above). Newly official committee in the union, given resources so that the body no longer needs to rely solely on donations to do its vital work. It has done essential work with artists and arts organisations from Belarus, Chile, Palestine, Ukraine to name just a few.
ITC (Independent Theatre Council)	The Independent Theatre Council is a management association and membership body for performing arts venues, companies and producers across the UK.
LA (Local Authority)	Local councils, made up of councillors who are elected by the public in local elections
LGBT+ Committee (Equity’s Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender + Committee)	The LGBT+ Committee advises Equity’s Council on issues affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and other queer members and takes action to promote their interests on both industrial matters and wider social issues affecting them. This might include anything from risks of harassment and violence facing LGBT+ members, at work and in public, to producing casting guidelines for producers working with LGBT+ performers.
The London Nightlife Taskforce	A taskforce convened by the Mayor of London and Greater London Authority tasked with creating an action plan for the capital’s nightlife.
Maintenance funding	Maintenance funding refers to government loans and grants designed to help students cover their living costs while studying.
Minimum rates	The minimum rates of pay negotiated between an employer and our union. Often misconstrued as Equity minimum as opposed to the employer’s minimum.

Minimum Service Levels Act 2023	The Minimum Service Levels Act 2023 allowed employers to require individuals to work during strikes, even if they support the action, and could lead to unions facing claims for damages. The TUC described it "as a threat to the right to strike and a move to undermine trade unions' ability to take effective action."
National Living Wage	The legal minimum amount employers can pay employees over 21 years of age.
Northern Ireland Screen	The development agency for Northern Ireland's film and TV industry.
Out of Order	Not following the formal rules of the meeting, motions, etc.
Performing Arts for All	Equity's manifesto for a thriving performing arts and entertainment industry, which built on the work of Performance for All.
Point of Order	A query in a formal debate or meeting as to whether correct procedure is being followed.
Progress 8	Progress 8 is a government measure used to assess the progress of pupils in secondary schools focusing on their attainment in up to eight qualifications.
S4C (Sianel Pedwar Cymru / Channel 4 Wales)	S4C is a Welsh language free-to-air public broadcast television channel.
SAG-AFTRA	Screen Actors Guild - American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, our sister union that went on strike last year over residual payments and assurances over AI usage.
Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)	A federation of trades unions in Scotland, representing most unionised workers in the country.
ScreenSkills	A non-profit organisation offering sector insight, training and career advice for existing and emerging talent.
Screen Scotland	The development agency for Scotland's film and TV industry.
The Social Model of Disability	As Graeae put it, "Under the Social Model of disability, people are disabled by barriers within society, rather than being 'victims' of their impairments or conditions." The Social Model of Disability is adopted by Equity.
Society of London Theatre (SOLT)	The Society of London Theatre (SOLT) is the Membership Organisation for London Theatre Producers, Managers, Owners and Operators. They work in partnership with their sister organisation, UK Theatre.
Spotlight	The dominant casting directory service in the UK. Eight Equity members have filed a class action lawsuit against the company. A successful judgment would mean that the courts agree that Spotlight must show that their rates of subscription to their members amount to no more than a reasonable estimate of the cost of production and distribution of their directory.
Standing Orders	Procedure rules that regulate the conduct of a meeting.
Stand Up To Racism	An organisation that campaigns against racism, fascism, Islamophobia and antisemitism. Equity has joined many other trade unions in affiliating to the organisation this year.
Subsidised Sector	Organisations that received funding from public bodies.
Trade Union Act 2016	A parliamentary bill introduced in 2016 by the then Conservative government. According to the TUC "the Act represents the most serious attack on the rights of trade unions and their members in a generation..." including: "arbitrary thresholds in industrial action ballots; complicated new balloting designed to make industrial action more difficult for unions to organise; new restrictions on pickets; [and] an expensive levy paid by unions for the costs of being regulated."
TUC (Trades Union Congress)	A federation of trades unions in England and Wales, representing most unionised workers in the countries.
UK Theatre	UK Theatre is another membership organisation for theatre producers, managers, owners and operators. They work in partnership with their sister organisation, Society of London Theatre (SOLT).
WHAM (Wigs, Hair and Make-up)	The workplace department responsible for wigs, hair and make-up



**To all artists: good work**

**To all workers: good art**

**To all people: Equity**

