

SDUK CONSTITUTION

INTRODUCTION

1. The name of The Union shall be The Stage Directors UK Union (referred to in this constitution also as “SDUK” or “The Union”).
- 1.1 The Registered Office of The Union shall be: 71-75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London, WC2H 9JQ
- 1.2 “SDUK is an independent, democratic trade union formed of Stage Directors, Artistic Directors, Choreographers, Movement Directors, Intimacy Directors/Coordinators and Fight Directors (“Directors” or “Members”) working in the performing arts and related industries.
- 1.3 SDUK, shall operate in accordance with UK Trade Union Law to organise, recruit, and represent Directors and act on behalf of its members. It shall maintain certification as a trade union.
- 1.4 SDUK exists to protect, promote, and advance the professional, economic and creative interests of its members.
- 1.5 Any amendments to this document must be approved by members at the Annual General Meeting.

OBJECTIVES

2. To protect and defend the collective economic, social, educational, cultural and political interests of Stage Directors, Artistic Directors, Choreographers, Movement Directors, Intimacy Directors/Coordinators and Fight Directors.
 - To negotiate and uphold fair pay, safe working conditions, and equitable treatment.
 - To represent members collectively and individually in matters relating to employment.
 - To advocate for the rights, recognition, and professional standards of directors and creative leaders.
- 2.1 To promote equal opportunities and equal treatment for all members and oppose discrimination on grounds of gender, race, sex, ethnic origin, disability, age, socio/economic class, sexual orientation, or religion.
 - To provide professional development, and resources for members.
 - To collaborate with other unions, organisations, and stakeholders to strengthen the creative workforce.
- 2.2 SDUK shall remain non-partisan but may take positions on issues affecting workers’ rights, cultural policy, and the creative industries.
- 2.3 To plan and participate in joint Trade Union action whenever it becomes necessary.
- 2.4 To seek and affiliate with other Trade Unions locally, regionally, and internationally as, in the opinion of the Central Committee, appears to be desirable.
- 2.5 To work efficiently and use all means necessary to find popular solutions to all matters of industrial relations in which SDUK is engaged.

RULE NO 1: MEMBERSHIP

3. Any Stage Directors, Artistic Directors, Choreographers, Movement Directors, Intimacy Directors/Coordinators and Fight Directors may apply for membership by completing the

appropriate application form provided on The Union's website and agreeing to be bound by the rules of The Union.

- 3.1 An applicant shall become a member when their/her/his application has been approved and they/she/he has been entered into the register of Members. Such approval will require receipt by The Union of the current contribution applicable under these rules.
- 3.2 The qualification for membership of The Stage Directors UK Union:
 - 3.2.1 Applicants must not be less than eighteen (18) years of age. Members are expected and encouraged to attend all Annual General Meetings as a duty of membership.
 - 3.2.2 Applicants must not be part of a group or organisation which seeks to defeat or undermine the aims and objectives of SDUK.
 - 3.2.3 Members must adhere to the rules of the Union and uphold its values.
 - 3.2.4 Honorary membership may be granted by the Executive Council to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the industry or SDUK.
 - 3.2.5 Honorary Members shall on acceptance be required to pay £70 per year. Honorary Members will receive insurance and have access to all SDUK resources. The honorary membership fee applies to all new Honorary Members from June 2023.
- 3.3 Members experiencing financial hardship may apply for a temporary fee reduction or can pause their membership once per twelve (12) month period by contacting the General Secretary or Administration and Membership Manager; when a member has paused their membership, all SDUK benefits will be paused including insurance.
- 3.4 The General Secretary shall determine the level of contributions and benefits for each member, which shall be approved and if necessary, altered by the Executive Council. The Executive Council shall determine the period of membership necessary prior to the member attaining eligibility for benefits, and any period during which contributions are in arrears, which shall remove such eligibility.
- 3.5 From August 1st 2026, the Union Contributions shall be:

Subscription Type	Annual fee
up to 10k	£114
up to 15K	£159
up to 20K	£204
up to 30K	£294
up to 40K	£384
up to 50K	£474
up to 60K	£564
up to 70k	£654
up to 80k	£747
up to 90k	£834
over 90k	£924
Student Membership	£25

- 3.5.1 A member can be on a student membership for a maximum of two (2) years).
 - 3.5.1.1 Student members do not receive insurance and are not eligible to vote.
- 3.5.2 A Member is only considered a full active member if he/she/they:

- 3.5.3 Has paid their annual, monthly or quarterly membership/subscription fee
- 3.5.4 Is not at any time in arrears with their annual/monthly/quarterly subscription fees.
- 3.5.4.1 However, a member may request that their membership/subscription is paused. The length of pause will be discussed with The Union and the Member and the Membership will automatically be reinstated when this period has lapsed. This pause in membership means that the Member is not covered by the PLI policy and does not receive the benefits of being a full active Member until payments are re-instated
- 3.6 If a payment for membership/subscription fees fails, the direct debit provider will try a minimum of three times to take payment.
- 3.6.1 If said payment cannot be taken, the membership will lapse and will automatically be cancelled. The Member will henceforth not be covered by the PLI policy or receive any benefits of being a Member. SDUK will get in contact with the Member to inform them that this has taken place.
- 3.7 If a Member cancels their membership, they will continue to receive benefits and be covered by the PLI policy up until the point their membership expires unless a refund is requested for the remaining membership period at which point access to benefits and PLI ceases.
- 3.8 If a Member wishes to reinstate their membership, they can do so by getting in contact with SDUK providing they have an up to date payment method and funds available to make payment.

RULE NO 2: GOVERNANCE

- 4. The supreme authority of The Union shall be vested in the Annual General Meeting where one Full Member shall have one (1) vote on all proposed resolutions.
- 4.1 For the day-to-day general administration of The Union's operations and its government in the interval between the Annual General Meetings, the Executive Council and General Secretary have supreme authority.
- 4.2 The Annual Conference shall be held yearly at a the time and place decided by the Executive Council and General Secretary.
- 4.3 It is obligatory for the General Secretary to notify all the members in writing at least thirty (30) days in advance of the Annual General Meeting.
- 4.4 All resolutions submitted to the Annual General Meeting must be forwarded to the General Secretary not later than ten (10) days before the Meeting.
- 4.5 No business other than that stated on the agenda shall be transacted at the Annual General Meeting. If a Director wants to introduce a serious matter, the Directors must inform the General Secretary at least twelve (12) hours before the commencement of the Annual General Meeting. In such a case, the majority of Directors must approve a motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders.
- 4.6 The decisions of the Annual General Meeting shall be binding upon all members of The Union.
- 4.7 The Annual General Meeting cannot transact any business unless at least ten (10) eligible Members are present at the Meeting.

RULE NO 3: EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- 5. The government of The Union and conduct of its business in the period between the General Annual Meetings shall be vested in the General Secretary and Executive Council.

- 5.1 The Executive Council shall be elected by the Members at the Annual General Meeting. Such members shall serve for three (3) years.
- 5.2 The composition of the Executive Council is as follows: General Secretary (a non-voting employee of The Union); President; Chair(s) of the Executive Council; Twelve (12) Members
- 5.3 No person shall be eligible to serve as a member of the Executive Council, who at the time of nomination is not a Full Member, or is under the age of eighteen (18).
- 5.4 The Executive Council must meet every four (4) months or as often as the General Secretary and Chairs feel it necessary, and at a time and place deemed most expedient for the transaction of The Union's business.
- 5.5 The Executive Council shall support the vision, objectives and undertakings of the General Secretary who has full control of The Union's business and shall take decisions in the interest of The Union in keeping with the rules of the organisation under which it is registered.
- 5.6 The Executive Council must at all times maintain and protect the aims and objectives of The Union and guard its funds against extravagance and misappropriation.
- 5.7 Each elected member of the Executive Council shall hold office for three years, provided that the said member does not break or breach the rules of The Union, or act against the interest of The Union. In such a situation, the Executive Council on the advice of the General Secretary or President has the authority to take disciplinary action against the said member. Expulsion of any member shall be decided upon by the Executive Council.
- 5.8 At the end of the three-year term, the member's office shall automatically expire, and the position shall be deemed vacant, unless the member has been duly nominated by two members of the Union and re-elected in accordance with this Constitution. An Executive Council member may not nominate themselves for re-election, nor may they participate in any decision, discussion, or process relating to their own nomination, re-election, or continuation in office.
- 5.9 The Executive Council, at their meetings, cannot transact any business on behalf of The Union unless a quorum of seven (7), or fifty-eight percent (58%) of Executive Council members are present.
- 5.10 The Executive Council can also give instructions to the General Secretary and other appointed and elected officers for the smooth conduct of The Union's affairs.
- 5.11 The Executive Council can dismiss or suspend any manager or officer for neglect of duty, dishonesty, incompetence, accepting bribes, conflict of interest, refusal to carry out instructions given by the General Secretary, President, Chairs or Executive Council and for any other reason that is deemed to be against the interest of The Union.
- 5.12 Any member of staff who feels that disciplinary action taken against them/her/him is unjust, or not in keeping with the rules of The Union has the right to appeal to the Executive Council.
- 5.13 Any staff appointment must be recommended by the Chair(s) or General Secretary for appointment. Salary structure for full/part time workers must be recommended by the General Secretary, Chair(s), and further approved by the Executive Council.
- 5.14 Should a vacancy occur during the Executive Council's term of office because of a resignation, expulsion or otherwise, the Executive Council would then have the right to co-opt a Member to serve on Executive Council.
- 5.15 The Executive Council shall have all the power to draw up rules and guidelines for the orderly conduct of Union activity.

RULE NO 4: PRESIDENT

6. The President shall be the senior figurehead, a negotiator and public advocate for The Union. They/she/he must be chosen by the Triennial Conference of Members.
- 6.1 They/she/he shall be responsible to the Executive Council. They shall only have a vote on Executive Council business if the Council's vote is split.
- 6.2 The President, in consultation with the General Secretary and Chair(s) shall have the authority to select personnel to represent The Union on national boards and at local, regional, and international conferences, conventions, seminars and other activities that are related to The Union's objectives.
- 6.3 The President on resigning from The Union must give three (3) months' notice in writing to the Executive Council of their/her/his intention of doing so. On their/her/his resignation or discharge from office, they/she/he shall within twenty-four (24) hours hand over all documents, books, vouchers, and other things belonging to The Union.

RULE NO 5: CHAIR(S)

7. The Chair(s) shall be a negotiator, and spokesperson for The Union. They/she/he must be chosen by the Triennial Conference of Members.
- 7.1 They/she/he shall preside over all Executive Council meetings of The Union and the Annual General Meeting. They/she/he shall be responsible to the Executive Council and shall have a vote on all Executive Council business. The Chair(s) shall appoint all commissions otherwise not provided for and, along with the General Secretary, shall be ex officio member of all the established commissions. They/she/he shall transact such other business as pertains to their/her/his office. They/she/he and the General Secretary shall sign the minutes of each meeting at the time they are approved.
- 7.2 They/she/he shall, with the General Secretary, have the power to make recommendations to the Executive Council for the appointment and employment of full or part-time managerial staff. The Executive Council shall have the final say. Managerial roles include:
 - 7.2.1 Administrator
 - 7.2.2 General Manager
 - 7.2.3 Finance Officer
- 7.3 The Chair(s) shall have the power to make recommendations to the Executive Council regarding lay-offs, suspension, or dismissal of full-time managerial staff. Any action contemplated must be to the full wishes of the Executive Council.
- 7.4 The Chair(s), in consultation with the General Secretary shall have the authority to select personnel to represent The Union on national boards and at local, regional, and international conferences, conventions, seminars and other activities that are related to The Union's objectives.
- 7.5 The Chair(s) on resigning from The Union must give three (3) months' notice in writing to the Executive Council of their/her/his intention of doing so. On their/her/his resignation or discharge from office, they/she/he shall within twenty-four (24) hours hand over all documents, books, vouchers, and other things belonging to The Union.
- 7.6 They/she/he shall, in conjunction with any Finance Officer and General Manager, or Administrator sign all cash vouchers and cheques/approve of bank transfers beyond the daily functioning of The Union on behalf of The Union.

RULE NO 6: GENERAL SECRETARY

8. The General Secretary shall be a part- or full-time officer.
 - 8.1.1 They/she/he shall be the Chief Negotiator and spokesperson for The Union.
 - 8.1.2 They/She/He shall not be in a voting position.
 - 8.1.3 Upon their/her/his departure from The Stage Directors UK Union the Annual General Meeting must elect their/her/his successor for a five (5) year period.
- 8.2 They/she/he shall in the execution of their/her/his office act under their/her/his own direction in consultation with the chair(s) and the Executive Council.
- 8.3 They/she/he shall prepare reports for the for presentation to the Annual General Meeting, subject to the approval of the Executive Council.
- 8.4 They/she/he shall be remunerated for their/her/his services at the discretion of the Executive Council.
- 8.5 They/she/he may delegate responsibilities.
- 8.6 The General Secretary, on resigning from The Union, must give three (3) months' notice in writing to the Executive Council of their/her/his intention to do so. If, however, they/she/he is discharged without notice, and without reasonable cause, they/she/he must be paid three (3) months' salary in lieu of notice. On their/her/his resignation or discharge from office, they/she/he shall within twenty-four (24) hours hand over all documents, books, vouchers, and other things belonging to The Union.
- 8.7 On relinquishing their/her/his office without notice they/she/he shall forfeit all monetary considerations, pending the decision of the Executive Council.
- 8.8 Any member of staff who feels that disciplinary action taken against them/her/him is unjust, or not in keeping with the rules of The Union has the right to appeal to the. Such an appeal must be in writing and must reach the President and General Secretary no later than two (2) weeks before the Annual General Meeting. Grounds of appeal must be attached to the relevant document.
- 8.9 Any staff appointment must be recommended by the chair(s) or General Secretary for appointment. Salary structure for full/part time workers must be recommended by the General Secretary, chair(s), and further approved by the Executive Council.

RULE 7: ELECTIONS

9. All Officers and Executive Council members shall be elected by direct ballot of the full membership.
 - 9.1 Elections shall be conducted by an independent scrutineer.
 - 9.2 Election regulations, including nomination processes and campaigning rules, shall be set out in a separate Election Procedures document.
 - 9.3 Terms of office shall be three years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms unless otherwise approved by the AGM.

RULE 8: COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

10. The Executive Council may establish committees or working groups to support its work.
 - 10.1 Committees may include:
 - 10.1.1 Pay/Conditions/Collective Agreements Committees
 - 10.1.2 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committees
 - 10.1.3 Professional Development and training Committees
 - 10.1.4 Sector specific working groups

10.2 Committees shall report to the Executive Council.

RULE 9: FINANCE AND AUDIT

11. The Union's financial year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.

Annual accounts shall be prepared by the General Secretary and approved by the Executive Council

11.1 An independent auditor shall be appointed by the Annual General Meeting.

11.2 The Executive Council shall ensure the responsible use of funds and protect the Union's assets.

11.3 An auditor of The Union shall not be removed from office except by resolution passed at an Annual General Meeting.

11.4 An auditor duly appointed to audit the accounts of The Union shall be re-appointed as auditor for the following accounting period, unless—

11.4.1 a resolution has been passed at an Annual General Meeting of The Union appointing somebody instead of them/her/him or providing expressly that they/she/he shall not be re-appointed, or

11.4.2 they/she/he has given notice to The Union in writing of their/her/his unwillingness to be re-appointed, or

11.4.3 they/she/he is ineligible for re-appointment, or

11.4.4 they/she/he has ceased to act as auditor by reason of incapacity.

11.5 Where notice has been given of an intended resolution to appoint somebody in place of a retiring auditor, but the resolution cannot be proceeded with at the meeting because of the death or incapacity of that person, or because they/she/he is ineligible for the appointment, the retiring auditor need not automatically be re-appointed.

RULE 10: LOANS

12. All loans taken on behalf of The Union must be endorsed by the Chair(s), General Secretary and Executive Council.

12.1 The signature of the above-mentioned officers must be on the relevant loan document, along with a certification letter from the Executive Council.

RULE 11: PROPERTY AND TRUSTEE PROVISIONS

13. The property of The Union shall be vested in Trustees for The Union.

13.1 The Trustee(s) shall be appointed by the Executive Council and Chairs and the General Secretary shall advise on the appointment, but the decision will be made by the Executive Council.

13.2 The Trustee(s) is/are the Trustee(s) of The Union.

13.3 Where such Trustee(s) is/are appointed or discharged by a resolution taken by or on behalf of The Union, the written record of the resolution shall be treated for the purposes of those sections as an instrument in writing, appointing, or discharging the Trustee(s).

13.4 The Executive Council may appoint and remove a second Trustee where necessary to facilitate disposal of The Union's property, and solely for such a purpose.

13.5 Any Union Trustee may be removed from office at any time, with or without cause, in the sole discretion of The Union, by an instrument in writing signed by the duly authorised Chairs and filed with the Executive Council.

RULE 12: VOLUNTARY FUNDS

14. Solidarity, Building or Welfare Funds can be established by the Executive Council

14.1 A day's wage or any other voluntary contribution from members can be made towards the fund from time to time.

RULE 13: CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

15. Members and Officers must uphold the values of SDUK and act in the best interests of the Union.

15.1 The Executive Committee may investigate complaints or allegations of misconduct.

15.2 Disciplinary procedures shall be fair, transparent, and set out in a separate policy.

15.3 Members have the right to appeal disciplinary decisions to an Appeals Panel.

RULE 14. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

16. Amendments may be proposed by the Executive Council or by any group of at least 10 members.

16.1 Amendments require a two-thirds majority vote at the AGM.

16.2 The Constitution shall be reviewed at least every five years.

RULE 15: AFFILIATION

17. The Stage Directors UK Union may affiliate to any regional or international Trade Union Centre which shares similar aims and objectives.

17.1 The decision to affiliate with any Trade Union Centre must be approved by the Executive Council.

17.2 Payments of affiliation fees must also be decided upon by the Executive Council.

17.3 The Stage Directors UK Union cannot cancel or withdraw its affiliation to a regional or international Trade Union Centre without the approval of the Executive Council.

17.4 The Executive Council must approve of The Union's relationship with any other local or international Trade Union.

RULE 16: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

18. No branch official or full-time officer of The Union shall have the powers to submit proposals or sign any renewal of agreement unless authorised by the Chair(s), General Secretary or endorsed by the Executive Council.

RULE 17: LIABILITY

19. Members are prohibited from incurring debt on behalf of The Union. In the event of The Union being dissolved, as previously stated all outstanding debts and liabilities incurred on behalf of The Union shall be discharged, and the remaining funds, if any, divided among the members unless the Members when voting for dissolution shall have resolved to the contrary. In the event of dissolution, The Union would be absorbed by another Trade Union.

RULE 18: DISSOLUTION

20. SDUK may be dissolved only by a two-thirds majority vote of the full membership.

20.1 Upon dissolution, all debts and liabilities incurred on behalf of The Union shall be discharged assets shall be transferred to another trade union or organisation with similar aims, as determined by the membership.

20.2 Upon completion of the said process, The Union shall be dissolved

RULE 19: ADOPTION

21. This Constitution was adopted by the membership of SDUK on the date recorded in the minutes of the Annual General Meeting at which it was approved.

21.1 This Constitution shall be immediately effective upon its adoption at any duly constituted conference of The Union.