

## Equity Online Branch – Guide To Participating in Branch Motions & Debate

You are now a member of Equity's Online Branch. It's not Facebook but this guide is going to help you understand what the Online Branch can do, that Facebook can't do. This is where the development money went!

Are you ready? It's not slick graphics, it's not augmented reality it's the ability to propose a motion, have it supported (seconded), allow amendments to be suggested, taken to debate, provide the proposer with the 'right to reply' including accepting and rejecting amendments before finally being placed before the entire branch under the [Online Branch's Rules and Standing Orders](#) for a vote to support or reject the motion proposed.



NOTE: this process has not been repeated enough times to have produced a full comprehensive set of instruction so [please contact the moderator directly at anytime](#) if you think clarification is needed or the instructions contradict the interface presented to you in the branch.

### The Equity Online Branch Home Page

#### 1 *In a Nutshell...*

- 1.1 The Online Branch has four primary areas of activity (visible in a left hand vertical menu):  
**Chat Room**  
**Motions and Discussions**  
**Debating Chamber**  
**Voting Area.**
- 1.2 All conversations start in the **Chat Room** only when a member decides it is time to convert a conversation into a formal debate does a **Motion** get proposed by clicking the “**Propose Motion**” button. Once it is formally Seconded the **Motion** moves to the “**Debating Chamber**”
- 1.3 Once a debate has taken place (the Moderator can set a time from 1 - 14 days) and the Motion's Proposer has returned a Right To Reply statement, the Motion moves to the **Voting Area.** (the moderator can select a timescale for voting from 1 - 14 days)
- 1.4 All Motions and their resulting vote are kept available for review in the **Motions and Discussions** area once the debate and vote are complete.
- 1.5 Successful Motions are passed to the relevant party in accordance with the Motion by the Moderator and / or included in the next agenda of an Online Branch Committee Meeting.

## Primary Areas Breakdown


### 2 The Chat Room

- 2.1 The Chat Room is a forum with a difference – you can start a conversation here on any matter of concern to Equity members.
- 2.2 The Chat Room works in the same way as other forums – discussion threads are started by members and anyone can contribute to the conversation as many times as they wish.
- 2.3 Anyone taking part in that conversation can chose to turn that conversation into a formal debate by clicking the **Move to debate** link.
- 3.4 OR scroll to the bottom of the Chat Room discussion thread page and click the **Propose Motion** button. (“**Move to Debate**” link and the “**Propose Motion**” button go to the same place)
- 3.5 You will be invited to
  - Give your Motion a title
  - To enter the text of your Motion (500 words)
  - Then make a posting aimed at persuading fellow members to support your Motion. (500 words)

REMEMBER: Your motion is limited to 500 words and your posting is limited to 500 words.


Add your motion comments

**Step 1** Title \*

**Step 2** Motion \* 

**500 word limit**

**Your Motion, the action requested  
the what, when and by who for example**

**Step 3** Proposal Posting \* 

**500 word limit**

**Your Statement, the why...  
any evidence, links or supporting material**

**Propose motion**

## Motions and Discussions

20 March 2016 | Currently Serving Moderator: [Caron Jane Lyon](#)

Motions Requiring Seconding

**Motions awaiting members to second them here**

Motions in Process

**Motions open for discussion and amendments here**

Completed Motions

**Completed Motion will be displayed here**

3.6 Once you have completed the three steps above, press the **Propose Motion** button again and your motion will be sent to the Online Branch Moderator for approval.

3.7 The **Chat Room** thread from which you proposed your motion will no longer be visible.

Once approved by the moderator, your motion will appear in the the **Motions & Discussions** section.

## 4 Motions & Discussions (Seconding, Overview of any motions' status)

4.1 When a **Motion** has been proposed by a Branch Member and approved by the Moderator it will appear in **Motions & Discussions** under the **Motions Requiring Seconding** heading.

There are three headings:

**Motions Requiring Seconding**  
**Motions in Process**  
and **Completed Motions**.

Equity  
Incorporating the Variety Artists' Federation

Welcome back, Caron Jane Lyon [Logout](#)

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You are here: [Home](#) > [Constitutional Registers](#) > [The Equity Online Branch](#) > [Motions and Discussions](#)

The Equity Online Branch

- > Chat Room
- > Debating Chamber
- Motions & Discussions**
- > Voting Area

**Motions and Discussions**

18 April 2015 | Currently Serving Moderator: [Caron Jane Lyon](#)

Motions Requiring Seconding

Motions in Process

Completed Motions

Caron Jane Lyon

## 4.2 Seconding a Motion

To second a motion, click on **Motions Requiring Seconding**, select the motion you wish to second and write your argument in favour for seconding the motion.

Once seconded, the motion will be added to a **Meeting Agenda** by the Moderator.

A **Meeting Agenda** is created by the Moderator and proposed motions will then be open for debate and appear in the **Motions in Progress** area of the **Motions & Discussions** Page and in the **Debating Chamber**

## 5. Debating Chamber (Debating, Amending)

5.1 To contribute to the debate of a **Motion**, click on the **Debating Chamber** in the left hand menu.

The screenshot displays the 'Debating Chamber' interface. On the left is a navigation menu for 'The Equity Online Branch' with options: '> Chat Room', '> Motions & Discussions', 'Debating Chamber' (highlighted), and '> Voting Area'. The main content area is titled 'Debating Chamber' and shows a date '22 April 2015' and 'Currently Serving Moderator: Caron Jane Lyon'. Below this is a 'Current Meetings' section with a yellow highlighted bar. A callout box with the text 'click on the motion to participate' and a blue arrow points to a specific motion entry: '22 April' followed by 'Motion - No payment for privilege - Open'.

## 5.2 Commenting on a Motion

Enter your comment into the Comment box (250 word limit) and hit “Post my comment”

See screenshot below

**The Equity Online Branch**

> Chat Room

> Motions & Discussions

**Debating Chamber**

> Voting Area

### Debate Motion

22 April 2015 | Currently Serving Moderator: [Caron Jane Lyon](#)

Comments Amendments > Reverse Order

#### Motion - No payment for privilege - 21 April 2015

*In the Chat Room thread (as this motion was formulated by Terry Victor) Michael Branwell responded with insights about Honorarium payments made to 'on the ground' Branch Moderators/Chairs.*

*Mary Lane then commented with "An honorarium is an amount paid to variety branch secretaries for the work they do on behalf of the branch members." It is about £8 a week.*

*Sheila Mitchell supported this comments with 'what is an honorarium' - the dictionary tells you that it is a voluntary fee paid especially to a professional man(sic) for his services.'*

*So now we come to the motion before us...*

*Activism is a privilege but the discussion this motion would like to explore is "what happens when the skills needed by the project/working party lead member goes beyond the scope of their industry membership."*

Over to you, the Equity Online Branch Members **Moderator's Context**

This comment was posted by the moderator.

**Motion**

It is a privilege to work as an activist. Such privilege should be its own reward. This online branch believes that volunteering within Equity should not be at the expense of a member's livelihood nor should it be to a member's financial (or equivalent) profit.

45 words

**Proposer's support statement**

Proposed by Terry Victor

Payment, or its equivalent, would put a value on voluntary labour. Is it NMW? I hope not. Is it free membership divided by however many hours? Surely not. We are a Union. We work together. This motion is in response to a suggestion by the Current Moderator of the online branch. It does not seek to devalue her work nor the work of any other member of Equity given freely but, rather, to fully value all the work of any and all activist members of our union.

87 words

**Member seconding the motion and their qualifying statement**

Seconded by Adam Burns

This motion says it all. Activism is a privilege In itself. Even more so when i think of the treatment of union people in some countries i have visited. The reward is helping improve our world for others.

38 words

Add your comments to this motion

Comment

**Post my comment**

## 5.3 Amending a Motion

To suggest an amendment to a motion > Click the **Amendments** tab > Click the **Add amendment** button.

The image shows two screenshots from a web application. The top screenshot is titled 'Debate Motion' and shows a sidebar for 'The Equity Online Branch' with options for Chat Room, Motions & Discussions, Debating Chamber, and Voting Area. The main content area shows a motion titled 'Motion - No payment for privilege - 21 April 2015' with a text description and a word count of 45. Below this is a section 'Proposed by Terry Victor' with a text description and a word count of 87. Further down is a section 'Seconded by Adam Burns' with a text description and a word count of 38. At the bottom of this section is a purple button labeled 'Add amendment'.

The bottom screenshot is titled 'Add Amendment' and shows a form with three text input fields. The first field is labeled 'Title \*' and contains the text 'Chose a title for your amendment.' with a blue arrow pointing to it. The second field is labeled 'Amendment \*' and contains the text 'Write the text of your amendment. e.g. "Add at the end of the motion:' with a blue arrow pointing to it. The third field is labeled 'Proposal \*' and contains the text 'This must be completed by the end of 2015'.' with a blue arrow pointing to it. Below the form is a purple button labeled 'Add amendment'.

Submit your amendment for comment and consideration with the proposing member by clicking the **Add amendment** button.

5.4 Contributing to the discussion of an amendment works in the same way as contributing to a discussion on a motion – see 5.2 above.

## **6 Voting**

6.1 The motion will stay open for debate for the length of time set by the moderator. Once the debate has been closed the mover of the motion will be invited to post a right of reply, the moderator will then first put any amendments to the vote and then put the motion, amended or otherwise, to the vote.

6.2 Voting will continue for the period set by the moderator. When that period has expired the Moderator will publish the results of the vote.

NOTE: Voting 6.1 has yet to be formally tested. During the 6 month open trial (Mar 01 - Aug 31 2016) A Chat Room thread “Points of Order - Motion in Progress” will be run by the Moderator to dialogue with members about procedural queries they might have in using the Online Branch relating to the Motion in progress.