

#SoAatHome | Industry Insider – Why you should stand for the Board

Tuesday 1 July 2025



1

00:00:00,000--> 00:00:03,000

-Good morning and
welcome to everybody

2

00:00:03,024--> 00:00:05,024

to our Industry Insider,

3

00:00:05,048--> 00:00:07,548

Why you should stand for the
board of the Society of Authors.

4

00:00:07,572--> 00:00:09,572

I'm Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin,

5

00:00:09,596--> 00:00:11,596

I am the current
Chair of the board.

6

00:00:11,620--> 00:00:14,620

Some of you might know
me as crime writer Sam Blake.

7

00:00:14,644--> 00:00:16,948

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Um, I also run the

Writing.ie website

8

00:00:16,972--> 00:00:18,300

and do various other things.

9

00:00:18,324--> 00:00:20,148

Um, I....

10

00:00:20,172--> 00:00:22,748

I'm delighted to welcome,

11

00:00:22,772--> 00:00:24,108

in the heat of the day,

12

00:00:24,132--> 00:00:25,788

as I'm sure everybody

else is hot as well,

13

00:00:25,812--> 00:00:29,708

a group of our

board members here

14

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00:00:29,732--> 00:00:31,508

who are going to be

able to talk to you today

15

00:00:31,532--> 00:00:33,308

about why they joined the board

16

00:00:33,332--> 00:00:37,000

and, um, answer any

of your questions as well.

17

00:00:37,000--> 00:00:38,948

This is part of our Society at--

18

00:00:38,972--> 00:00:40,388

Um, Society...

19

00:00:40,412--> 00:00:41,468

SoA at Home,

20

00:00:41,492--> 00:00:44,000

the Society of Authors at Home

Spring/Summer Programme.

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21

00:00:44,000--> 00:00:45,828

And it's free for all,

22

00:00:45,852--> 00:00:48,228

but if you can afford to,

we do appreciate donations

23

00:00:48,252--> 00:00:50,988

which go to the Society

of Authors Access Fund,

24

00:00:51,012--> 00:00:52,828

which provides grants to authors

25

00:00:52,852--> 00:00:55,000

and, um...

26

00:00:55,000--> 00:00:56,628

So that they can

travel, they can, uh....

27

00:00:56,652--> 00:00:58,548

Have money for

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subsistence if they're travelling,

28

00:00:58,572--> 00:01:01,188

childcare costs and access

needs and things like that.

29

00:01:01,212--> 00:01:03,788

Basically, that, um,

enable authors to go

30

00:01:03,812--> 00:01:06,948

and take part in events,

residences, and retreats.

31

00:01:06,972--> 00:01:09,228

And we suggest a

minimum donation of £5,

32

00:01:09,252--> 00:01:10,588

if that's possible for you.

33

00:01:10,612--> 00:01:13,228

Elsa is our moderator today,

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34

00:01:13,252--> 00:01:16,000

and she'll be popping links
into the chat as we proceed.

35

00:01:16,000--> 00:01:20,148

And you can also help the
Society of Authors Access Fund

36

00:01:20,172--> 00:01:22,628

by making a purchase
on our virtual bookstore

37

00:01:22,652--> 00:01:24,988

at Bookshop.org,

38

00:01:25,012--> 00:01:26,988

where you can
find books by writers

39

00:01:27,012--> 00:01:30,428

taking part in the Society of
Authors at Home programme,

40

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00:01:30,452--> 00:01:31,548

which is an extensive list.

41

00:01:31,572--> 00:01:33,000

There's a big variety there.

42

00:01:33,000--> 00:01:35,108

Elsa, again, will be

popping in the links

43

00:01:35,132--> 00:01:37,668

and you'll see those

pop up during the session.

44

00:01:37,692--> 00:01:39,988

So we'll be here for an hour.

45

00:01:40,012--> 00:01:42,108

We've got a 20-minute

Q&A at the end,

46

00:01:42,132--> 00:01:43,788

so do, as we're speaking,

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47

00:01:43,812--> 00:01:46,228

jot down your questions and
you can pop those in at the end.

48

00:01:46,252--> 00:01:47,888

Harriet's going to
be looking after them,

49

00:01:47,912--> 00:01:49,200

asking, reading them out for us.

50

00:01:49,224--> 00:01:50,588

Um...

51

00:01:50,612--> 00:01:52,188

If you'd like captions,

52

00:01:52,212--> 00:01:54,000

you can switch them on.

53

00:01:54,000--> 00:01:56,548

Um, and, um....

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54

00:01:56,572--> 00:01:58,908

We have those enabled.

55

00:01:58,932--> 00:02:00,788

The recording of the event

56

00:02:00,812--> 00:02:03,948

will be available at the Society
of Authors website for members

57

00:02:03,972--> 00:02:06,588

and can be accessed by
logging into your members area

58

00:02:06,612--> 00:02:08,000

and going to the resources page.

59

00:02:08,000--> 00:02:10,268

And for non-members,

60

00:02:10,292--> 00:02:12,548

the recording will be
available via our Vimeo channel

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61

00:02:12,572--> 00:02:15,648

and there are some amazing stuff on
the Vimeo channel, so do check that out.

62

00:02:15,672--> 00:02:19,108

All sorts of really useful
industry insider tips

63

00:02:19,132--> 00:02:22,388

and, um, some fantastic events

64

00:02:22,412--> 00:02:25,500

about tax and all sorts of things that
you really, really need to know about.

65

00:02:25,524--> 00:02:27,108

If you do have any
questions, as I say,

66

00:02:27,132--> 00:02:29,908

jot them down. Put them
in the Q&A if you can,

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67

00:02:29,932--> 00:02:32,100

rather than the chat, so
that we're able to see them.

68

00:02:32,124--> 00:02:34,668

Now, I'd like to introduce
you to our amazing panel.

69

00:02:34,692--> 00:02:36,508

We have Charles Harris,

70

00:02:36,532--> 00:02:38,000

Helen Epega,

71

00:02:38,000--> 00:02:39,268

and Harriet Evans with us.

72

00:02:39,292--> 00:02:41,708

Charles is an author and
award-winning writer-director

73

00:02:41,732--> 00:02:43,000

for television and cinema

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74

00:02:43,000--> 00:02:44,868

having traditionally
published two books,

75

00:02:44,892--> 00:02:46,308

twice award-nominated,

76

00:02:46,332--> 00:02:47,468

and three non-fiction books,

77

00:02:47,492--> 00:02:49,708

as well as self-publishing
a collection of short stories

78

00:02:49,732--> 00:02:51,000

and a further non-fiction book.

79

00:02:51,000--> 00:02:54,588

Charles previously worked in the
film and TV industry in various roles,

80

00:02:54,612--> 00:02:56,368

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ranging from screenwriting
and film editing

81

00:02:56,392--> 00:02:58,000

to directing and producing.

82

00:02:58,000--> 00:03:00,668

And he co-founded the
London Screenwriters Workshop,

83

00:03:00,692--> 00:03:03,068

the first screenwriter's
workshop in the world.

84

00:03:03,092--> 00:03:04,748

It's now called Euroscript.

85

00:03:04,772--> 00:03:08,000

And was co-chair of the New
Producers Alliance for 3 years.

86

00:03:08,000--> 00:03:11,708

Helen Epega is a writer,
librettist, and composer,

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87

00:03:11,732--> 00:03:14,588

best known for creating

Song Queen: A Pidgin Opera,

88

00:03:14,612--> 00:03:17,000

the world's first opera

in Pidgin English.

89

00:03:17,000--> 00:03:19,308

Creating works as

The Venus Bushfires,

90

00:03:19,332--> 00:03:21,028

she blends lyrical storytelling

91

00:03:21,052--> 00:03:23,000

with African percussion

and classical forms

92

00:03:23,000--> 00:03:26,508

to explore identity, cultural

memory, and accessibility.

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93

00:03:26,532--> 00:03:28,708

And this year, she
wrote *Of Earth and Quill*,

94

00:03:28,732--> 00:03:30,000

a one-woman opera

95

00:03:30,000--> 00:03:32,508

debuting at Tête à
Tête: The Opera Festival.

96

00:03:32,532--> 00:03:35,788

Her work has toured internationally
and been featured on the BBC,

97

00:03:35,812--> 00:03:38,000

CNN, *The Guardian*,
and *Vice* magazine.

98

00:03:38,000--> 00:03:40,748

Helen is chair of
our risk committee

99

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00:03:40,772--> 00:03:42,908

and is committed to
expanding the range of

100

00:03:42,932--> 00:03:45,708

inclusive, cross-cultural
storytelling,

101

00:03:45,732--> 00:03:48,028

and you can see a
snippet of Helen in action

102

00:03:48,052--> 00:03:51,388

if you can log into our awards.

103

00:03:51,412--> 00:03:54,308

She introduced our
awards, she was our main...

104

00:03:54,332--> 00:03:56,068

main woman at the
awards ceremony

105

00:03:56,092--> 00:03:57,708

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in Southwark

Cathedral the other day,

106

00:03:57,732--> 00:04:00,000

and she played

absolutely beautifully.

107

00:04:00,000--> 00:04:01,908

Mesmerising. It was

fantastic, wasn't it?

108

00:04:01,932--> 00:04:04,988

Harriet Evans is the

author of 13 novels,

109

00:04:05,012--> 00:04:06,428

several top 10 bestsellers,

110

00:04:06,452--> 00:04:11,000

2 Richard and Judy selections, and

has sold over a million copies worldwide.

111

00:04:11,000--> 00:04:12,308

Before that, she

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was a publisher,

112

00:04:12,332--> 00:04:13,708

first at Penguin

and then Headline,

113

00:04:13,732--> 00:04:15,000

where she served on the board.

114

00:04:15,000--> 00:04:18,228

And in a varied and a rewarding

career, publishing career,

115

00:04:18,252--> 00:04:22,000

she's edited authors from Sue

Townsend to Penny Vincenzi,

116

00:04:22,000--> 00:04:23,268

set up a romance list,

117

00:04:23,292--> 00:04:26,148

overruled Nick Hornby during a

literary quiz on a music question,

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118

00:04:26,172--> 00:04:30,428

and had coffee with Dave

Prowse, aka Darth Vader,

119

00:04:30,452--> 00:04:32,000

to discuss his memoirs.

120

00:04:32,000--> 00:04:34,188

So, we have a

talented bunch for you

121

00:04:34,212--> 00:04:36,308

who will give you,

hopefully, a good idea

122

00:04:36,332--> 00:04:39,000

of what it's like to be on

the Society of Authors board.

123

00:04:39,000--> 00:04:40,988

So I thought I'd just ask,

124

00:04:41,012--> 00:04:44,000

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start off by asking a very
obvious question, and....

125

00:04:44,000--> 00:04:46,468

Why these people particularly
decided to join the board.

126

00:04:46,492--> 00:04:49,308

So, Harriet, if we can
start with you, perhaps.

127

00:04:49,332--> 00:04:50,468

So you're top of my screen,

128

00:04:50,492--> 00:04:55,000

why did you decide
to join the board?

129

00:04:55,000--> 00:04:57,068

-Um, hi, hello everyone.

130

00:04:57,092--> 00:05:00,148

Thanks for, um, coming along.

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131

00:05:00,172--> 00:05:03,000

Um, I....

132

00:05:03,000--> 00:05:06,388

Have always been,

like, really aware

133

00:05:06,412--> 00:05:09,068

that I work in one

part of the book world,

134

00:05:09,092--> 00:05:11,108

but I've also always been aware,

135

00:05:11,132--> 00:05:13,108

because of my

publishing experience,

136

00:05:13,132--> 00:05:15,000

of how very different

137

00:05:15,000--> 00:05:19,188

the publisher mindset

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is to the author mindset.

138

00:05:19,212--> 00:05:21,948

And it is so hard

being an author.

139

00:05:21,972--> 00:05:26,000

And when I became a

full-time writer, I realized

140

00:05:26,000--> 00:05:28,988

just what conversations

needed to be had

141

00:05:29,012--> 00:05:31,548

and what conversations

weren't being had.

142

00:05:31,572--> 00:05:34,068

And, um, I felt,

143

00:05:34,092--> 00:05:36,268

because there was

loads at that time

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144

00:05:36,292--> 00:05:37,628

about the SoA in the press,

145

00:05:37,652--> 00:05:40,548

and I felt not all of it was

representative or true,

146

00:05:40,572--> 00:05:43,108

but also it did so

much good work.

147

00:05:43,132--> 00:05:46,108

It's helped me in the past

on a contractual issue

148

00:05:46,132--> 00:05:48,708

which was heartbreaking,

it was horrible,

149

00:05:48,732--> 00:05:50,228

to have to go through that.

150

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00:05:50,252--> 00:05:52,428

All of it was awful, and they
were so kind and helpful,

151

00:05:52,452--> 00:05:54,000

and I thought....

152

00:05:54,000--> 00:05:55,908

Um, this is
something I believe in

153

00:05:55,932--> 00:05:59,148

and there are lots of things
that you can't believe in that much

154

00:05:59,172--> 00:06:00,172

and...

155

00:06:00,196--> 00:06:03,708

And if I can stand and
do some work for it...

156

00:06:03,732--> 00:06:06,148

I'm making this sound really

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noble, but it wasn't like that.

157

00:06:06,172--> 00:06:08,000

It's just like,

this... this matters.

158

00:06:08,000--> 00:06:11,628

And, um, I'm not sure

I'm gonna be able to do it,

159

00:06:11,652--> 00:06:13,188

but I'm gonna give it a try.

160

00:06:13,212--> 00:06:14,988

And I thought with my

publishing experience,

161

00:06:15,012--> 00:06:18,400

that might be a

useful thing to bring

162

00:06:18,424--> 00:06:20,000

to the table.

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163

00:06:20,000--> 00:06:22,068

-I think that's a really,
really valuable, isn't it?

164

00:06:22,092--> 00:06:25,000

It's bringing that, and
that's something that, um....

165

00:06:25,000--> 00:06:28,868

That juxtaposition between the
business side and the creative side,

166

00:06:28,892--> 00:06:31,388

and I think that's something
that the Society of Author

167

00:06:31,412--> 00:06:32,988

very much focuses on, isn't it?

168

00:06:33,012--> 00:06:37,000

That we are in the business of
authorship and championing authors.

169

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00:06:37,000--> 00:06:39,708

Um, and so, yeah,
no, that's... that's...

170

00:06:39,732--> 00:06:41,708

that's a lovely reason
to want to join the board.

171

00:06:41,732--> 00:06:44,000

Uh, Charles, how about you?

172

00:06:44,000--> 00:06:47,068

-Um, I often say I'm....

173

00:06:47,092--> 00:06:48,548

I'm not...

174

00:06:48,572--> 00:06:50,508

I don't think the Society
of Authors is wonderful

175

00:06:50,532--> 00:06:53,000

because I'm a member of
the Management Committee.

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176

00:06:53,000--> 00:06:55,588

Um, I am a member of
the Management Committee

177

00:06:55,612--> 00:06:57,688

because I think the Society
of Authors is wonderful,

178

00:06:57,712--> 00:06:59,788

and I echo what Harriet
said about the enormous help

179

00:06:59,812--> 00:07:01,908

they've given me on
a number of contracts.

180

00:07:01,932--> 00:07:03,188

Um...

181

00:07:03,212--> 00:07:04,988

So that was part of it.

182

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00:07:05,012--> 00:07:06,012

I think there's a....

183

00:07:06,036--> 00:07:09,000

With anything you do, there's
a mixture of giving and getting.

184

00:07:09,000--> 00:07:11,188

So, um, you know,

185

00:07:11,212--> 00:07:13,428

I want to do something to
improve the lives of authors.

186

00:07:13,452--> 00:07:16,000

I still think
there's a lot to do.

187

00:07:16,000--> 00:07:20,388

I wanted to, um, basically help

188

00:07:20,412--> 00:07:23,000

the aims of what
is my trade union.

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189

00:07:23,000--> 00:07:25,868

But at the same time,
there's a selfish reason,

190

00:07:25,892--> 00:07:28,000

which is I wanted to be among

191

00:07:28,000--> 00:07:30,588

great, good, different
kinds of authors

192

00:07:30,612--> 00:07:34,000

sitting around that table,

193

00:07:34,000--> 00:07:35,988

whether physically or online.

194

00:07:36,012--> 00:07:39,508

There's an amazing
range of experience

195

00:07:39,532--> 00:07:42,148

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and range of interest.

196

00:07:42,172--> 00:07:43,348

Um...

197

00:07:43,372--> 00:07:47,000

And I found myself kind of
rather honoured to be among them.

198

00:07:47,000--> 00:07:49,788

So, yeah, I say, I think...

199

00:07:49,812--> 00:07:51,708

If you don't get something
from doing something,

200

00:07:51,732--> 00:07:52,937

there's no point in doing it.

201

00:07:52,961--> 00:07:55,088

I mean, if you just say
it's just purely altruistic,

202

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00:07:55,112--> 00:07:57,000

I'm always a bit
suspicious anyway.

203

00:07:57,000--> 00:07:59,908

So, but also
there's a lot to give.

204

00:07:59,932--> 00:08:01,188

It can be challenging

205

00:08:01,212--> 00:08:03,828

and I'm sure we'll get on to
talking a bit about that as well.

206

00:08:03,852--> 00:08:05,948

There's a lot I've learned, um,

207

00:08:05,972--> 00:08:09,000

as Harriet said about
publishing that I didn't know.

208

00:08:09,000--> 00:08:11,988

Um, and that itself

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has been interesting

209

00:08:12,012--> 00:08:16,000

and often taken me way
outside my comfort zone.

210

00:08:16,000--> 00:08:18,000

Uh, but that's
part of the fun of it.

211

00:08:18,000--> 00:08:21,088

-Isn't it just? Yeah, no, I think that you
made some really good points there.

212

00:08:21,112--> 00:08:23,828

That blend of skills is
really interesting, isn't it?

213

00:08:23,852--> 00:08:25,388

And really important for us

214

00:08:25,412--> 00:08:28,000

as a board to have
that blend of skills

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215

00:08:28,000--> 00:08:29,988

because it's really
important for us

216

00:08:30,012--> 00:08:32,588

to be able to have voices from
right across the industry.

217

00:08:32,612--> 00:08:36,908

And each of us individually
have different sets of experience,

218

00:08:36,932--> 00:08:39,068

and it's bringing that
to the table, isn't it?

219

00:08:39,092--> 00:08:40,228

We don't always agree.

220

00:08:40,252--> 00:08:41,668

Quite often we disagree,

221

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00:08:41,692--> 00:08:43,048

but we're able to debate points,

222

00:08:43,072--> 00:08:45,000

you know, coming from

our particular speciality.

223

00:08:45,000--> 00:08:47,148

Um, and, um...

224

00:08:47,172--> 00:08:49,628

And make sure we

produce the best solution

225

00:08:49,652--> 00:08:51,468

for the organization as a whole.

226

00:08:51,492--> 00:08:53,028

So, I think some

lovely points there.

227

00:08:53,052--> 00:08:55,508

And Helen, how about you?

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228

00:08:57,000--> 00:08:58,908

-Hi there, thank
you all for joining

229

00:08:58,932--> 00:09:02,000

and thank you for having
me on the board [laughs]

230

00:09:02,000--> 00:09:04,908

at the SoA and this morning.

231

00:09:04,932--> 00:09:06,788

For me, really,

232

00:09:06,812--> 00:09:09,028

I really still consider myself
quite new to the board.

233

00:09:09,052--> 00:09:11,000

I joined

234

00:09:11,000--> 00:09:12,308

this year, really.

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235

00:09:12,332--> 00:09:13,748

End of last year this year.

236

00:09:13,772--> 00:09:16,000

And I went to the....

237

00:09:16,000--> 00:09:18,268

To the summer party last year.

238

00:09:18,292--> 00:09:21,268

And prior to that, I hadn't
considered myself an author.

239

00:09:21,292--> 00:09:24,268

Even though I'd been
writing operas for 10 years

240

00:09:24,292--> 00:09:27,000

and obviously writing librettos
for a lot longer than that.

241

00:09:27,000--> 00:09:30,108

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Um, I didn't consider
myself an author.

242

00:09:30,132--> 00:09:34,000

And in this room full of
authors, I thought, "oh...

243

00:09:34,000--> 00:09:35,348

I feel at home here."

244

00:09:35,372--> 00:09:37,588

And.... What I
automatically thought,

245

00:09:37,612--> 00:09:41,000

I'm going to join
the board, as you do.

246

00:09:41,000--> 00:09:43,628

And, um, the experience
has been really...

247

00:09:43,652--> 00:09:46,148

It's been lovely, and I

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say lovely because I've...

248

00:09:46,172--> 00:09:48,268

I felt quite held in that space.

249

00:09:48,292--> 00:09:51,000

For me, it's really
important to have, um,

250

00:09:51,000--> 00:09:54,788

diversity of ideas and diversity

251

00:09:54,812--> 00:09:58,268

of, um, you know, frameworks,
diversity of experiences.

252

00:09:58,292--> 00:09:59,668

And I'm sort of coming...

253

00:09:59,692--> 00:10:01,000

Maybe possibly

254

00:10:01,000--> 00:10:03,228

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I felt like I was an outsider,

255

00:10:03,252--> 00:10:05,848

because in my mind I always

thought musician, rather than author,

256

00:10:05,872--> 00:10:07,108

but of course I'm an author.

257

00:10:07,132--> 00:10:10,000

So just realizing that the

authorship world is far...

258

00:10:10,000--> 00:10:14,788

Far more enormous

than I initially experienced,

259

00:10:14,812--> 00:10:18,148

and I enjoy being on the board

because it challenges me as well.

260

00:10:18,172--> 00:10:20,000

I thought that, um...

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261

00:10:20,000--> 00:10:22,468

I might have a
certain viewpoint,

262

00:10:22,492--> 00:10:24,908

but having the opportunity
to have a dialogue

263

00:10:24,932--> 00:10:26,508

with so many
different viewpoints

264

00:10:26,532--> 00:10:28,708

really helps me to kind
of see a broader picture

265

00:10:28,732--> 00:10:31,000

and through that,
I'm really honoured

266

00:10:31,000--> 00:10:32,508

to serve members.

267

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00:10:32,532--> 00:10:36,000

And I think it's really important to
have a board that reflects as broad,

268

00:10:36,000--> 00:10:39,188

you know, a diversity
of ideas as possible.

269

00:10:39,212--> 00:10:42,488

So, dare I say, I'm having
a good time

270

00:10:42,512--> 00:10:43,512

[laughs]

271

00:10:43,536--> 00:10:46,000

on the board!

272

00:10:46,000--> 00:10:48,428

-That's great, no, that's
good to hear, isn't it?

273

00:10:48,452--> 00:10:50,508

Because, I mean, it's

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quite a time commitment,

274

00:10:50,532--> 00:10:52,948

so it is... it's important.

275

00:10:52,972--> 00:10:55,208

And I think you made a really
good point there, Charles,

276

00:10:55,232--> 00:10:57,608

that one of my business partners
always says that, you know,

277

00:10:57,632--> 00:11:00,108

you can do something if it
serves you, it needs to serve you.

278

00:11:00,132--> 00:11:01,700

And so, certainly for
anybody watching,

279

00:11:01,724--> 00:11:04,188

who is, um... Who's
thinking about joining,

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280

00:11:04,212--> 00:11:06,268

we absolutely need
your experience

281

00:11:06,292--> 00:11:08,000

and we need your skills.

282

00:11:08,000--> 00:11:09,628

Um, but it needs
to serve you too,

283

00:11:09,652--> 00:11:12,068

so you need to be, um,
doing it for, you know,

284

00:11:12,092--> 00:11:15,000

to make sure that you're going
to learn stuff. And we have, um...

285

00:11:15,000--> 00:11:16,468

As you say, diversity
of experience,

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286

00:11:16,492--> 00:11:21,000

a great mix of
different authors and...

287

00:11:21,000--> 00:11:23,148

musicians on
board-- on the board.

288

00:11:23,172--> 00:11:25,208

But we also do things
like the governance training

289

00:11:25,232--> 00:11:29,108

and DEI training, um, which
is really, really important.

290

00:11:29,132--> 00:11:31,828

And we did unconscious
bias training too,

291

00:11:31,852--> 00:11:33,808

which is what I found
really, really interesting.

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292

00:11:33,832--> 00:11:36,828

I'm hoping we're going to be able to
do again soon. So, there is a lot of...

293

00:11:36,852--> 00:11:38,628

there's quite a lot of
learning, isn't there?

294

00:11:38,652--> 00:11:40,928

Harriet, for you, has the time
commitment worked for you

295

00:11:40,952--> 00:11:43,148

in terms of, um... You
sometimes are hybrid, usually.

296

00:11:43,172--> 00:11:45,100

Sometimes you're in
the office, how does that...

297

00:11:45,124--> 00:11:47,000

How does that work for you?

298

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00:11:47,000--> 00:11:49,788

-I found it, um....

299

00:11:49,812--> 00:11:51,908

It comes and goes,

300

00:11:51,932--> 00:11:55,000

so I have quite small

children and I'm writing

301

00:11:55,000--> 00:11:57,068

two different series of books,

302

00:11:57,092--> 00:12:01,000

and I have other

stuff on as well, um....

303

00:12:01,000--> 00:12:03,148

And, actually,

304

00:12:03,172--> 00:12:06,188

I'm not standing

for a second term

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305

00:12:06,212--> 00:12:08,000

because I want to
make sure I've got

306

00:12:08,000--> 00:12:09,508

all the time I need to do...

307

00:12:09,532--> 00:12:12,228

to do my work, and those
kids need feeding and stuff.

308

00:12:12,252--> 00:12:14,388

But it's actually been
really interesting,

309

00:12:14,412--> 00:12:17,000

because it's helped me

310

00:12:17,000--> 00:12:18,948

reassess myself.

311

00:12:18,972--> 00:12:22,388

When you're talking about

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benefits and gains as Charles was,

312

00:12:22,412--> 00:12:24,000

it's made me realize

313

00:12:24,000--> 00:12:26,508

I'm allowed to be in the room.

314

00:12:26,532--> 00:12:28,628

You know, everyone

has imposter syndrome.

315

00:12:28,652--> 00:12:32,228

I think women as well have a

tendency to think "I can't do this,

316

00:12:32,252--> 00:12:34,288

I'm not allowed to do

this, or I don't know that."

317

00:12:34,312--> 00:12:36,688

It's made me think, no, you

know what you're talking about,

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318

00:12:36,712--> 00:12:40,308

and I... I stood really without
really thinking I'd get on.

319

00:12:40,332--> 00:12:43,748

But it's also made me much
more organized with my time,

320

00:12:43,772--> 00:12:45,068

because when you're a writer,

321

00:12:45,092--> 00:12:46,588

you are, as we all know,

322

00:12:46,612--> 00:12:50,388

you are your own boss and so
you tend to drift from thing to thing.

323

00:12:50,412--> 00:12:51,412

-It's a bit fluid.

324

00:12:51,436--> 00:12:53,676

-And sort of think, oh, I

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need to write, I need to write.

325

00:12:53,700--> 00:12:56,580

This has actually made me... I have a journal, which I don't have here now,

326

00:12:56,604--> 00:12:58,728

but, um... where I plan out what the week's gonna be

327

00:12:58,752--> 00:13:01,072

and I check in with what meetings I've got, and it actually

328

00:13:01,096--> 00:13:03,228

has made me take myself seriously,

329

00:13:03,252--> 00:13:05,508

but it's also made me, um...

330

00:13:05,532--> 00:13:08,028

The net benefit I haven't found

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331

00:13:08,052--> 00:13:10,788

is necessarily like being in a
room with important people,

332

00:13:10,812--> 00:13:13,268

much as I've really cherished,

333

00:13:13,292--> 00:13:15,548

like, meeting the
other board members

334

00:13:15,572--> 00:13:19,308

and being exposed to, like,
difficult conversations and all of that.

335

00:13:19,332--> 00:13:21,388

It's more, for me, thinking,

336

00:13:21,412--> 00:13:24,088

you need to get better at that,
you need to listen to this person,

337

00:13:24,112--> 00:13:27,028

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you need to speak up,
because this is wrong.

338

00:13:27,052--> 00:13:30,188

But also, you're at the Houses
of Parliament talking about AI.

339

00:13:30,212--> 00:13:32,000

Like, it's for you

340

00:13:32,000--> 00:13:35,068

to take on, and for
me, I've found it...

341

00:13:35,092--> 00:13:37,028

I'm about to say the
words "personal growth",

342

00:13:37,052--> 00:13:40,000

but I have found
it, like, it's...

343

00:13:40,000--> 00:13:43,268

It's made me work harder

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and in a more disciplined way,

344

00:13:43,292--> 00:13:48,000

and I really have

appreciated and benefited that.

345

00:13:48,000--> 00:13:50,588

From that, and I'm a quite

exam deadline person.

346

00:13:50,612--> 00:13:51,988

I'm a terrible

coursework person.

347

00:13:52,012--> 00:13:54,868

I don't know why my, you

know, job is literally coursework,

348

00:13:54,892--> 00:13:57,000

but so I am quite

good with, uh...

349

00:13:57,000--> 00:14:00,108

Just, like, get this stuff done.

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350

00:14:00,132--> 00:14:01,548

It may be in a bit of a rush.

351

00:14:01,572--> 00:14:04,148

And when I first started, the
amount of information you were...

352

00:14:04,172--> 00:14:06,000

I'm sure all...

353

00:14:06,000--> 00:14:09,668

All of you will get
on board with this,

354

00:14:09,692--> 00:14:11,428

but, like, there's so much to take on

355

00:14:11,452--> 00:14:13,868

and I just... and Helen, we used
to chat when you just joined.

356

00:14:13,892--> 00:14:16,708

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It, you know, it's completely
overwhelming, like, what is this?

357

00:14:16,732--> 00:14:19,108

And I realized the way I
work is just keep looking at it.

358

00:14:19,132--> 00:14:20,508

It won't make
sense the first time.

359

00:14:20,532--> 00:14:23,008

Just go back a couple of days
later to look at something else,

360

00:14:23,032--> 00:14:25,000

go back and look at
something else. It's fine.

361

00:14:25,000--> 00:14:26,468

Everyone else has
had the same thing.

362

00:14:26,492--> 00:14:28,748

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So it's also made me
trust my judgment, too.

363

00:14:28,772--> 00:14:30,788

And that's what the
time commitment is,

364

00:14:30,812--> 00:14:33,788

not, like, taking
on another job,

365

00:14:33,812--> 00:14:36,000

but it is definitely
a considerable...

366

00:14:36,000--> 00:14:38,668

It's a proportion of
your life to consider.

367

00:14:38,692--> 00:14:40,000

And if you're....

368

00:14:40,000--> 00:14:43,188

You're standing, take it seriously

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and take yourself seriously,

369

00:14:43,212--> 00:14:45,000

and then you'll,

370

00:14:45,000--> 00:14:48,228

I think, get, you know,

loads more out of it

371

00:14:48,252--> 00:14:50,428

and I hope you others

would agree with that,

372

00:14:50,452--> 00:14:52,000

she says grammatically.

373

00:14:52,000--> 00:14:54,388

-I know, that's excellent, yeah,

374

00:14:54,412--> 00:14:56,848

because the board papers,

obviously, as you mentioned there,

375

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00:14:56,872--> 00:14:59,948

take a lot of time to read, as well
as, actually, the meetings themselves.

376

00:14:59,972--> 00:15:02,868

And being on board
with those board papers

377

00:15:02,892--> 00:15:06,012

and being fully briefed before you get
to meetings is really, really important,

378

00:15:06,036--> 00:15:09,000

so that you can contribute in a,
you know, in a really meaningful way.

379

00:15:09,000--> 00:15:12,188

But you mentioned there
that you were Helen's buddy.

380

00:15:12,212--> 00:15:14,868

So one of the things we
do for new board members,

381

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00:15:14,892--> 00:15:17,312

because we know that it is a
bit overwhelming and daunting...

382

00:15:17,336--> 00:15:19,868

I think people see the SoA

383

00:15:19,892--> 00:15:22,468

and they maybe see one
area of the work that we do,

384

00:15:22,492--> 00:15:24,428

and they think that that...
you mentioned AI there.

385

00:15:24,452--> 00:15:26,692

I'm going to come back around
to that, but, um, you know,

386

00:15:26,716--> 00:15:29,148

it's about standing outside
the House of Parliament

387

00:15:29,172--> 00:15:31,828

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or it's about the Author Care

Toolkit, which we've just launched,

388

00:15:31,852--> 00:15:35,000

which is all about, um,

improving, obviously improving that

389

00:15:35,000--> 00:15:36,428

professional relationship.

390

00:15:36,452--> 00:15:40,548

But actually, we work across

probably 5, 6, 7, 8 different areas,

391

00:15:40,572--> 00:15:44,000

you know, from prizes

and grants through to

392

00:15:44,000--> 00:15:46,048

all the different campaigning

work, policy work,

393

00:15:46,072--> 00:15:48,808

all the different types of things,

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and so there is a lot to take in.

394

00:15:48,832--> 00:15:51,388

But we do have a
buddy system, so we...

395

00:15:51,412--> 00:15:53,892

New board members, Helen came
in, mentioned came in in January,

396

00:15:53,916--> 00:15:56,000

so it's perfect for you
to be here today, Helen.

397

00:15:56,000--> 00:15:59,228

Um, and, um, and that
buddy system is quite useful.

398

00:15:59,252--> 00:16:02,668

How did you find that? How did you find it
worked for you, Helen, the buddy system?

399

00:16:02,692--> 00:16:04,000

Because Harriet was your buddy.

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400

00:16:04,000--> 00:16:06,428

You have to say nice things
now, because she's in the room!

401

00:16:06,452--> 00:16:07,628

[laughter]

402

00:16:07,652--> 00:16:09,708

-No! Harriet is fantastic,
absolutely amazing.

403

00:16:09,732--> 00:16:13,108

And, um, I... I couldn't have, um,
have hoped for a better buddy,

404

00:16:13,132--> 00:16:18,588

because you do get the papers
and you think what is this, you know?

405

00:16:18,612--> 00:16:20,748

And interestingly enough,

406

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00:16:20,772--> 00:16:22,828

I would always have a story

407

00:16:22,852--> 00:16:25,400

and it's like, my name's Helen,
I write music, I'm bad at maths.

408

00:16:25,424--> 00:16:28,708

So, I was really nervous
when I saw the finance aspect.

409

00:16:28,732--> 00:16:31,000

However, somehow the
finance aspect's been

410

00:16:31,000--> 00:16:33,828

the clearest part
to me, so it's got...

411

00:16:33,852--> 00:16:37,000

it's developed other
aspects within my

412

00:16:37,000--> 00:16:41,188

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tool, I suppose, that I wasn't
even looking to.... to develop,

413

00:16:41,212--> 00:16:43,108

because I thought, I...

I'm just not good at that,

414

00:16:43,132--> 00:16:44,268

but that wasn't the case.

415

00:16:44,292--> 00:16:46,928

And I think it's been really,

really wonderful, especially having

416

00:16:46,952--> 00:16:49,108

a buddy like Harriet,

that no question is silly.

417

00:16:49,132--> 00:16:51,028

-Yes, that's really

important, isn't it?

418

00:16:51,052--> 00:16:53,068

-You know, you just keep

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asking, and quite often...

419

00:16:53,092--> 00:16:54,668

And something that
has changed within me

420

00:16:54,692--> 00:16:56,988

is I've gained a lot of
confidence. If I may say so,

421

00:16:57,012--> 00:16:59,000

I probably took
up a lot of time

422

00:16:59,000--> 00:17:00,468

at one particular board meeting,

423

00:17:00,492--> 00:17:02,188

because I just kept
asking questions

424

00:17:02,212--> 00:17:03,868

to make sure that it
was clear in my mind,

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425

00:17:03,892--> 00:17:06,588

but not once did I feel,
oh gosh, she's going again,

426

00:17:06,612--> 00:17:08,000

gosh, she's taking time.

427

00:17:08,000--> 00:17:09,188

Oh, gosh, isn't it clear?

428

00:17:09,212--> 00:17:10,548

Nobody said that.

429

00:17:10,572--> 00:17:13,788

It was so open, and that's
something that's developed in me.

430

00:17:13,812--> 00:17:15,308

It's like, yeah, I
deserve to be here.

431

00:17:15,332--> 00:17:17,708

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And it's not necessarily
because I've got the answers,

432

00:17:17,732--> 00:17:20,788

but because I want to
ask certain questions.

433

00:17:20,812--> 00:17:22,000

So sometimes having

434

00:17:22,000--> 00:17:24,468

an interest in the question

435

00:17:24,492--> 00:17:26,948

is just important as the
experience you might have,

436

00:17:26,972--> 00:17:28,588

because everybody's
learning on the job

437

00:17:28,612--> 00:17:31,828

and you do get in, you think,
oh gosh, this person's written this

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438

00:17:31,852--> 00:17:34,000

and, you know, this person's
been here for, you know,

439

00:17:34,000--> 00:17:37,148

5 years, whatever, but
it's really not like that.

440

00:17:37,172--> 00:17:38,172

It's quite, um....

441

00:17:38,196--> 00:17:40,148

I think it's quite a warm group

442

00:17:40,172--> 00:17:41,828

and it's quite an open group,

443

00:17:41,852--> 00:17:44,000

and I've really
benefited from that

444

00:17:44,000--> 00:17:45,428

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personally and professionally,

445

00:17:45,452--> 00:17:48,148

especially when I kind
of look at my confidence

446

00:17:48,172--> 00:17:50,628

and how I have the
internal dialogue with myself

447

00:17:50,652--> 00:17:52,468

and what I potentially
bring to the table.

448

00:17:52,492--> 00:17:55,028

-I think those questions, um...

449

00:17:55,052--> 00:17:57,492

And I think I know which board
meeting you were talking about,

450

00:17:57,516--> 00:17:58,616

are super, super important

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451

00:17:58,640--> 00:18:01,128

because sometimes, you know
with anything, you don't always...

452

00:18:01,152--> 00:18:03,648

You take the information, you
have your own thoughts about it,

453

00:18:03,672--> 00:18:06,000

but you don't necessarily
think about it from all angles

454

00:18:06,000--> 00:18:08,668

just because of the
way we're all conditioned.

455

00:18:08,692--> 00:18:11,428

And... and so having somebody
else throw up a question,

456

00:18:11,452--> 00:18:13,168

you're like, oh, I'd
never thought of that.

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457

00:18:13,192--> 00:18:15,688

That's a different... from a
completely different point of view.

458

00:18:15,712--> 00:18:17,688

Charles, have you found
that? Have you found that

459

00:18:17,712--> 00:18:19,512

we've had conversations
around the board table

460

00:18:19,536--> 00:18:21,308

that have thrown
up new things for you

461

00:18:21,332--> 00:18:24,000

and got you to think about
things in a different way?

462

00:18:24,000--> 00:18:25,428

-Uh, never... No,
no, all the time.

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463

00:18:25,452--> 00:18:28,348

Um.... I mean, I

used to teach writing

464

00:18:28,372--> 00:18:30,388

and one of the things I

would constantly teach

465

00:18:30,412--> 00:18:32,200

is questions are more

important than answers.

466

00:18:32,224--> 00:18:33,224

-Yeah.

467

00:18:33,248--> 00:18:35,628

-And I remember that

meeting with Helen, and..

468

00:18:35,652--> 00:18:37,948

Yeah, I mean, most of the

questions were ones, as you say,

469

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00:18:37,972--> 00:18:40,268

you think, well, yeah, I
wish I'd asked that question,

470

00:18:40,292--> 00:18:42,000

because I certainly
don't know the answer.

471

00:18:42,000--> 00:18:44,388

-Yeah, loads of people
don't know the answer either.

472

00:18:44,412--> 00:18:46,668

Like, that's the
thing, we all, like...

473

00:18:46,692--> 00:18:49,428

Sorry to jump in, but yeah,
we might not have got to that,

474

00:18:49,452--> 00:18:51,668

like, or spent as much
time on that paper,

475

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00:18:51,692--> 00:18:54,600

so the person asking the question quite
often gives themselves the power,

476

00:18:54,624--> 00:18:55,628

you know?

477

00:18:55,652--> 00:18:57,588

-Yes, and when it comes
to finance, I mean...

478

00:18:57,612--> 00:18:59,228

We have a lot of responsibility.

479

00:18:59,252--> 00:19:00,594

There's a lot of money involved,

480

00:19:00,618--> 00:19:02,468

particularly with the
trusts and the prizes,

481

00:19:02,492--> 00:19:07,000

so.... And we do have to have
a responsibility to get things...

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482

00:19:07,000--> 00:19:08,308

Get things right.

483

00:19:08,332--> 00:19:10,028

And what else...?

484

00:19:10,052--> 00:19:11,468

We talked about, um...

485

00:19:11,492--> 00:19:14,188

Oh, yes, and the other thing
is, I mean, you know, I mean,

486

00:19:14,212--> 00:19:15,828

we do need a range of skills

487

00:19:15,852--> 00:19:18,188

and it's great the range of
skills we've got at the moment.

488

00:19:18,212--> 00:19:20,628

I mean, I came in

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four years ago, was it?

489

00:19:20,652--> 00:19:22,828

I've lost track, four and
a half years, probably.

490

00:19:22,852--> 00:19:26,148

And before we had
the buddy system,

491

00:19:26,172--> 00:19:27,728

but there was an
informal buddy system.

492

00:19:27,752--> 00:19:29,300

So one of the buddies
was you, Vanessa,

493

00:19:29,324--> 00:19:31,028

and you helped me a lot.

494

00:19:31,052--> 00:19:33,388

Ad there was
another board member

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495

00:19:33,412--> 00:19:36,028

who gave me a lot of information
and a bit of scurrilous gossip

496

00:19:36,052--> 00:19:38,200

and a few things like that,
which was all very useful.

497

00:19:38,224--> 00:19:40,348

There's a sense of
how the board worked.

498

00:19:40,372--> 00:19:42,788

Um, but there were also
people I could go back to

499

00:19:42,812--> 00:19:44,000

and, um... and say, look,

500

00:19:44,000--> 00:19:45,948

I've got a bit of a
problem with this.

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501

00:19:45,972--> 00:19:49,268

You know, it may just be something

I'm writing in my novel or something,

502

00:19:49,292--> 00:19:51,668

and say, you know...

And you've been very good

503

00:19:51,692--> 00:19:54,308

and so have other

members of the board,

504

00:19:54,332--> 00:19:57,000

um, just sort of saying

"have you thought about this"

505

00:19:57,000--> 00:20:00,000

or would you like to talk to this

person, or whatever? So there's a....

506

00:20:00,000--> 00:20:01,468

There's a lot of

interplay there,

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507

00:20:01,492--> 00:20:03,868

but there is also a
lot of responsibility.

508

00:20:03,892--> 00:20:06,000

Your original question
was about time.

509

00:20:06,000--> 00:20:07,148

Um...

510

00:20:07,172--> 00:20:09,628

The first year actually
wasn't too bad.

511

00:20:09,652--> 00:20:13,268

And then I realized, actually,

512

00:20:13,292--> 00:20:14,948

we should be taking more time.

513

00:20:14,972--> 00:20:16,448

We need to take

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more responsibility.

514

00:20:16,472--> 00:20:18,000

So I started volunteering for...

515

00:20:18,000--> 00:20:21,308

for things, and there was

a... a big subcommittee

516

00:20:21,332--> 00:20:24,108

dealing with some

complaints that came in,

517

00:20:24,132--> 00:20:26,000

and that took up an

enormous amount of time.

518

00:20:26,000--> 00:20:28,588

But I didn't resent

a single minute of it.

519

00:20:28,612--> 00:20:31,108

I mean, it was... there

was a lot of time, but, um,

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520

00:20:31,132--> 00:20:34,028

and there was a lot of very
interesting debates that took place.

521

00:20:34,052--> 00:20:38,828

And, um, one day they might
become a plot of a novel, who knows?

522

00:20:38,852--> 00:20:40,000

But, uh....

523

00:20:40,000--> 00:20:43,788

It was, um, you know,
and again, now I'm now

524

00:20:43,812--> 00:20:46,468

Chair of the new
Membership Subcommittee

525

00:20:46,492--> 00:20:48,028

and that's going
to take a lot of time,

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526

00:20:48,052--> 00:20:49,600

and I'm on the
governance subcommittee.

527

00:20:49,624--> 00:20:51,188

But I don't resent that,

528

00:20:51,212--> 00:20:53,000

because I think
these are... these are...

529

00:20:53,000--> 00:20:54,668

You know, we're
getting under the bonnet

530

00:20:54,692--> 00:20:57,668

and tinkering and saying, well,
how do we make this Society better?

531

00:20:57,692--> 00:20:59,000

Because it can always be better.

532

00:20:59,000--> 00:21:02,108

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-Yeah, absolutely. Well, I think that's the way to, um....

533

00:21:02,132--> 00:21:04,988

ensure that we have enough time in meetings to have those debates,

534

00:21:05,012--> 00:21:07,948

because if the subcommittees can have the conversations

535

00:21:07,972--> 00:21:10,828

and consider the strategy for moving forward

536

00:21:10,852--> 00:21:12,100

with things like membership...

537

00:21:12,124--> 00:21:14,148

Helen's on risk, and Harriet is too,

538

00:21:14,172--> 00:21:18,548

and we've got governance, and

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we've got, um, policy and campaigns,

539

00:21:18,572--> 00:21:21,000

and we've got a whole
series of subcommittees.

540

00:21:21,000--> 00:21:23,228

And we do encourage
board members to join

541

00:21:23,252--> 00:21:24,588

those subcommittees too,

542

00:21:24,612--> 00:21:27,000

because that's an
opportunity for people to meet

543

00:21:27,000--> 00:21:29,068

sort of off-piste, so to speak,

544

00:21:29,092--> 00:21:31,848

where they've got a bit more time
where they can really get to grips

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545

00:21:31,872--> 00:21:35,112

with issues and look at, you know, how
we take the society forward and strategies

546

00:21:35,136--> 00:21:37,148

because really, that's
what the board is about.

547

00:21:37,172--> 00:21:39,588

It's about strategy, it's not
about day-to-day management.

548

00:21:39,612--> 00:21:43,228

That's what, um, Anna
and the staff team look after.

549

00:21:43,252--> 00:21:44,668

We're all... we're
about the strategy

550

00:21:44,692--> 00:21:47,000

and the way we're going to
move the organization forwards.

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551

00:21:47,000--> 00:21:48,688

And so those

subcommittees are absolutely...

552

00:21:48,712--> 00:21:50,148

will be absolutely invaluable,

553

00:21:50,172--> 00:21:52,308

because they will

bring those strategies...

554

00:21:52,332--> 00:21:54,000

Hammer out the

ideas and the thoughts

555

00:21:54,000--> 00:21:55,908

and then bring them

back to the board

556

00:21:55,932--> 00:21:58,268

so that we can, um, we

can discuss those things.

557

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00:21:58,292--> 00:22:01,108

-It's worth picking up on the
implication of what you're saying,

558

00:22:01,132--> 00:22:03,100

which people may be a
bit confused about, which is

559

00:22:03,124--> 00:22:06,000

we are in the process of
doing a lot of new things.

560

00:22:06,000--> 00:22:07,000

Um, and, you know....

561

00:22:07,000--> 00:22:09,148

-Oh, absolutely.
Huge, huge changes.

562

00:22:09,172--> 00:22:11,228

And, I mean, the AI
thing, Harriet's mentioned,

563

00:22:11,252--> 00:22:12,808

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I'll come back to
that now in a second.

564

00:22:12,832--> 00:22:16,000

Yeah, we're in the process of
organising our next five-year strategy.

565

00:22:16,000--> 00:22:19,628

So we are looking at, um,
areas right across the board.

566

00:22:19,652--> 00:22:24,000

We are, um, yeah, doing
all sorts of bits and pieces

567

00:22:24,000--> 00:22:26,788

to, um, basically,
yeah, bring...

568

00:22:26,812--> 00:22:28,988

I suppose not bring
the organization in...

569

00:22:29,012--> 00:22:31,000

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a bit more up-to-date,
but we're looking at...

570

00:22:31,000--> 00:22:33,748

I think that's one of the
things that we've got an eye on.

571

00:22:33,772--> 00:22:35,988

So, um, yeah, we're
very much focused

572

00:22:36,012--> 00:22:37,508

on the business of authorship

573

00:22:37,532--> 00:22:40,188

and the conditions for authors

574

00:22:40,212--> 00:22:43,000

and, you know, paying
conditions and all of those things.

575

00:22:43,000--> 00:22:45,508

And currently, as I
mentioned there earlier,

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576

00:22:45,532--> 00:22:49,000

AI is a huge issue, it's
a huge policy area, so...

577

00:22:49,000--> 00:22:50,908

We have a very busy staff,

578

00:22:50,932--> 00:22:53,068

we have a very busy team,
we have a very busy board,

579

00:22:53,092--> 00:22:54,468

and anything that
comes along to us

580

00:22:54,492--> 00:22:57,000

that's sort of extra
to that then takes up

581

00:22:57,000--> 00:22:58,268

that amount of time.

582

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00:22:58,292--> 00:23:01,708

And AI is a hot topic for
everybody at the moment.

583

00:23:01,732--> 00:23:04,000

Harriet, do tell us your...

584

00:23:04,000--> 00:23:07,228

You actually are the... probably
the worst experience of everybody,

585

00:23:07,252--> 00:23:10,228

I think, in the UK at the
moment, um, because your book...

586

00:23:10,252--> 00:23:11,988

We've... all of us
have been scraped,

587

00:23:12,012--> 00:23:13,788

have our books scraped, um...

588

00:23:13,812--> 00:23:16,000

And obviously one of the key

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things that we're doing is

589

00:23:16,000--> 00:23:19,508

making sure, trying

to get the remuneration

590

00:23:19,532--> 00:23:22,148

side of things

sorted out for that.

591

00:23:22,172--> 00:23:23,708

But your book was

actually scraped

592

00:23:23,732--> 00:23:25,788

before it was even

published, wasn't it?

593

00:23:25,812--> 00:23:29,868

-It was, um, and Nadine, one

of our fellow board members,

594

00:23:29,892--> 00:23:31,000

Nadine Matheson,

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595

00:23:31,000--> 00:23:36,588

gave us the link really early
on to The Atlantic's article

596

00:23:36,612--> 00:23:39,000

about the LibGen
dataset, Llama3,

597

00:23:39,000--> 00:23:44,188

which Meta has mined and, um,

598

00:23:44,212--> 00:23:48,148

used to train its LLMs,
its large language models.

599

00:23:48,172--> 00:23:51,748

And, um, we, uh...

600

00:23:51,772--> 00:23:55,100

all typed in our books at the same time,
as I'm sure thousands of other people did.

601

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00:23:55,124--> 00:23:57,748

This is in March, and my
new book, The Treasures,

602

00:23:57,772--> 00:24:00,468

that one there,
wasn't out till June.

603

00:24:00,492--> 00:24:04,000

It's only just come out, and
that was on there already.

604

00:24:04,000--> 00:24:06,428

So, somehow they've got hold of...

605

00:24:06,452--> 00:24:08,908

If you're in any doubt,
like, that they're really evil,

606

00:24:08,932--> 00:24:11,708

somehow, and I still
can't work out how

607

00:24:11,732--> 00:24:13,000

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and Penguin can't work out how,

608

00:24:13,000--> 00:24:16,708

they've got hold

of the whole text.

609

00:24:16,732--> 00:24:20,068

And, you know, I don't know if people

saw The Bookseller headline today,

610

00:24:20,092--> 00:24:22,268

but, like, the head

of Nielsen Book Data

611

00:24:22,292--> 00:24:24,748

gave an interview saying

he thinks that by 2030,

612

00:24:24,772--> 00:24:27,748

the first AI bestseller will

have... will have appeared.

613

00:24:27,772--> 00:24:30,148

And we're looking at, you

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know, an extinction-level event.

614

00:24:30,172--> 00:24:32,000

There's a lot of conversations.

615

00:24:32,000--> 00:24:33,628

Sometimes I'm like...

616

00:24:33,652--> 00:24:36,588

This isn't a thing and
you all need to learn

617

00:24:36,612--> 00:24:38,200

to sort of, like, live
with each other's

618

00:24:38,224--> 00:24:41,548

differences in the
wider cultural discourse.

619

00:24:41,572--> 00:24:43,228

This.... This is a thing.

620

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00:24:43,252--> 00:24:44,988

You know, we have a union

621

00:24:45,012--> 00:24:47,188

and we need to
stand up for ourselves

622

00:24:47,212--> 00:24:49,508

and be able to advocate
as strongly as possible,

623

00:24:49,532--> 00:24:54,000

and it is really hard because we
are dealing with Meta, Amazon,

624

00:24:54,000--> 00:24:55,000

-The British government.

625

00:24:55,000--> 00:24:57,708

-Google, Microsoft, and
the British government,

626

00:24:57,732--> 00:25:00,000

who at the moment

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don't give a flying...

627

00:25:00,000--> 00:25:01,188

about it.

628

00:25:01,212--> 00:25:04,868

So, um, I would have

felt really depressed

629

00:25:04,892--> 00:25:07,668

and that they did an interview

with me in The Bookseller,

630

00:25:07,692--> 00:25:09,628

and the headline was

"Author's Despair!"

631

00:25:09,652--> 00:25:12,172

So my friends keep sending me

things saying, "Author's Despair!"

632

00:25:12,196--> 00:25:13,196

Um...

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633

00:25:13,220--> 00:25:16,028

But if I hadn't been
on the SoA committee,

634

00:25:16,052--> 00:25:18,500

I think I really genuinely
would have felt despair.

635

00:25:18,524--> 00:25:21,988

Because to be able to get up and
try and do something about it

636

00:25:22,012--> 00:25:26,348

at least means
you're.... you're trying

637

00:25:26,372--> 00:25:29,268

and it's something we're
all going to have to look at

638

00:25:29,292--> 00:25:31,228

with increasing urgency.

639

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00:25:31,252--> 00:25:33,000

And whoever

takes over, please...

640

00:25:33,000--> 00:25:35,000

Could you sort it

out? Thank you.

641

00:25:35,000--> 00:25:37,208

-Yeah, yeah. I mean, we're

doing huge work in that area.

642

00:25:37,232--> 00:25:38,708

You mentioned

going to Westminster.

643

00:25:38,732--> 00:25:42,268

We have been meeting with

MPs from all across the House.

644

00:25:42,292--> 00:25:46,000

We've got a policy team who

are working specifically on this.

645

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00:25:46,000--> 00:25:47,548

Um, so I think I do...

646

00:25:47,572--> 00:25:49,628

I mean, I feel when

we are moving forwards,

647

00:25:49,652--> 00:25:51,908

but it's... it is an

inordinate amount of time

648

00:25:51,932--> 00:25:53,828

that's being involved and, um,

649

00:25:53,852--> 00:25:55,676

that is involved, and, um...

650

00:25:55,700--> 00:25:58,308

Yeah, it's just, yeah, you just

have to keep going, don't you?

651

00:25:58,332--> 00:26:01,468

You have to keep moving forwards. We

have to keep moving forwards as a board.

#SoAatHome | Industry Insider – Why you should stand for the Board

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652

00:26:01,492--> 00:26:03,828

It's a really, really
serious area.

653

00:26:03,852--> 00:26:06,000

It's a really serious
area for our membership

654

00:26:06,000--> 00:26:10,108

which is key, so I think that's
the biggest point to make

655

00:26:10,132--> 00:26:12,228

for anybody who is thinking
about joining the board

656

00:26:12,252--> 00:26:15,148

is that we have a membership and
we are a membership organization,

657

00:26:15,172--> 00:26:17,000

and we represent all members.

#SoAatHome | Industry Insider – Why you should stand for the Board

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658

00:26:17,000--> 00:26:21,068

AI is a problem for all
members and we are...

659

00:26:21,092--> 00:26:22,708

You know, that's
why it's so serious.

660

00:26:22,732--> 00:26:26,508

And we're very much focused when we
are looking at the strategy moving forward

661

00:26:26,532--> 00:26:28,000

on the full membership.

662

00:26:28,000--> 00:26:31,348

Um, and that's... that's
just absolutely, um....

663

00:26:31,372--> 00:26:34,000

crucial to the whole...
the whole picture.

664

#SoAatHome | Industry Insider – Why you should stand for the Board

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00:26:34,000--> 00:26:36,708

Um, just in terms of...

665

00:26:36,732--> 00:26:38,348

Helen, do you want
to just run through...

666

00:26:38,372--> 00:26:40,508

You're, sort of...

You're London-based.

667

00:26:40,532--> 00:26:42,548

Harriet isn't. I'm
based in Dublin,

668

00:26:42,572--> 00:26:44,548

so I'm travelling
backwards and forwards.

669

00:26:44,572--> 00:26:47,548

Just to reassure anybody
who is thinking about joining,

670

00:26:47,572--> 00:26:49,000

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we cover expenses, don't we?

671

00:26:49,000--> 00:26:52,908

Um, uh, for, uh, for board
members. All board-- all board,

672

00:26:52,932--> 00:26:55,000

all expenses connected
to board meetings

673

00:26:55,000--> 00:26:56,000

we... we cover.

674

00:26:56,000--> 00:27:00,468

-Yes, I wanted to add that I'm
also a mum of two small children,

675

00:27:00,492--> 00:27:02,000

so, um...

676

00:27:02,000--> 00:27:04,308

Throw in the school
drop-offs and pick-ups,

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677

00:27:04,332--> 00:27:08,000

but it's the works, and the board
has been very open, and um....

678

00:27:08,000--> 00:27:09,548

As Vanessa mentioned earlier,

679

00:27:09,572--> 00:27:12,000

you can join remotely
or you can join in person.

680

00:27:12,000--> 00:27:14,948

-Yeah, we've got a great hybrid
system, haven't we? Yeah.

681

00:27:14,972--> 00:27:16,428

-Yeah, and that really works.

682

00:27:16,452--> 00:27:19,548

And when you're, you know, when
you're at home or somewhere else,

683

00:27:19,572--> 00:27:21,828

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not in the office,

not in the SoA office,

684

00:27:21,852--> 00:27:23,588

you don't feel that

you're not part of it.

685

00:27:23,612--> 00:27:25,908

So, um, you're very much

brought into the meeting,

686

00:27:25,932--> 00:27:27,668

so you don't feel that

you're missing out.

687

00:27:27,692--> 00:27:30,000

So I make it work and SoA also

688

00:27:30,000--> 00:27:31,868

helps me to make it work.

689

00:27:31,892--> 00:27:32,892

Um...

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690

00:27:32,916--> 00:27:35,268

And yeah, and we... we
do listen to each other

691

00:27:35,292--> 00:27:36,588

in terms of availability.

692

00:27:36,612--> 00:27:37,908

That's really, really important.

693

00:27:37,932--> 00:27:40,000

So, it does
take up a bit of time,

694

00:27:40,000--> 00:27:41,468

but I really
think it's worth it.

695

00:27:41,492--> 00:27:42,788

And I second Charles.

696

00:27:42,812--> 00:27:45,000

Sometimes you

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feel like, actually,

697

00:27:45,000--> 00:27:47,628

you'd be open to

giving more time,

698

00:27:47,652--> 00:27:49,588

because what we're

talking about is...

699

00:27:49,612--> 00:27:52,000

is so important, and

some of the issues are

700

00:27:52,000--> 00:27:54,348

important for every

single member,

701

00:27:54,372--> 00:27:55,988

every creator in the country.

702

00:27:56,012--> 00:27:59,268

And like Harrie said,

Harriet said, it's, um,

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703

00:27:59,292--> 00:28:01,788

extinction-level events

that are kind of happening,

704

00:28:01,812--> 00:28:03,000

so you feel really...

705

00:28:03,000--> 00:28:05,388

You feel really geared up

706

00:28:05,412--> 00:28:08,708

and you feel empowered to do

something and to do something now,

707

00:28:08,732--> 00:28:10,100

and I think that's why I thought

708

00:28:10,124--> 00:28:11,428

I'm gonna join the board.

709

00:28:11,452--> 00:28:14,268

Found two members at the party

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710

00:28:14,292--> 00:28:18,508

and took it forward, so
the time doesn't seem to...

711

00:28:18,532--> 00:28:21,000

It doesn't hinder, and
I... and it's a pleasure.

712

00:28:21,000--> 00:28:24,628

-Yeah, absolutely,
it's great to hear that.

713

00:28:24,652--> 00:28:27,292

And Charles, obviously a pleasure
for you, because you stood again.

714

00:28:27,316--> 00:28:29,108

So, the terms are
three years, aren't they?

715

00:28:29,132--> 00:28:31,000

And then, uh, with
a renewable 3 years.

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716

00:28:31,000--> 00:28:35,000

And you're in your second
lot of three at this point.

717

00:28:35,000--> 00:28:38,548

-Yes, um, a sort of fit
of madness, possibly,

718

00:28:38,572--> 00:28:42,108

But, um, yes, I was... I was
enjoying myself so much

719

00:28:42,132--> 00:28:44,000

I couldn't not stand again.

720

00:28:44,000--> 00:28:45,000

-Yeah, I think...

721

00:28:45,000--> 00:28:47,088

-And I had lots of things I
wanted to continue doing,

722

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00:28:47,112--> 00:28:50,000

and there's lots of things
ongoing that I want to...

723

00:28:50,000--> 00:28:51,108

I want to make work.

724

00:28:51,132--> 00:28:54,000

So, um, so that's,
you know, one reason why

725

00:28:54,000--> 00:28:58,000

I stood again and I'm very
pleased I got back in again.

726

00:28:58,000--> 00:28:59,828

-Yeah, no. I think
that's very important.

727

00:28:59,852--> 00:29:01,948

It's very important for a
board to have a mixture of

728

00:29:01,972--> 00:29:03,948

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new ideas and
freshness coming in,

729

00:29:03,972--> 00:29:07,000

and that experience for people
who are familiar with all the...

730

00:29:07,000--> 00:29:08,868

the various, the
ins and the outs.

731

00:29:08,892--> 00:29:10,828

You mentioned there
about the charities.

732

00:29:10,852--> 00:29:13,668

We run a whole bunch of
charities, as well as the SoA itself.

733

00:29:13,692--> 00:29:17,000

You know, we're trustees
of different charities

734

00:29:17,000--> 00:29:18,868

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and so that's a big factor too.

735

00:29:18,892--> 00:29:21,348

But I think it really is,
certainly from our point of view,

736

00:29:21,372--> 00:29:25,068

we're looking for key skills in
fundraising, in PR, in finance.

737

00:29:25,092--> 00:29:27,308

If anybody has a finance
background, we would...

738

00:29:27,332--> 00:29:29,628

We absolutely
encourage you to stand.

739

00:29:29,652--> 00:29:33,000

But you will get... you will
get a lot out of it as well.

740

00:29:33,000--> 00:29:35,348

Um, it... yeah, I

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just, I think it is...

741

00:29:35,372--> 00:29:37,548

It is that wonderful melting pot

742

00:29:37,572--> 00:29:41,468

of different sets of skills, different
ideas, and different challenges,

743

00:29:41,492--> 00:29:44,372

because every meeting, you don't
know what's going to come down the road.

744

00:29:44,396--> 00:29:47,100

You don't know whether it is AI
coming down the road, or if it's a...

745

00:29:47,124--> 00:29:48,748

a different challenge
for members.

746

00:29:48,772--> 00:29:52,000

We've been very involved
in a whole series of,

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747

00:29:52,000--> 00:29:55,628

you know, disputes. Our

Contracts department is incredible.

748

00:29:55,652--> 00:29:58,468

And a lot of people

watching might be familiar with

749

00:29:58,492--> 00:30:00,548

or have come into

the SoA through that,

750

00:30:00,572--> 00:30:03,000

through the Contracts advice.

751

00:30:03,000--> 00:30:05,348

And we... every single day,

752

00:30:05,372--> 00:30:07,768

we're making a difference to

people. In fact, there was a....

753

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00:30:07,792--> 00:30:10,828

I don't know if any of you have had
a chance to look at the board circular.

754

00:30:10,852--> 00:30:13,652

We get a board circular email every
week, which just gives us an update

755

00:30:13,676--> 00:30:15,796

of what's going on and
there was a really lovely quote

756

00:30:15,820--> 00:30:20,000

at the end of that that came out
yesterday about a member who had

757

00:30:20,000--> 00:30:22,108

joined and used
our tax helpline,

758

00:30:22,132--> 00:30:23,708

which is obviously
a member benefit,

759

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00:30:23,732--> 00:30:26,468

to help fix their tax problem.

760

00:30:26,492--> 00:30:27,788

They had a huge tax problem.

761

00:30:27,812--> 00:30:30,108

They thought they were
in debt to the tax office,

762

00:30:30,132--> 00:30:33,108

and were... and then
they said themselves,

763

00:30:33,132--> 00:30:37,000

as a working-class writer, they
were... it was hugely anxious time.

764

00:30:37,000--> 00:30:39,628

And in fact, H.W. Fisher,
who provide that helpline

765

00:30:39,652--> 00:30:41,908

for our members for free,

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766

00:30:41,932--> 00:30:44,148

were able to turn
everything around

767

00:30:44,172--> 00:30:46,108

and they've now had a
huge, massive tax rebate,

768

00:30:46,132--> 00:30:48,000

so they are
absolutely delighted.

769

00:30:48,000--> 00:30:52,148

And I think being on
the board, it's about...

770

00:30:52,172--> 00:30:53,668

it's about the
big picture stuff.

771

00:30:53,692--> 00:30:56,548

We work on the big, big
picture side in terms of strategy,

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772

00:30:56,572--> 00:31:01,000

but it... Absolutely, everything we do
has an impact at an individual level

773

00:31:01,000--> 00:31:03,108

and I think it's that
appreciation of the individual

774

00:31:03,132--> 00:31:05,000

that's really, really
important as well.

775

00:31:05,000--> 00:31:07,108

Charles, anything else for you?

776

00:31:07,132--> 00:31:09,108

Any other reasons
why you joined the board

777

00:31:09,132--> 00:31:12,000

or anything that
you want to add in?

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778

00:31:12,000--> 00:31:13,548

-Um...

779

00:31:13,572--> 00:31:17,000

I think I've covered

quite a lot there, huh?

780

00:31:17,000--> 00:31:19,928

-Yeah, I think the meetings format,

you come to most meetings, don't you?

781

00:31:19,952--> 00:31:21,152

Because you're London-based.

782

00:31:21,176--> 00:31:24,000

-Yes, I'm lucky in that I'm a

half-hour tube journey away.

783

00:31:24,000--> 00:31:26,028

Um, and... and if

you can make it...

784

00:31:26,052--> 00:31:28,348

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And a lot of people
come down from Scotland.

785

00:31:28,372--> 00:31:30,588

Um, and you come from Dublin.

786

00:31:30,612--> 00:31:34,748

So, um, I mean, which
is why we pay expenses.

787

00:31:34,772--> 00:31:36,000

I think

788

00:31:36,000--> 00:31:40,000

it's good to be there in person
if you can, but as Helen says,

789

00:31:40,000--> 00:31:42,788

we've structured
the hybrid meetings

790

00:31:42,812--> 00:31:45,068

so that even if
you're dialling in,

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791

00:31:45,092--> 00:31:47,000

which occasionally

I've had to do,

792

00:31:47,000--> 00:31:49,428

you do feel like you're

part of the meeting

793

00:31:49,452--> 00:31:52,000

and not just, like, an add-on.

794

00:31:52,000--> 00:31:53,988

-Yeah, absolutely. Yeah,

our governance training,

795

00:31:54,012--> 00:31:57,548

which is mandatory, is in January

every year and that is in person,

796

00:31:57,572--> 00:31:59,268

so we really want people--

797

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00:31:59,292--> 00:32:02,788

to encourage people to try and get to
at least one or two meetings themselves,

798

00:32:02,812--> 00:32:08,668

because as we all know, that
individual connection is just so important.

799

00:32:08,692--> 00:32:12,000

But I think the hybrid thing
works really, really well.

800

00:32:12,000--> 00:32:13,908

And actually, Harriet's...

801

00:32:13,932--> 00:32:16,028

You've joined from
trains, haven't you?

802

00:32:16,052--> 00:32:18,168

You were on a train once,
joining a meeting, so it's...

803

00:32:18,192--> 00:32:21,348

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We're very flexible,
um, and, um, we would...

804

00:32:21,372--> 00:32:24,828

We really want... we
want people to join.

805

00:32:24,852--> 00:32:26,148

We want that skill set

806

00:32:26,172--> 00:32:30,268

and we want to make it
as easy as possible for you.

807

00:32:30,292--> 00:32:32,000

You guys out there
who are thinking of--

808

00:32:32,000--> 00:32:34,308

-Can I just jump in about
governance training?

809

00:32:34,332--> 00:32:37,212

Because for a lot of people, that

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might sound like complete gobbledygook.

810

00:32:37,236--> 00:32:38,668

Or worse, off-putting.

811

00:32:38,692--> 00:32:39,692

-Yeah, absolutely.

812

00:32:39,716--> 00:32:41,516

-When I first heard

about governance training,

813

00:32:41,540--> 00:32:42,788

I thought it was almost like...

814

00:32:42,812--> 00:32:45,668

I mean, the three most scary letters

in the English language are AGM.

815

00:32:45,692--> 00:32:47,588

You know, I mean, I

thought, oh my god.

816

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00:32:47,612--> 00:32:50,000

You know, what's going to
go on here? And I've now done

817

00:32:50,000--> 00:32:52,148

two, maybe three, because
we do one every year now.

818

00:32:52,172--> 00:32:56,000

And it was fascinating.

819

00:32:56,000--> 00:32:57,628

Um, you know, you...

820

00:32:57,652--> 00:33:02,000

It's really learning how organizations
work, how people interact,

821

00:33:02,000--> 00:33:04,268

how to interact
with people better.

822

00:33:04,292--> 00:33:07,988

There was a lot of good stuff

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there that I wouldn't have expected.

823

00:33:08,012--> 00:33:11,000

So, it does sound a bit dry
and dusty, and it certainly isn't.

824

00:33:11,000--> 00:33:13,708

I found it, uh...

825

00:33:13,732--> 00:33:17,000

as I say, fascinating, and each one gave
something new and something different.

826

00:33:17,000--> 00:33:19,788

-Yeah. Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

827

00:33:19,812--> 00:33:23,000

Harriet, have you enjoyed the
governance training and found it useful?

828

00:33:23,000--> 00:33:26,068

-Hugely, but also it's
that thing of quite often

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829

00:33:26,092--> 00:33:27,948

things that you're

dreading a bit

830

00:33:27,972--> 00:33:31,000

turn out to be what

you most needed to do.

831

00:33:31,000--> 00:33:34,228

And much like that-- I

do, I live outside London

832

00:33:34,252--> 00:33:37,868

and I do make quite an effort

to make sure I'm at meetings.

833

00:33:37,892--> 00:33:40,428

The train was not great.

834

00:33:40,452--> 00:33:42,748

I wouldn't recommend

trying to dial in on a train.

835

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00:33:42,772--> 00:33:43,828

It was a nightmare.

836

00:33:43,852--> 00:33:45,828

But I do really try
and make an effort

837

00:33:45,852--> 00:33:47,628

and make sure I'm
there at those meetings,

838

00:33:47,652--> 00:33:52,000

because as you guys
have said, you know, it is...

839

00:33:52,000--> 00:33:55,428

really valuable sitting around
a table, sometimes disagreeing,

840

00:33:55,452--> 00:33:59,188

but seeing the
humanity of other people.

841

00:33:59,212--> 00:34:04,148

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And I think what online culture

842

00:34:04,172--> 00:34:06,988

sometimes lets us

do a bit too much

843

00:34:07,012--> 00:34:09,668

is agree with the people

we already agree with.

844

00:34:09,692--> 00:34:10,692

-Yes.

845

00:34:10,716--> 00:34:12,000

-And when you get on a train,

846

00:34:12,000--> 00:34:13,268

clear your diary...

847

00:34:13,292--> 00:34:14,908

My diary's not

all that busy, but...

848

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00:34:14,932--> 00:34:18,108

Um, and, um, you know,
go and sit in the room,

849

00:34:18,132--> 00:34:20,228

you are in the room
where it happens,

850

00:34:20,252--> 00:34:23,028

you know, and that's....
that's really important.

851

00:34:23,052--> 00:34:26,348

And the governance thing, again,
like Charles, I was like, what is this?

852

00:34:26,372--> 00:34:28,988

And Mo, who's done
it the last few times,

853

00:34:29,012--> 00:34:32,068

you sense you're part
of a bigger movement

854

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00:34:32,092--> 00:34:33,948

of people who are
giving up their time,

855

00:34:33,972--> 00:34:38,308

who are volunteers, who want to
make sure institutions and unions

856

00:34:38,332--> 00:34:42,000

that need to run well and
work for their members

857

00:34:42,000--> 00:34:43,948

do just that.

858

00:34:43,972--> 00:34:47,228

And it's really powerful and quite
moving idea that actually, like,

859

00:34:47,252--> 00:34:50,348

you're part of a bigger thing,

860

00:34:50,372--> 00:34:54,428

than you and your

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motives or your beliefs,

861

00:34:54,452--> 00:34:56,628

or whatever it

might be on that day.

862

00:34:56,652--> 00:35:00,000

And I... yeah, I really

appreciated that training.

863

00:35:00,000--> 00:35:01,148

-I love what Harriet...

864

00:35:01,172--> 00:35:04,000

Harriet, I love what you

said there, because I think

865

00:35:04,000--> 00:35:07,788

we do live in an

increasingly fractious society.

866

00:35:07,812--> 00:35:11,068

And I think a lot of what

we're doing at the Society,

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867

00:35:11,092--> 00:35:13,000

and the governance

training is a part of,

868

00:35:13,000--> 00:35:19,000

is trying to move towards

listening, understanding nuance,

869

00:35:19,000--> 00:35:21,908

understanding that we

can't agree with everybody.

870

00:35:21,932--> 00:35:24,000

We don't have to,

therefore, hate them.

871

00:35:24,000--> 00:35:26,748

You know, that we

can actually find a way

872

00:35:26,772--> 00:35:29,548

of working together,

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873

00:35:29,572--> 00:35:31,708

and generally we do.

874

00:35:31,732--> 00:35:34,068

Generally, we... even if
we have disagreements,

875

00:35:34,092--> 00:35:37,668

we find a way of working
together on an issue.

876

00:35:37,692--> 00:35:40,000

We, um....

877

00:35:40,000--> 00:35:43,000

You know, so, um, it's rare
that we get a particularly...

878

00:35:43,000--> 00:35:46,000

In fact, I can't remember a really
fractious vote or anything like that.

879

00:35:46,000--> 00:35:48,508

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You know, we look for consensus

880

00:35:48,532--> 00:35:52,000

and I think that governance
is a part of the whole thing.

881

00:35:52,000--> 00:35:53,000

-Yeah, yeah.

882

00:35:53,000--> 00:35:54,108

-Um, if I could...

883

00:35:54,132--> 00:35:56,308

What I've really enjoyed
and benefited from

884

00:35:56,332--> 00:35:58,468

is, um, the strategy.

885

00:35:58,492--> 00:36:01,788

For example, you might
think, oh, this might only affect

886

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00:36:01,812--> 00:36:04,000

a certain amount of people,

887

00:36:04,000--> 00:36:06,928

but what I love about the Society of
Authors, what I love about creatives,

888

00:36:06,952--> 00:36:09,000

is this... these are the
times when we shine.

889

00:36:09,000--> 00:36:11,548

You know, the
world's going to pots.

890

00:36:11,572--> 00:36:14,068

Where are the creatives? You
know, where are the writers?

891

00:36:14,092--> 00:36:15,628

Where are the...
where are the artists?

892

00:36:15,652--> 00:36:20,948

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And I think celebrating,
holding, and protecting

893

00:36:20,972--> 00:36:24,228

whatever it is that allows
us to do what we do...

894

00:36:24,252--> 00:36:26,268

Yes, I am incredibly idealistic,

895

00:36:26,292--> 00:36:27,988

because I do think what we do

896

00:36:28,012--> 00:36:30,428

and what the arts do is
makes the world better.

897

00:36:30,452--> 00:36:34,000

It makes the experience
better for everyone.

898

00:36:34,000--> 00:36:36,308

So, it's in my vested
interest as a human being

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899

00:36:36,332--> 00:36:40,000

to protect those and the
world where this is created.

900

00:36:40,000--> 00:36:42,068

Otherwise, it's just...

901

00:36:42,092--> 00:36:45,000

It's just a more...

902

00:36:45,000--> 00:36:50,428

scary, horrible, confusing,
boring, bland world.

903

00:36:50,452--> 00:36:52,000

So I'm...

904

00:36:52,000--> 00:36:55,508

I'm gaining something
every time we have a meeting,

905

00:36:55,532--> 00:36:58,508

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every time we think

this is affecting someone.

906

00:36:58,532--> 00:37:00,972

It could be... it could be someone
having a particular problem,

907

00:37:00,996--> 00:37:02,000

but there's a strategy

908

00:37:02,000--> 00:37:04,468

that goes into
creating an ecosystem

909

00:37:04,492--> 00:37:07,868

where that person and all
of us really are protected.

910

00:37:07,892--> 00:37:10,508

So I love learning about that
and seeing the big picture,

911

00:37:10,532--> 00:37:12,308

and really seeing

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how certain decisions,

912

00:37:12,332--> 00:37:14,068

being in the room,

as Harrie says,

913

00:37:14,092--> 00:37:15,468

having your voice heard,

914

00:37:15,492--> 00:37:19,000

is so important and it's really
inspiring and it's empowering

915

00:37:19,000--> 00:37:21,868

to protect this amazing

916

00:37:21,892--> 00:37:25,000

and also fragile,
creative thing that we do.

917

00:37:25,000--> 00:37:27,428

So that's what I
get from it, and um...

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918

00:37:27,452--> 00:37:30,468

I... Yeah, I just want to say,
sometimes it might seem,

919

00:37:30,492--> 00:37:33,588

oh, this is such an
established institution,

920

00:37:33,612--> 00:37:35,000

is there a space
for a new voice?

921

00:37:35,000--> 00:37:36,708

There absolutely is.

922

00:37:36,732--> 00:37:38,000

There absolutely is.

923

00:37:38,000--> 00:37:39,628

-And there has to be.

924

00:37:39,652--> 00:37:42,408

-I mean, and that's... that's

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really... that's so beautifully put, Helen.

925

00:37:42,432--> 00:37:43,788

Really, really well said.

926

00:37:43,812--> 00:37:46,212

But that said, the new voices,
there is space for new voices,

927

00:37:46,236--> 00:37:48,948

because it's vitally important
that we have those new voices

928

00:37:48,972--> 00:37:51,948

in order to ensure
that the institution

929

00:37:51,972--> 00:37:55,828

remains current, remains reflective
of the creatives that are out there.

930

00:37:55,852--> 00:37:58,308

And so those new
voices at all ages,

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931

00:37:58,332--> 00:38:01,000

you know, we really want

932

00:38:01,000--> 00:38:03,548

those voices. We need them

933

00:38:03,572--> 00:38:07,188

in order to help

us move forwards

934

00:38:07,212--> 00:38:09,188

and help us strategise.

935

00:38:09,212--> 00:38:11,000

Um, Helen... Uh, Harriet, sorry.

936

00:38:11,000--> 00:38:13,708

-That I just wanted to

jump in on that as well,

937

00:38:13,732--> 00:38:16,148

which is one of the things

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when the SoA gets a report,

938

00:38:16,172--> 00:38:17,348

there's two strands.

939

00:38:17,372--> 00:38:19,228

There's when the SoA

gets reported in the press

940

00:38:19,252--> 00:38:20,908

or when people talk about it,

941

00:38:20,932--> 00:38:22,188

that I sometimes want to go...

942

00:38:22,212--> 00:38:23,748

That's... that's...

you've got that wrong.

943

00:38:23,772--> 00:38:25,668

It's the idea that the

board is a monolith.

944

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00:38:25,692--> 00:38:27,388

We talk about this in
meetings quite long.

945

00:38:27,412--> 00:38:29,908

The idea that we're just a group
who all agree with each other,

946

00:38:29,932--> 00:38:31,082

who are sitting in judgment.

947

00:38:31,106--> 00:38:33,588

I was voted in by members,
I take that really seriously.

948

00:38:33,612--> 00:38:36,508

I don't get on with all the board
members, we're not all best friends.

949

00:38:36,532--> 00:38:38,988

I don't agree with quite
a lot of things people say.

950

00:38:39,012--> 00:38:41,388

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That's the point of
being on a board,

951

00:38:41,412--> 00:38:44,828

and governance training is
to help you work through that.

952

00:38:44,852--> 00:38:46,668

So this idea that we
all gather together

953

00:38:46,692--> 00:38:48,228

like something out
of Lord of the Rings

954

00:38:48,252--> 00:38:50,188

and issue an edict
is totally wrong.

955

00:38:50,212--> 00:38:51,668

It actually... it takes process.

956

00:38:51,692--> 00:38:54,028

It takes a lot of

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working through stuff.

957

00:38:54,052--> 00:38:56,328

The other thing, and we
haven't talked about this at all,

958

00:38:56,352--> 00:38:57,868

is when I joined the board,

959

00:38:57,892--> 00:39:00,600

I was like, oh yeah, I'm on the
board now, so, like, we're the SoA.

960

00:39:00,624--> 00:39:03,628

We are the management
committee representing members.

961

00:39:03,652--> 00:39:07,000

The real work is done
by the incredible staff.

962

00:39:07,000--> 00:39:08,000

-Oh, yeah.

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963

00:39:08,000--> 00:39:09,548

-They are insanely great.

964

00:39:09,572--> 00:39:11,908

They put up with
quite a lot sometimes.

965

00:39:11,932--> 00:39:14,268

They are the ones
planning out campaigns,

966

00:39:14,292--> 00:39:18,708

talking to members,
generating, like, coverage.

967

00:39:18,732--> 00:39:22,148

They are doing so much
important, actual work.

968

00:39:22,172--> 00:39:23,668

It's a bit like civil service.

969

00:39:23,692--> 00:39:25,068

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And they are the ones who,

970

00:39:25,092--> 00:39:28,000

I think sometimes in this...

971

00:39:28,000--> 00:39:29,388

That's the one
thing I'd say, like,

972

00:39:29,412--> 00:39:31,868

really look at what
the staff is doing

973

00:39:31,892--> 00:39:33,628

because that is
incredibly helpful.

974

00:39:33,652--> 00:39:37,268

We... We come in and are asked
to make decisions and discuss,

975

00:39:37,292--> 00:39:40,108

but actually, it's the people
who are there every single day

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976

00:39:40,132--> 00:39:42,000

who are employed by

977

00:39:42,000--> 00:39:43,000

the union to do that.

978

00:39:43,000--> 00:39:45,708

-Absolutely, they're at the
sharp end, and they're a very...

979

00:39:45,732--> 00:39:47,548

They're quite a
small, tight team,

980

00:39:47,572--> 00:39:50,548

and they are enormously skilled,

981

00:39:50,572--> 00:39:52,588

absolutely Harriet couldn't
agree with you more.

982

00:39:52,612--> 00:39:54,348

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We... we... I mean, our
job is very much this...

983

00:39:54,372--> 00:39:57,000

it's the strategy, it's the overview,
that's what the board does.

984

00:39:57,000--> 00:39:59,548

The day-to-day
stuff is, um, is....

985

00:39:59,572--> 00:40:01,988

run by an amazing team.

986

00:40:02,012--> 00:40:03,948

Now, perfect time
to go to questions.

987

00:40:03,972--> 00:40:06,108

I think we have
some in the Q&A box.

988

00:40:06,132--> 00:40:08,148

Harriet, can you see those?

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989

00:40:10,132--> 00:40:12,000

-Yep. Shall I start from the...

990

00:40:12,000--> 00:40:13,988

-Read them out, yeah, and then...

991

00:40:14,012--> 00:40:17,868

Okay, "to follow up Vanessa's point, what is the time commitment?"

992

00:40:17,892--> 00:40:20,748

For me, to answer that, I'm not going to answer them all, do I?

993

00:40:20,772--> 00:40:23,668

Um, I'd say it's...

that's unanswerable.

994

00:40:23,692--> 00:40:28,000

It is as much or as

little time as you, um...

995

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00:40:28,000--> 00:40:31,000

what's put into it. But

if I had to break it down,

996

00:40:31,000--> 00:40:34,000

and this is very rough, I

would say it's probably half

997

00:40:34,000--> 00:40:36,268

a morning out of 5 days.

998

00:40:36,292--> 00:40:39,028

So sometimes I'm

spending loads of time on it,

999

00:40:39,052--> 00:40:41,228

sometimes I'm taking

up all day at meetings,

1000

00:40:41,252--> 00:40:43,000

sometimes...

1001

00:40:43,000--> 00:40:46,908

a week will go by and I

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don't do anything on the SoA.

1002

00:40:46,932--> 00:40:49,000

But I would say it's

half... half a morning.

1003

00:40:49,000--> 00:40:51,508

-Yeah, so our meetings...

and our meetings...

1004

00:40:51,532--> 00:40:55,000

Yeah, our meetings are 3 hours

each, um, and they happen...

1005

00:40:55,000--> 00:40:57,508

There's 6 meetings. I

always say there's four.

1006

00:40:57,532--> 00:40:59,608

I don't know where I've

got that idea in my... anyway.

1007

00:40:59,632--> 00:41:02,628

6 meetings a year and it takes

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about 3 to 4 hours, probably,

1008

00:41:02,652--> 00:41:04,308

to read the board

papers beforehand,

1009

00:41:04,332--> 00:41:07,108

because there is a substantial

amount of paperwork beforehand to read

1010

00:41:07,132--> 00:41:09,228

which is sort of all the

updates and bits and pieces

1011

00:41:09,252--> 00:41:11,388

so that you're well informed

going into that meeting,

1012

00:41:11,412--> 00:41:13,000

and that time is

very, very important.

1013

00:41:13,000--> 00:41:14,348

If you're on a subcommittee,

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1014

00:41:14,372--> 00:41:17,708

then there will be extra time
where subcommittees are meeting,

1015

00:41:17,732--> 00:41:19,200

and again, there's
more papers there.

1016

00:41:19,224--> 00:41:21,428

Um, so, um, yeah, so I, yeah...

1017

00:41:21,452--> 00:41:24,000

I think half a day a
week probably is about...

1018

00:41:24,000--> 00:41:25,988

You know, sometimes
when something's going...

1019

00:41:26,012--> 00:41:29,188

big's happening, um,
then it can be more chaotic.

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1020

00:41:29,212--> 00:41:31,348

So, Charles and Helen,
same type of thing?

1021

00:41:31,372--> 00:41:33,548

-I was just going to clarify
that the paper situation.

1022

00:41:33,572--> 00:41:36,508

It sounds a bit like, you know, you
get a whole load of papers immediately

1023

00:41:36,532--> 00:41:37,668

before the board meeting.

1024

00:41:37,692--> 00:41:43,000

Um, you get a... you get
papers online to read, sorted out

1025

00:41:43,000--> 00:41:45,300

about... I mean, about a week
beforehand, 7 days beforehand.

1026

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00:41:45,324--> 00:41:47,888

-7 days. Yeah, seven days before
is what we're aiming for, yeah.

1027

00:41:47,912--> 00:41:50,548

So you have time, you know,
to relax and read properly

1028

00:41:50,572--> 00:41:53,088

and work out what you... what
you think or what you don't think,

1029

00:41:53,112--> 00:41:55,000

or what you need
questions answered.

1030

00:41:55,000--> 00:41:56,000

-Yeah, absolutely.

1031

00:41:56,000--> 00:41:57,988

-And actually, there's two
questions further down,

1032

00:41:58,012--> 00:42:01,148

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which I think link into this, and
one is from Anthony Capildeo

1033

00:42:01,172--> 00:42:04,628

and the other is from
Alycia Pirmohamed,

1034

00:42:04,652--> 00:42:07,228

which is about that
time commitment,

1035

00:42:07,252--> 00:42:08,988

which I hope that's
answered a little bit.

1036

00:42:09,012--> 00:42:11,548

Like, for me, it's
like I say, I plan out.

1037

00:42:11,572--> 00:42:13,068

I try and plan out my week,

1038

00:42:13,092--> 00:42:14,868

but it's also about

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having that looseness.

1039

00:42:14,892--> 00:42:16,000

Just thinking, right,

1040

00:42:16,000--> 00:42:18,988

I'm gonna take the

time as I need to,

1041

00:42:19,012--> 00:42:22,188

but it's also, when you put

yourself in a different space,

1042

00:42:22,212--> 00:42:25,228

it's actually quite useful,

often it sparks off things

1043

00:42:25,252--> 00:42:27,708

you didn't realize

it was going to do.

1044

00:42:27,732--> 00:42:31,388

And as for how a board

meeting works, you get...

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1045

00:42:31,412--> 00:42:33,528

I wondered about this
before, but I'd been on a board

1046

00:42:33,552--> 00:42:34,988

of my previous
publishing company.

1047

00:42:35,012--> 00:42:38,348

You get minutes and you just
go through the minutes, so...

1048

00:42:38,372--> 00:42:41,548

and then there are
links in that document

1049

00:42:41,572--> 00:42:43,581

to all of the papers you'll
need for the minutes.

1050

00:42:43,605--> 00:42:45,788

But as I often say, like,

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1051

00:42:45,812--> 00:42:48,268

when I'm doing creative
writing tutorials or whatever,

1052

00:42:48,292--> 00:42:50,400

you know when something's
new, you're just like, ahh!

1053

00:42:50,424--> 00:42:52,788

Um, when a novel's
going bad, you're like, ahh!

1054

00:42:52,812--> 00:42:56,028

Just hold that space, just
be like, I don't understand this,

1055

00:42:56,052--> 00:42:58,068

I'm just gonna go over,
re-read it, you know.

1056

00:42:58,092--> 00:42:59,092

-Yeah, or ask.

1057

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00:42:59,116--> 00:43:02,500

-It's... it's a lot of different information,
but I don't know if others have found...

1058

00:43:02,524--> 00:43:03,908

Have found that.

1059

00:43:03,932--> 00:43:05,388

Also, Alycia I think it was,

1060

00:43:05,412--> 00:43:08,000

there's breaks, and there's
really, really nice biscuits.

1061

00:43:08,000--> 00:43:10,148

[laughter]

1062

00:43:10,172--> 00:43:11,508

-And sometimes even more.

1063

00:43:11,532--> 00:43:12,532

-Indeed. Fruit, also.

1064

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00:43:12,556--> 00:43:16,228

-I mean, I like your creative
writing analogy there, Harrie,

1065

00:43:16,252--> 00:43:19,000

because it is very
similar in a way.

1066

00:43:19,000--> 00:43:22,348

Um, I, you know, just
basically one sentence at a time.

1067

00:43:22,372--> 00:43:24,388

You know, you look
at the pile of papers,

1068

00:43:24,412--> 00:43:26,276

but you just go, okay,
I'll look at the first,

1069

00:43:26,300--> 00:43:27,948

I don't need to think
about all the rest.

1070

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00:43:27,972--> 00:43:30,300

Then I'll look at the second,
then I'll look at the third

1071

00:43:30,324--> 00:43:33,000

and you take one at a
time, slicing the sausage.

1072

00:43:33,000--> 00:43:36,000

-Yeah, I think... I agree.

My approach is to, kind of,

1073

00:43:36,000--> 00:43:37,828

have a look at it all.

1074

00:43:37,852--> 00:43:42,000

And, literally, we'll
just maybe dedicate

1075

00:43:42,000--> 00:43:43,788

a couple of pages
for the first 15 minutes,

1076

00:43:43,812--> 00:43:45,000

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then do nothing

1077

00:43:45,000--> 00:43:49,000

and wait till the next

day, and then read it all.

1078

00:43:49,000--> 00:43:51,668

And then, doing nothing

again, and then read it all again.

1079

00:43:51,692--> 00:43:52,828

And then it makes sense.

1080

00:43:52,852--> 00:43:54,408

So I'm just giving

myself the time.

1081

00:43:54,432--> 00:43:56,308

And you do feel that

you have time to do that.

1082

00:43:56,332--> 00:43:58,400

And if you don't understand,

if I don't understand,

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1083

00:43:58,424--> 00:44:00,953

there are a number of people
on the board that I can...

1084

00:44:00,977--> 00:44:03,000

that I can refer to.

1085

00:44:03,000--> 00:44:04,748

-Exactly. No silly questions.

1086

00:44:04,772--> 00:44:05,872

No, I think that's really...

1087

00:44:05,896--> 00:44:08,288

I mean, from my point of view,
from a chair's point of view,

1088

00:44:08,312--> 00:44:11,748

it's really, really important that we
have all the board at every meeting.

1089

00:44:11,772--> 00:44:13,128

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I mean, that's really important.

1090

00:44:13,152--> 00:44:16,000

Skipping board meetings, unless
there's obviously something really

1091

00:44:16,000--> 00:44:17,988

terrible on, something
has happened to you,

1092

00:44:18,012--> 00:44:20,228

then, um, we... we really,
really encourage people

1093

00:44:20,252--> 00:44:21,828

to try and come to
all board meetings.

1094

00:44:21,852--> 00:44:24,028

We let you know the
dates a year in advance.

1095

00:44:24,052--> 00:44:26,348

I'm telling you now, the

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governance training's in January,

1096

00:44:26,372--> 00:44:27,668

so if anybody is signing up,

1097

00:44:27,692--> 00:44:30,000

that's when we absolutely

need you in the room.

1098

00:44:30,000--> 00:44:32,708

Um, and, um, so

there's lots of notice,

1099

00:44:32,732--> 00:44:35,628

so you can plan your time

and plan your life around it.

1100

00:44:35,652--> 00:44:37,972

Obviously, if something does

blow up, if something happens,

1101

00:44:37,996--> 00:44:41,068

if the, say, the AI, something

changes with the AI bill

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1102

00:44:41,092--> 00:44:42,508

and we all need
to get together, we...

1103

00:44:42,532--> 00:44:44,200

we sometimes would
have an online meeting

1104

00:44:44,224--> 00:44:45,988

and we try and bring
everybody together,

1105

00:44:46,012--> 00:44:47,788

so those can be
a bit unscheduled.

1106

00:44:47,812--> 00:44:50,668

But, um, but those are, those
are the key things, I think.

1107

00:44:50,692--> 00:44:53,348

-Um, you can be even more...
a little bit more specific, I think,

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1108

00:44:53,372--> 00:44:56,000

because in general,
not every single month,

1109

00:44:56,000--> 00:44:57,388

we meet on the odd months.

1110

00:44:57,412--> 00:44:59,548

So January, March, and so forth.

1111

00:44:59,572--> 00:45:00,572

-Yes.

1112

00:45:00,596--> 00:45:02,748

-Usually third Thursday.

1113

00:45:02,772--> 00:45:06,028

So, you know, um,
and I don't know.

1114

00:45:06,052--> 00:45:10,000

Are the meeting of dates available

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for people who are interested?

1115

00:45:10,000--> 00:45:11,200

Can they, can they get them?

1116

00:45:11,224--> 00:45:13,704

-Yeah, they should... they'll be
in the board. Yeah, we've board,

1117

00:45:13,728--> 00:45:16,928

we've had a director's... Um, information
on directors, being a director that

1118

00:45:16,952--> 00:45:18,512

we're going to be
sending out to people.

1119

00:45:18,536--> 00:45:21,000

Anybody who is interested
in applying, do ask for that.

1120

00:45:21,000--> 00:45:23,508

And I'll make sure the dates
are in that so that you can check

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1121

00:45:23,532--> 00:45:25,628

that you're going to be
available well in advance.

1122

00:45:25,652--> 00:45:28,208

It just means that you can--
Obviously, we all have emergencies.

1123

00:45:28,232--> 00:45:29,348

We all have things happen,

1124

00:45:29,372--> 00:45:31,548

but it means then you can
arrange your life around it,

1125

00:45:31,572--> 00:45:34,308

because, really, being a member
of the Board of Society of Authors

1126

00:45:34,332--> 00:45:35,828

is super important.

1127

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00:45:35,852--> 00:45:37,548

We have got a lot of members,

1128

00:45:37,572--> 00:45:39,188

we've got a lot of
issues to deal with,

1129

00:45:39,212--> 00:45:42,000

and it is, um...

1130

00:45:42,000--> 00:45:43,948

It's just something
to take very seriously.

1131

00:45:43,972--> 00:45:46,628

So, um, yeah, we do
encourage people to take that.

1132

00:45:46,652--> 00:45:48,000

If you are standing,

1133

00:45:48,000--> 00:45:49,148

fantastic.

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1134

00:45:49,172--> 00:45:51,388

We're delighted and we
want, you know, it to serve you

1135

00:45:51,412--> 00:45:52,948

as much as you can serve us,

1136

00:45:52,972--> 00:45:55,508

but it's really important to
take that commitment seriously

1137

00:45:55,532--> 00:45:59,000

and we need to make sure that
you can attend and give that time.

1138

00:45:59,000--> 00:46:01,148

-Yeah, it is very important.

1139

00:46:01,172--> 00:46:03,328

Can I just very quickly say
there's also quid pro quo.

1140

00:46:03,352--> 00:46:05,100

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You get invited to
lots of fun things, too.

1141

00:46:05,124--> 00:46:07,268

So, like we mentioned,
Westminster.

1142

00:46:07,292--> 00:46:10,108

You know, the award ceremonies.

1143

00:46:10,132--> 00:46:15,000

There's lots of interesting
things that come up.

1144

00:46:15,000--> 00:46:16,708

-Exactly, extra to that.

1145

00:46:16,732--> 00:46:18,300

How are we doing
on questions, Harrie?

1146

00:46:18,324--> 00:46:21,108

-Um, Morgen Witzel says,

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1147

00:46:21,132--> 00:46:24,308

"how similar is the role to that of a trustee or non-executive director?"

1148

00:46:24,332--> 00:46:26,988

These roles would typically involve oversight and scrutiny,

1149

00:46:27,012--> 00:46:28,888

but it sounds like Management Committee members

1150

00:46:28,912--> 00:46:31,000

get a bit more hands-on. Is that correct?"

1151

00:46:31,000--> 00:46:32,000

Great question, Morgen.

1152

00:46:32,000--> 00:46:34,588

-No, yeah, very good question. No, it would be much more...

1153

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00:46:34,612--> 00:46:37,028

I think we are quite hands-on

1154

00:46:37,052--> 00:46:39,228

in the fact that we get
involved in different issues,

1155

00:46:39,252--> 00:46:41,188

but not hands-on from
an executive point of view.

1156

00:46:41,212--> 00:46:43,000

So it's very much

1157

00:46:43,000--> 00:46:46,828

a strategic role, much
more like a trustee would be,

1158

00:46:46,852--> 00:46:48,468

but we are getting
into the nitty-gritty,

1159

00:46:48,492--> 00:46:51,000

because in order to do the...

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1160

00:46:51,000--> 00:46:52,568

to do the right thing

for our members,

1161

00:46:52,592--> 00:46:55,672

we have to be asking lots of questions

and get into the nitty-gritty of things

1162

00:46:55,696--> 00:46:57,000

like investments and, um...

1163

00:46:57,000--> 00:47:00,308

the way things work,

things move forward.

1164

00:47:00,332--> 00:47:04,308

And we are, um, sort of,

as I mentioned at the start,

1165

00:47:04,332--> 00:47:06,388

we're bringing in

lots of new things.

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1166

00:47:06,412--> 00:47:08,588

We're trying to... obviously,
I'm new, I'm a new chair,

1167

00:47:08,612--> 00:47:10,948

we've got a new CEO,
and so we are, um...

1168

00:47:10,972--> 00:47:12,708

There's a few things
that we're streamlining

1169

00:47:12,732--> 00:47:14,988

and, um, and bringing
things forwards.

1170

00:47:15,012--> 00:47:18,000

But certainly, Morgen,
um, it would be very much

1171

00:47:18,000--> 00:47:21,628

similar to the type of roles that I think,
I'm guessing you have played in the past.

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1172

00:47:21,652--> 00:47:24,348

And it's very much

like a trustee role,

1173

00:47:24,372--> 00:47:26,000

but we... we do take it, um...

1174

00:47:26,000--> 00:47:27,868

We take it very seriously.

1175

00:47:27,892--> 00:47:30,508

I mean, it's a very serious

thing to be on the board,

1176

00:47:30,532--> 00:47:32,000

because it's... We have...

1177

00:47:32,000--> 00:47:35,388

We were responsible for

the direction of the Society

1178

00:47:35,412--> 00:47:41,000

and the Society has a

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big voice, you know, in

1179

00:47:41,000--> 00:47:42,348

the various arenas.

1180

00:47:42,372--> 00:47:44,788

We're very involved in, um, in

1181

00:47:44,812--> 00:47:47,000

the whole government,

Westminster,

1182

00:47:47,000--> 00:47:49,348

discussions that are

going on at the moment.

1183

00:47:49,372--> 00:47:52,588

We're trying to make sure that

we're core to the various lawsuits

1184

00:47:52,612--> 00:47:54,708

that people are discussing

in various places.

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1185

00:47:54,732--> 00:47:58,000

So, um, we're very much
in the middle of things.

1186

00:47:58,000--> 00:47:59,908

-And we're legally
responsible as well.

1187

00:47:59,932--> 00:48:02,782

-Absolutely. Oh, God, that's so
important, actually. Thank you, Harriet.

1188

00:48:02,806--> 00:48:04,428

-Yeah, you have to
sign a piece of paper

1189

00:48:04,452--> 00:48:06,348

as a director, saying, like,

1190

00:48:06,372--> 00:48:09,388

if you're in dereliction
of your fiduciary duties

1191

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00:48:09,412--> 00:48:11,000

then you're, you know, um...

1192

00:48:11,000--> 00:48:13,410

governance duties, then you
can be legally liable for things.

1193

00:48:13,434--> 00:48:17,588

So it's... it's serious,
but that doesn't mean

1194

00:48:17,612--> 00:48:20,628

you have to have expert
knowledge and all of that to apply,

1195

00:48:20,652--> 00:48:22,028

and that's a really key thing.

1196

00:48:22,052--> 00:48:24,188

Like, if only people who
think they can do it do it,

1197

00:48:24,212--> 00:48:27,000

then you end up with a...

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1198

00:48:27,000--> 00:48:30,088

A boardroom of people who
don't have the wide experience

1199

00:48:30,112--> 00:48:31,400

that we need from
our membership.

1200

00:48:32,000--> 00:48:33,900

-Yeah, a particular age
group or whatever. Yeah.

1201

00:48:33,924--> 00:48:36,724

Yeah, no, we want everybody,
because we want all those different voices

1202

00:48:36,748--> 00:48:38,668

and we want those
different thoughts as well.

1203

00:48:38,692--> 00:48:42,308

So, but yeah, no, um, that you
are a legally responsible as director

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1204

00:48:42,332--> 00:48:44,388

and there is, um,
as well, there is

1205

00:48:44,412--> 00:48:47,000

a very strict code of
confidentiality around meetings

1206

00:48:47,000--> 00:48:49,268

and what's going
on in those meetings.

1207

00:48:49,292--> 00:48:51,188

And that's really important
to observe as well.

1208

00:48:51,212--> 00:48:55,000

So, we are... we will help you and
explain all of those, what those...

1209

00:48:55,000--> 00:48:56,000

those things mean,

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1210

00:48:56,024--> 00:48:58,148

you know, if you're
interested in standing.

1211

00:48:58,172--> 00:48:59,868

So, how are we doing?

1212

00:48:59,892--> 00:49:01,000

Anything else?

1213

00:49:01,000--> 00:49:03,948

-Um, "is it a 3-year term
that you must stand for?

1214

00:49:03,972--> 00:49:07,628

I'm a relatively new published
debut author", congratulations.

1215

00:49:07,652--> 00:49:10,588

"Would I be just as eligible to
stand as someone more experienced?

1216

00:49:10,612--> 00:49:12,948

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Is there any criterion

to stand for the board?"

1217

00:49:12,972--> 00:49:14,348

Yes, it's a three-year term.

1218

00:49:14,372--> 00:49:18,000

I don't know if anyone else

wants to speak to the rest of that

1219

00:49:18,000--> 00:49:19,000

very good question.

1220

00:49:19,000--> 00:49:20,068

-Three-year renewable

1221

00:49:20,092--> 00:49:22,988

and you have as much experience

and as valuable experience

1222

00:49:23,012--> 00:49:25,148

in being a new author

1223

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00:49:25,172--> 00:49:28,000

and your own life

experience as anybody else.

1224

00:49:28,000--> 00:49:30,588

Um, so yeah, we don't

need you to have been a,

1225

00:49:30,612--> 00:49:34,000

you know, managing

director of Morgan Stanley or

1226

00:49:34,000--> 00:49:35,948

Pricewaterhouse in order

to stand for the board.

1227

00:49:35,972--> 00:49:37,948

Um, and, you know,

an author on the side.

1228

00:49:37,972--> 00:49:41,028

We want... we absolutely

need your... your experience.

1229

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00:49:41,052--> 00:49:43,708

I mean, Helen, you'll probably
speak to this, um, as well,

1230

00:49:43,732--> 00:49:45,932

because you came from a
completely different background,

1231

00:49:45,956--> 00:49:47,988

and, um, yeah.

1232

00:49:48,012--> 00:49:49,868

We're all... we all... we need that,

1233

00:49:49,892--> 00:49:52,000

and actually having
newer authors

1234

00:49:52,000--> 00:49:54,548

in the mix for the
Society, for the board,

1235

00:49:54,572--> 00:49:58,000

it's really valuable, because

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your experience is very current.

1236

00:49:58,000--> 00:50:00,228

And, uh, we were

all first-time authors,

1237

00:50:00,252--> 00:50:02,000

I was certainly a

first-time author

1238

00:50:02,000--> 00:50:04,788

in 2016, can't even

remember how long ago.

1239

00:50:04,812--> 00:50:06,108

How many years ago that was now.

1240

00:50:06,132--> 00:50:08,228

A lot... a while ago, you

know, and so that... that...

1241

00:50:08,252--> 00:50:11,000

What's happening now

and what your experience is

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1242

00:50:11,000--> 00:50:13,228

coming into the industry

1243

00:50:13,252--> 00:50:15,388

and your perceptions of
what you're seeing around you,

1244

00:50:15,412--> 00:50:18,028

and the things that are happening
to you are absolutely important

1245

00:50:18,052--> 00:50:19,300

and we need to hear those too.

1246

00:50:19,324--> 00:50:20,900

Um, so Helena,
anything to add to that?

1247

00:50:20,924--> 00:50:27,000

-Yeah, I just wanted to share
how new I was to all of this.

1248

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00:50:27,000--> 00:50:30,000

When I... when I said I
would stand for the board,

1249

00:50:30,000--> 00:50:32,348

I... I didn't necessarily
even know

1250

00:50:32,372--> 00:50:34,788

who to speak to,
who to ask for support,

1251

00:50:34,812--> 00:50:37,388

but there was a
really fair system.

1252

00:50:37,412--> 00:50:39,000

I think you share
in a statement

1253

00:50:39,000--> 00:50:42,068

what you hope to offer,
what your experience is,

1254

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00:50:42,092--> 00:50:43,548

and it goes out to
the membership.

1255

00:50:43,572--> 00:50:45,628

And to be honest,
nobody knew who I was.

1256

00:50:45,652--> 00:50:47,000

There was nobody.

1257

00:50:47,000--> 00:50:49,308

So there was no
reason for me to think

1258

00:50:49,332--> 00:50:50,668

that I would be elected.

1259

00:50:50,692--> 00:50:52,668

And when I say none,
I mean zero.

1260

00:50:52,692--> 00:50:55,228

However, it was a really...

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1261

00:50:55,252--> 00:50:57,548

It was, I don't know,
call it a campaign,

1262

00:50:57,572--> 00:50:59,000

because I didn't run one per se.

1263

00:50:59,000--> 00:51:01,908

I just put it all out, um...

1264

00:51:01,932--> 00:51:04,068

And then I got
elected to the board,

1265

00:51:04,092--> 00:51:07,588

and that inspired me even
further about the openness

1266

00:51:07,612--> 00:51:10,628

of the membership
and the processes.

1267

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00:51:10,652--> 00:51:13,868

No organization

is perfect, but, um...

1268

00:51:13,892--> 00:51:15,708

But from my experience,

1269

00:51:15,732--> 00:51:19,000

I've had a really positive
experience in wanting to apply

1270

00:51:19,000--> 00:51:21,908

and actually being
voted onto the board.

1271

00:51:21,932--> 00:51:25,000

And it is really serious and
I do take the responsibility

1272

00:51:25,000--> 00:51:26,548

very seriously.

1273

00:51:26,572--> 00:51:30,000

But, um, also, there's a

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lot of openness and I think

1274

00:51:30,000--> 00:51:32,108

it can be really enjoyable,

1275

00:51:32,132--> 00:51:33,588

and it has been for me

1276

00:51:33,612--> 00:51:35,548

and there are a lot of

serious things happening,

1277

00:51:35,572--> 00:51:37,508

but I think there is a framework

1278

00:51:37,532--> 00:51:39,148

where you can

bring your own voice

1279

00:51:39,172--> 00:51:41,788

and things that are passion--

you're passionate about,

1280

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00:51:41,812--> 00:51:43,228

things that are
important to you.

1281

00:51:43,252--> 00:51:47,868

And you... you get to talk about the
strategy that affects authors' lives.

1282

00:51:47,892--> 00:51:51,308

So, um, for me, I had no
reason to think I'd be voted.

1283

00:51:51,332--> 00:51:52,332

I was.

1284

00:51:52,356--> 00:51:57,000

And, so I think if... if I can do it
other people should and could.

1285

00:51:57,024--> 00:52:00,268

-You have to have been....
Sorry, just very quickly.

1286

00:52:00,292--> 00:52:02,488

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You have to have been a
member for more than 6 months.

1287

00:52:02,512--> 00:52:04,000

That is, I mean, you're asking a...

1288

00:52:04,000--> 00:52:05,468

For specifics as well.

1289

00:52:05,492--> 00:52:08,000

So there is, like,
that is a criterion

1290

00:52:08,000--> 00:52:10,876

and the rest of the T's
and C's are on the website.

1291

00:52:10,900--> 00:52:13,108

-Oh yeah, I didn't just wake
up, but yeah, I was very...

1292

00:52:13,132--> 00:52:16,548

I was fairly new in terms
of calling myself an author,

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1293

00:52:16,572--> 00:52:19,000

but the processes are
there to allow somebody who

1294

00:52:19,000--> 00:52:20,225

feels quite fresh in the game

1295

00:52:20,249--> 00:52:23,000

to... to... to take part.

1296

00:52:23,000--> 00:52:25,200

-Yeah, absolutely. Charles,
sorry, you had your hand up.

1297

00:52:25,224--> 00:52:28,188

Yes, I was going to say what Harriet
was going to say about being a member

1298

00:52:28,212--> 00:52:29,428

in good standing.

1299

00:52:29,452--> 00:52:30,976

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You need to find two sponsors

1300

00:52:31,000--> 00:52:32,468

who are members.

1301

00:52:32,492--> 00:52:36,000

Um, I'm not sure what the... whether
they also have to be members for two...

1302

00:52:36,000--> 00:52:38,028

for 6 months, but, um....

1303

00:52:38,052--> 00:52:40,588

And you write a piece.

1304

00:52:40,612--> 00:52:43,000

I didn't... I also didn't
do any campaigning,

1305

00:52:43,000--> 00:52:46,068

but you wrote a piece which
hopefully reflects the passion

1306

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00:52:46,092--> 00:52:47,700

of what you'd love
to bring to the board.

1307

00:52:47,724--> 00:52:49,468

-Yeah, an honest
statement about who you are

1308

00:52:49,492--> 00:52:51,900

and what it is that you want
to do, yeah, absolutely, yeah.

1309

00:52:52,000--> 00:52:54,228

Yeah, and I think
those are really valuable

1310

00:52:54,252--> 00:52:55,948

and that enables the
membership, then,

1311

00:52:55,972--> 00:52:58,228

to get a real sense of the
people who are standing

1312

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00:52:58,252--> 00:53:00,000

and so, you know, and the...

1313

00:53:00,000--> 00:53:02,308

there will be things that
you have in your statement

1314

00:53:02,332--> 00:53:05,788

that chime with particular
members and that's very important.

1315

00:53:05,812--> 00:53:08,000

Yeah, and I didn't do
any campaigning either.

1316

00:53:08,000--> 00:53:10,748

I honestly was quite amazed
when I got through as well.

1317

00:53:10,772--> 00:53:13,476

So, um, it is, um...

1318

00:53:13,500--> 00:53:15,428

Yeah, I think we're all

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in the same boat there.

1319

00:53:15,452--> 00:53:18,000

How we doing? Any

more there, Harriet?

1320

00:53:18,000--> 00:53:20,228

-"What's the practical

process of standing?

1321

00:53:20,252--> 00:53:21,828

I know the deadline's

15th of July,

1322

00:53:21,852--> 00:53:24,948

but it would be good if you could spell

out the process between now and then."

1323

00:53:24,972--> 00:53:29,000

All of the information is in the

links that are on the chat at the side.

1324

00:53:29,000--> 00:53:30,428

So, just if you click on them,

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1325

00:53:30,452--> 00:53:34,000

there's a form

you fill out, like...

1326

00:53:34,000--> 00:53:35,948

You know, and the

deadline is the 15th.

1327

00:53:35,972--> 00:53:39,108

-Yeah, yeah, so, and we want to

have... your statement is very important.

1328

00:53:39,132--> 00:53:41,200

-And you'd need to get it

nominated, as we've said.

1329

00:53:41,224--> 00:53:42,788

-Yeah, so you need

to find two members

1330

00:53:42,812--> 00:53:45,188

to nominate you, uh,

you write your statement.

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1331

00:53:45,212--> 00:53:47,412

I think presume there's a
word count on statement length,

1332

00:53:47,436--> 00:53:50,000

and, um, then, um...

1333

00:53:50,000--> 00:53:52,948

That comes in July the 15th,
and then what'll happen is that

1334

00:53:52,972--> 00:53:56,868

there's a leaflet
goes out to members,

1335

00:53:56,892--> 00:53:58,608

or I think it's probably
online for people.

1336

00:53:58,632--> 00:54:00,428

I'm abroad, so I get
a slightly different...

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1337

00:54:00,452--> 00:54:03,948

I get the... The paper
leaflet sent out to me.

1338

00:54:03,972--> 00:54:06,000

And, um...

1339

00:54:06,000--> 00:54:07,708

Everybody is able to
read your statement.

1340

00:54:07,732--> 00:54:09,268

Yeah, so that's
basically it, really.

1341

00:54:09,292--> 00:54:11,908

There's a lot of detail, there's
a lot of detail in those links,

1342

00:54:11,932--> 00:54:14,508

and as we say,
we've got information

1343

#SoAatHome | Industry Insider – Why you should stand for the Board

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00:54:14,532--> 00:54:16,648

that we'll send you if

you're interested in standing.

1344

00:54:16,672--> 00:54:19,348

Ask the question. If there's

anything that we haven't covered here,

1345

00:54:19,372--> 00:54:22,208

which is probably quite a lot, or

something that might be worrying you,

1346

00:54:22,232--> 00:54:25,676

absolutely email

in, ask the question.

1347

00:54:25,700--> 00:54:27,828

Um, and... and then we'll

be able to answer it for you,

1348

00:54:27,852--> 00:54:29,388

because, um, it's

really important

1349

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00:54:29,412--> 00:54:31,000

that you come into

this with open eyes

1350

00:54:31,000--> 00:54:34,588

and, um, you know

exactly what it is, what it...

1351

00:54:34,612--> 00:54:36,748

what it is you're standing

for and what we do,

1352

00:54:36,772--> 00:54:38,100

and all of those

types of things.

1353

00:54:38,124--> 00:54:40,068

Um, so do... don't...

don't hesitate.

1354

00:54:40,092--> 00:54:43,000

Don't feel like it's a silly

question, just ask the question.

1355

#SoAatHome | Industry Insider – Why you should stand for the Board

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00:54:43,000--> 00:54:44,228

Um, any more?

1356

00:54:44,252--> 00:54:45,328

Any more for any more?

1357

00:54:45,352--> 00:54:46,352

-Many more.

1358

00:54:46,376--> 00:54:49,588

"Do you have policies
around confidentiality

1359

00:54:49,612--> 00:54:53,028

and/or disciplinary processes re:
ManCom and staff, or ordinary members?

1360

00:54:53,052--> 00:54:55,348

What are the red lines among
membership and participation?

1361

00:54:55,372--> 00:54:57,308

and what are the desiderata?"

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1362

00:54:57,332--> 00:55:01,188

Um, that is a very
long question...

1363

00:55:01,212--> 00:55:03,188

Well, I... we could all
spend ages answering it,

1364

00:55:03,212--> 00:55:06,388

but the meetings
are confidential.

1365

00:55:06,412--> 00:55:08,112

There's loads of stuff we could tell you.

1366

00:55:08,200--> 00:55:09,400

-The very simple answer, yeah.

1367

00:55:09,424--> 00:55:11,508

-The meetings are confidential
and if you break that,

1368

00:55:11,532--> 00:55:13,488

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you are in dereliction
of your fiduciary duties.

1369

00:55:13,512--> 00:55:17,000

And there's loads of stuff we could
tell you, some of which is extremely

1370

00:55:17,000--> 00:55:19,468

eye-popping to hear
when you first join.

1371

00:55:19,492--> 00:55:20,908

You're like, they did what?

1372

00:55:20,932--> 00:55:22,228

That we still don't talk about.

1373

00:55:22,252--> 00:55:25,068

So, um... that's fascinating.

1374

00:55:25,092--> 00:55:26,588

-Sorry, I'm answering
these all, like,

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1375

00:55:26,612--> 00:55:28,612

just because I'm asking
the questions, I'm, like...

1376

00:55:28,615--> 00:55:30,775

-Yeah. Yeah. No, no, it's
fine, you're doing very well.

1377

00:55:30,799--> 00:55:32,508

No, absolutely,
everything is confidential.

1378

00:55:32,532--> 00:55:34,652

-There is some stuff where
you're like, wow, you know,

1379

00:55:34,676--> 00:55:36,908

and of course you
can't talk about it.

1380

00:55:36,932--> 00:55:39,000

We've been on the end
of some quite hairy stuff.

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1381

00:55:39,000--> 00:55:42,708

And that's a privilege to be
making decisions about, um...

1382

00:55:42,732--> 00:55:47,000

Um, I don't know if any of
you want to speak to that.

1383

00:55:47,000--> 00:55:48,348

-Yeah, no, absolutely.

1384

00:55:48,372--> 00:55:50,088

Yeah, basically
everything's confidential.

1385

00:55:50,112--> 00:55:52,748

You sign a confidentiality agreement
when you come into the board

1386

00:55:52,772--> 00:55:54,400

and we expect you
to keep to it, because

1387

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00:55:54,424--> 00:55:55,988

there are things we're talking

1388

00:55:56,012--> 00:55:58,468

about that will not be public
for another 6 months to a year.

1389

00:55:58,492--> 00:56:00,848

There are things that, um, you
know, need to be developed,

1390

00:56:00,872--> 00:56:02,708

that there are
things that we aren't...

1391

00:56:02,732--> 00:56:04,428

we don't make
decisions immediately.

1392

00:56:04,452--> 00:56:06,000

We consider everything.

1393

00:56:06,000--> 00:56:07,868

It's really important

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that we do due diligence

1394

00:56:07,892--> 00:56:10,708

on every single decision,
that we weigh that up,

1395

00:56:10,732--> 00:56:12,932

and that sometimes that might
take more than one meeting

1396

00:56:12,956--> 00:56:14,508

so there are no
shotgun decisions.

1397

00:56:14,532--> 00:56:16,548

They're all seriously considered

1398

00:56:16,572--> 00:56:18,853

and that means, therefore,
that there's a process involved

1399

00:56:18,877--> 00:56:21,000

and so that confidentiality
is absolutely vital.

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1400

00:56:21,000--> 00:56:24,000

Um, yeah, no, very, very key.

1401

00:56:24,000--> 00:56:27,388

-Um, Bridget Minamore

had a good question.

1402

00:56:27,412--> 00:56:30,188

You picked up on the

slight uncertainty in all of us.

1403

00:56:30,212--> 00:56:32,268

"Not sure if I misheard,

members who nominate you

1404

00:56:32,292--> 00:56:34,492

need to have been members

for a certain amount of time?"

1405

00:56:34,516--> 00:56:37,516

If you want to stand, you have to have

been a member for more than 6 months.

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1406

00:56:37,540--> 00:56:41,000

I am not sure about if the
people who are nominating you,

1407

00:56:41,000--> 00:56:44,000

do they need to have been
members for 6 months?

1408

00:56:44,000--> 00:56:46,228

And I wonder if Elsa...

1409

00:56:46,252--> 00:56:48,732

-Yeah, I think they probably
do, but that'll be in... that'll be...

1410

00:56:48,756--> 00:56:51,836

We can check that for you. Sorry, I'm
conscious we've only got 3 minutes left.

1411

00:56:51,860--> 00:56:53,708

And, I mean,
ideally, they would be,

1412

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00:56:53,732--> 00:56:55,708

because, um, we

want... you want to get...

1413

00:56:55,732--> 00:56:57,000

you want to get

1414

00:56:57,000--> 00:57:00,508

people who have... know a little bit

about the Society ought to nominate you,

1415

00:57:00,532--> 00:57:01,988

that you can discuss it with.

1416

00:57:02,012--> 00:57:04,000

So that, um, you're

not all coming in fresh.

1417

00:57:04,000--> 00:57:09,028

Um, that, um, that those,

those, um, you know, you've...

1418

00:57:09,052--> 00:57:11,828

You have a bit of experience

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in what we do, basically.

1419

00:57:11,852--> 00:57:14,342

-And there's one more question,
if we've got time for one more,

1420

00:57:14,366--> 00:57:17,668

that I think reflects a couple
of other questions on the chat,

1421

00:57:17,692--> 00:57:19,476

which is from
Anthony again.

1422

00:57:19,500--> 00:57:21,748

"What's the strategy for
activating the entire membership

1423

00:57:21,772--> 00:57:23,148

in the voting process, please?

1424

00:57:23,172--> 00:57:24,908

Can ordinary members
contribute to this

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1425

00:57:24,932--> 00:57:26,228

and the wider public?

1426

00:57:26,252--> 00:57:29,468

What's your view of the public good
in wider engagement with the SoA?"

1427

00:57:29,492--> 00:57:31,200

We need to get the
membership more engaged.

1428

00:57:31,224--> 00:57:35,188

We have a really large
membership, and they are...

1429

00:57:35,212--> 00:57:37,188

Some of them, and
I've met loads of them,

1430

00:57:37,212--> 00:57:39,388

some of them just really
like being part of their union

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1431

00:57:39,412--> 00:57:40,412

and they're just happy.

1432

00:57:40,436--> 00:57:43,108

But it is an ongoing

1433

00:57:43,132--> 00:57:46,228

campaign of ours to get
membership more engaged.

1434

00:57:46,252--> 00:57:50,308

Were we to, like, do it in the press,
like, who's been nominated for an Oscar?

1435

00:57:50,332--> 00:57:53,000

I'm not quite sure you
get the take-up, but, um...

1436

00:57:53,000--> 00:57:55,348

It is really important, that's
a really good question.

1437

00:57:55,372--> 00:57:58,028

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Yeah, you've been...

you, as board members

1438

00:57:58,052--> 00:58:01,000

are being, um, nominated

1439

00:58:01,000--> 00:58:03,748

by members and then you're voted

1440

00:58:03,772--> 00:58:07,348

for by members to

represent their interests.

1441

00:58:07,372--> 00:58:09,188

Obviously, as we make decisions,

1442

00:58:09,212--> 00:58:12,000

we can't go to the membership

with every single decision

1443

00:58:12,000--> 00:58:14,828

because that would

be, um... it just...

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1444

00:58:14,852--> 00:58:17,208

it just wouldn't... we wouldn't
be able to function like that

1445

00:58:17,232--> 00:58:19,632

because of the time that's
involved, and obviously the costs.

1446

00:58:19,656--> 00:58:21,828

Although cost isn't
the biggest issue,

1447

00:58:21,852--> 00:58:24,668

but it's just, you know, we
have to be able to move forwards.

1448

00:58:24,692--> 00:58:27,588

Um, and so you are elected.

1449

00:58:27,612--> 00:58:29,628

Every single member
of the board is elected

1450

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00:58:29,652--> 00:58:31,412

by the membership in
order to represent them,

1451

00:58:31,436--> 00:58:34,000

in the same way

MPs are in Parliament.

1452

00:58:34,000--> 00:58:36,068

Um, and... and they're expected...

1453

00:58:36,092--> 00:58:38,388

that's why board members are
expected to come to meetings

1454

00:58:38,412--> 00:58:40,688

and why we expect them
to fulfil their fiduciary duties,

1455

00:58:40,712--> 00:58:42,000

why we, um...

1456

00:58:42,000--> 00:58:44,748

You know, we give them as

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much training as we possibly can

1457

00:58:44,772--> 00:58:47,000

because that... you are elected

1458

00:58:47,000--> 00:58:48,708

for that role.

1459

00:58:48,732--> 00:58:51,328

So yeah, we don't... we don't... we
go back to membership, obviously,

1460

00:58:51,352--> 00:58:54,788

at AGMs and stuff like that
with the really big decisions.

1461

00:58:54,812--> 00:58:58,268

Um, "can it be clarified
through an email to membership

1462

00:58:58,292--> 00:59:00,668

where the members who
nominate candidates..." I can't...

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1463

00:59:00,692--> 00:59:02,188

Yeah, we can do that, yeah.

1464

00:59:02,212--> 00:59:06,108

We'll clarify that,

um, that time evolved.

1465

00:59:06,132--> 00:59:09,628

That's popped up there on my...

1466

00:59:09,652--> 00:59:11,428

It's the first one to

pop up on my screen.

1467

00:59:11,452--> 00:59:13,708

Now, we have got

one more minute,

1468

00:59:13,732--> 00:59:16,468

so anything we

can whistle through?

1469

00:59:16,492--> 00:59:19,000

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Are there any answers there,
the questions that we've got?

1470

00:59:19,000--> 00:59:21,000

We've nailed all of them
at this stage, have we?

1471

00:59:21,000--> 00:59:23,348

"What is DEI?"

1472

00:59:23,372--> 00:59:25,868

DEI... Well, that's Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion.

1473

00:59:25,892--> 00:59:27,548

We are, um...

1474

00:59:27,572--> 00:59:29,668

We have, again, all of
this is on the website.

1475

00:59:29,692--> 00:59:31,428

We have a commitment

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1476

00:59:31,452--> 00:59:34,988

to make sure we're enacting DEI

1477

00:59:35,012--> 00:59:36,548

wherever we can,

1478

00:59:36,572--> 00:59:38,000

and that's something that

1479

00:59:38,000--> 00:59:39,988

the staff and the ManCom

1480

00:59:40,012--> 00:59:42,908

take a lot of care to try and do

1481

00:59:42,932--> 00:59:46,000

to the best of their

ability, and um... it is a...

1482

00:59:46,000--> 00:59:51,000

Yeah, it's one of the central

pillars of our... of our union.

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1483

00:59:51,000--> 00:59:53,000

-Yeah, absolutely,
vitally important.

1484

00:59:53,000--> 00:59:54,000

What else?

1485

00:59:54,024--> 00:59:55,708

-Um, and that
brings.... Say again?

1486

00:59:55,732--> 00:59:57,000

-Sorry.

1487

00:59:57,000--> 01:00:00,788

-Sorry. I think that brings
us perfectly to 11 o'clock.

1488

01:00:00,812--> 01:00:03,988

So if you have any other questions
that have come out of this conversation,

1489

01:00:04,012--> 01:00:06,000

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please do email them in.

1490

01:00:06,000--> 01:00:08,988

Um, and, um, somebody,

Anthony's just asking,

1491

01:00:09,012--> 01:00:11,000

"be keen to know how

criteria for nominations

1492

01:00:11,000--> 01:00:13,148

for a nominee, as

nominations close..."

1493

01:00:13,172--> 01:00:15,268

Oh yes, no, absolutely,

we'll let you know that.

1494

01:00:15,292--> 01:00:18,108

Um, and, um, we will...

we'll double-check that.

1495

01:00:18,132--> 01:00:20,372

Obviously, it's something we

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should have known coming in.

1496

01:00:20,396--> 01:00:22,368

Um, there's always a few
questions we can't answer

1497

01:00:22,392--> 01:00:24,100

and that's why there's
no silly question.

1498

01:00:24,124--> 01:00:29,000

So, uh, thank you very, very
much indeed for joining us, and, um...

1499

01:00:29,000--> 01:00:32,308

There we go. Yeah, oh, Anna
says she'll update the website today.

1500

01:00:32,332--> 01:00:34,428

So yeah, that'll be on
the website later, Anthony.

1501

01:00:34,452--> 01:00:37,000

So for anybody else

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watching, um, that...

1502

01:00:37,000--> 01:00:39,428

That question, um,

about the length of time

1503

01:00:39,452--> 01:00:43,000

that members need to be

1504

01:00:43,000--> 01:00:44,828

in place for before

they can nominate you,

1505

01:00:44,852--> 01:00:46,748

will be on the... will

be on the website.

1506

01:00:46,772--> 01:00:49,508

Um, thank you, huge

thanks, uh, to Harriet,

1507

01:00:49,532--> 01:00:52,068

to Charles, and to

Helen for joining me.

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1508

01:00:52,092--> 01:00:55,908

Our next SoA at Home event
takes place this evening from 7pm

1509

01:00:55,932--> 01:00:59,628

with an Industry Insider on
making a living as a writer in Wales.

1510

01:00:59,652--> 01:01:01,308

And that, while it
applies to Wales,

1511

01:01:01,332--> 01:01:04,000

will obviously be applicable
to everybody else as well.

1512

01:01:04,000--> 01:01:06,428

In conjunction with
our Cymru Group.

1513

01:01:06,452--> 01:01:08,588

Um, and for more, go over to

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1514

01:01:08,612--> 01:01:10,588

societyofauthors.org/events.

1515

01:01:10,612--> 01:01:12,788

Um... Oh, it just

popped up there, I think.

1516

01:01:12,812--> 01:01:14,268

Um, what's that say?

1517

01:01:14,292--> 01:01:17,348

Oh, and there's

a code, um, there.

1518

01:01:17,372--> 01:01:19,188

That's just "SOAATHOME20",

1519

01:01:19,212--> 01:01:21,568

which is the code for 20% off

the first year of membership,

1520

01:01:21,592--> 01:01:23,300

so if you know people

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who are keen to join

1521

01:01:23,324--> 01:01:25,708

and haven't yet,
do encourage them.

1522

01:01:25,732--> 01:01:28,428

Do, um...

1523

01:01:28,452--> 01:01:31,508

Just as a reminder,
the SoA events,

1524

01:01:31,532--> 01:01:33,388

um, at Home
events are free to all,

1525

01:01:33,412--> 01:01:35,372

but if you can afford to,
please consider donating

1526

01:01:35,396--> 01:01:37,000

to the Society of
Authors Access Fund

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1527

01:01:37,000--> 01:01:39,788

where we suggest a
minimum donation of £5.

1528

01:01:39,812--> 01:01:42,100

And obviously that fund is
open to everybody on the call

1529

01:01:42,124--> 01:01:44,068

to apply to, as well.

1530

01:01:44,092--> 01:01:47,068

You can also help
the Access Fund

1531

01:01:47,092--> 01:01:49,668

through making a purchase
through Bookshop.org,

1532

01:01:49,692--> 01:01:53,068

um, through our virtual bookshop,
which I mentioned again at the start.

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1533

01:01:53,092--> 01:01:55,588

So another big thank you to
Charles, Helen, and Harriet,

1534

01:01:55,612--> 01:01:57,828

and for all of you who have
joined us for today's event,

1535

01:01:57,852--> 01:02:01,708

um, and, um, do continue this
conversation on social media

1536

01:02:01,732--> 01:02:05,000

with the festival
hashtag #SoAatHome

1537

01:02:05,000--> 01:02:07,748

if you, um, if you want to.

1538

01:02:07,772--> 01:02:10,388

But as I say, um, information
will be on the website.

1539

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01:02:10,412--> 01:02:12,108

If you have any
specific questions,

1540

01:02:12,132--> 01:02:14,628

do email them to us rather
than asking us on social media,

1541

01:02:14,652--> 01:02:17,732

because obviously we haven't got people
monitoring social media the whole time

1542

01:02:17,756--> 01:02:21,108

and if it's a... if it's a pertinent
question to you, do email it in.

1543

01:02:21,132--> 01:02:23,508

We're all about
openness and clarity,

1544

01:02:23,532--> 01:02:25,668

and making sure that you
have the right information.

1545

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01:02:25,692--> 01:02:28,000

Um, and we'd be

delighted for you to join us.

1546

01:02:30,852--> 01:02:31,868

-Thank you.

1547

01:02:31,892--> 01:02:33,548

-Thank you.

1548

01:02:33,572--> 01:02:36,000

Thanks, Vanessa.

-Thank you.