



Politics is stalling. WE are the start-up.

WE First Party Conference

Manchester 25–27 November 2016

The Women's Equality Party is gathering in Manchester in November for its first ever Party Conference. Party Conference is not simply a fun get together, where you will meet fellow party members, listen to speeches and create new ideas. Party Conference is the supreme decision-making body of the Party and as a delegate you will have the chance to shape our party structure and help the UK build a better future.

Below is more information on your role at Party Conference.

Please note that deadline to submit motions is 30 September.

What happens at Party Conference?

At Party Conference WE will:

- Discuss and approve the WE Constitution
- Improve and endorse the WE Policy Document
- Select a Policy Committee and explore how WE want to make policy decisions
- Experiment with innovative ways of reaching a conclusion in a political debate
- Discuss and decide on motions
- Select representatives for the Steering Committee, which will hold the decision-making power between Party Conferences
- Select representatives for the Policy Committee, which will execute the party's policies between Party Conferences and make new policy proposals.

Party conference will also offer workshops and training and you will have the chance to meet other WE members and supporters from all across the UK.

What is my role as a delegate?

As a delegate you have the right to participate in Party Conference debates, to vote on policy motions, to elect the members of the Policy Committee and representatives to sit on the Steering Committee. **You have the responsibility to be present during party business sessions** and to ensure the party is operating in line with its core values and policies.

You also have the right, in collaboration with your branch or other WE members, to put forward motions, amendments to motions and ideas for policy discussions.

There will be an introductory session at Party Conference on Standing Orders, which direct the form of the debates.

How can I actively participate in Party Conference?

WE Voices

On Friday night there will be an 'open mic' session where members can come up and give three-minute speeches about a topic of their own choice. This is a great opportunity to address issues you feel strongly about. You can sign up for that before the start of the session.

Stand for a position

Subject to approval of the WE draft Constitution by Party Conference, the Conference will elect five representatives to the Steering Committee and 14 people to take a seat on the Policy Committee. Find out more details [here](#) and make sure you inform us at the latest by 1 October if you are standing for any of these positions.

Participate in debates

Topical discussion debates will take place on the Saturday and will result in non-binding votes or decisions. Participate in the debates to prepare yourself for Party Business discussions on policies, the WE draft Constitution and motions, which will take place on the Sunday.

Put forward motions

Collaborate with other members or with your local branch to put forward a motion to discuss at Party Conference.

Put forward suggestions for topical discussions

A part of conference will be debating seminars where we will use different debating methods on topics of our choice. In collaboration with your branch or with other WE members, put forward a suggestion for a topical discussion.

Join workshops and get together

Join the conference workshops to meet with other WE members and learn something new.

Make sure you attend the Conference Opening and the Saturday night party to get the most out of your stay in Manchester!

Make up for what's missing

Do you think the Women's Equality Party is not addressing important issues? Join an open space session facilitated by Stella Duffy to discuss that and more.

What is a motion?

A motion is a proposal for discussion and possible adoption as a resolution.

A policy motion can reaffirm the policy of the party or adopt a new policy.

A business motion is a proposal that concerns the internal work of the party.

An emergency motion is a proposal put forward after the deadline for motions is past to address an issue that has come up in the meantime. Emergency motions are not subject to amendment.

Motions are sent out to delegates electronically eight weeks ahead of Party Conference and you will have at least two weeks to submit amendments to the motions if you feel they're necessary.

Who can send in motions?

Motions and amendments to those motions for debate may be proposed by a local branch (or branches) or not less than 20 members working together. The Party Leader and the Steering Committee can also put forward motions.

Amendments to published motions may be proposed by a local branch or not less than five Members working together. The Steering Committee can also put forward amendments.

What will happen to my motion?

This first Party Conference has a very full agenda and consequently there will be limitations on how many motions can be debated at this time.

The Agenda Committee will take your motion into consideration and may contact you to ask for it to be combined with other similar motions. The Agenda Committee will let you know if your Motion will be picked for debate or not.

The Agenda Committee, operating on behalf of the current Steering Committee, consists of: Halla Gunnarsdóttir, WE Head of Policy and WE members Ali Smith (Brighton) and David Renton (Edinburgh).

What happens if I think the Agenda Committee has made a decision to exclude my motion for a reason I find unacceptable e.g. to avoid triggering an important debate for the party?

If you believe your motion needs the immediate attention of the Party and that a majority of Party Conference would support its being put on the agenda, you can insist on a vote at Party Conference on whether to allow your motion on the agenda.

How do I submit a motion?

You can send your motion to info@womensequality.org.uk with the subject Party Conference Motion.

You need to use our form for motions which is available [here](#).

Motions that do not fulfil the criteria will be automatically refused and such decision cannot be challenged at Party Conference.

When will I see the motions that will be up for discussion at Party Conference?

If you are a voting delegate at the Party Conference you will receive the motions electronically around 17 October.

How can a motion be changed before it is voted on?

Amendments to motions can be made at the latest by 31 October.

What is a policy discussion?

Policy discussions are intended to deepen our understanding of current issues and policies that work towards gender equality.

At the first WE Party Conference we will choose six to seven topics to discuss in break-out sessions. We will use different debating techniques in each session, which include (subject to change):

1. Consensus debating
2. Open space debating
3. Parliamentary debating
4. European Square debating
5. Oxford-style debating
6. Agree to disagree
7. Fish bowl debating

This exercise will help us as a party to form our own ways of having political debates.

Who can make a suggestion for a policy debate?

Topics for policy debates may be proposed by a local branch (or branches) or not less than five members working together. The Leader and the Steering Committee can also put forward suggestions.

You will be notified whether your topic was picked or not.

How do I make a suggestion for a policy discussion?

You can send your topical discussion suggestion to info@womensequality.org.uk with the subject Policy Discussion Suggestion.

You need to use our form for policy discussion suggestions which is available [here](#).

Your topic may be automatically refused if you do not use the right form.

I can't make it to Party Conference, how can I have my voice heard?

You can stand for the elected positions and put forward motions even though you cannot attend Party Conference.

The best way to ensure your voice is heard is to be active within your local branch.

Key dates (subject to change)

<i>15 September</i>	<i>Discounted registration for conference closes</i>
<i>30 September</i>	<i>Last chance to send in motions</i>
<i>1 October</i>	<i>Last chance to stand as a Steering Committee member</i>
<i>1 October</i>	<i>Last chance to stand as a Policy Committee member</i>
<i>17 October</i>	<i>Motions and draft Constitution sent out to delegates</i>
<i>31 October</i>	<i>Last chance to send in amendments to motions</i>
<i>15 November</i>	<i>Final registration</i>

<i>17 November</i>	<i>Last chance to send in emergency motions</i>
<i>21 November</i>	<i>Final agenda sent out to delegates</i>