



MADMUN XVI  
November 15, 2025

SAG-AFTRA

Background Guide  
MADMUN 2025

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# Letter from the Dais

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To the Delegates of the Screen Actors Guild Committee,

Welcome to MADMUN XVI - Madison Area's 16th Annual Model United Nations Conference!

Representing various actors, delegates will collaborate to discuss issues in Hollywood. This background guide will provide an overview of the main issues in SAG-AFTRA compiled into one topic: 2023 SAG-AFTRA Actors Strike. The Dais include Chairs Maddy Norgord and Brooklyn Norgord. We are so excited to have you all take part in the committee of the most famous and beloved Hollywood stars!

## About Us:

Hi! My name is Brooklyn Norgord (she/her) and I am going to be one of your chairs for SAG-AFTRA. I am a senior at Monona Grove High School and have done Model UN for all 4 years of my high school career, and am so excited to chair this year! My favorite conference is CIMUN, but one of my favorite MUN memories is when one of my fellow delegates got arrested in the Las Vegas Casinos Association during MADMUN last year. I love drama and online references, so I think that this committee will be so much fun to chair, and see how each delegate will take on their role as an actor in the Screen Actors Guild. The issues we will be discussing are also super important when it comes to online media as a whole, so I can't wait to see what you all come up with!

Hello delegates! My name is Maddy Norgord (she/her) and I'm co-chairing this year for SAF-AFTRA in MADMUN XVI. This is my fourth year doing Model UN and I have always hoped to be a chair, so I'm really excited to have gotten the opportunity to chair this year. My favorite conference is MADMUN because of its fast pace and it's really exciting seeing former fellow delegates in conferences and getting the chance to create solutions with them again. SAG-AFTRA is especially exciting because I spend a lot of time consuming pop culture, so this is something I feel will be really fun to be involved in and connect to. I'm really looking forward to this conference, and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions!

Fitting our theme of *Dismantling Veils of Deception*, the committee decided on one main topic : 2023 SAG-AFTRA Actors Strike. As you prepare for the conference, consider the developments that defined the strike, and the ways in which topics such as artificial intelligence, streaming platforms, and unfair pay have affected Hollywood as a whole. We hope that by the end of this conference you will gain a better understanding of not only the actor strike itself but also the dynamics that shape modern labor movements which influence pop culture as a whole.

We hope delegates will collaborate to develop practical solutions to address unfair wages and unregulated AI via thorough research on your actor's perspectives and sufficient participation in both moderated and unmoderated caucuses. We hope and expect that all delegates will speak up if they disagree with other delegates on topics and remain civil and respectful in the following debate.

We're excited to see you put your solution-making and collaborating skills to the test, but most importantly, HAVE FUN! See you at MADMUN XVI!!

All the best,

Maddy Norgord and Brooklyn Norgord

## Tips:

- **This is a present day committee. All of your solutions should be relevant to 2025.**
- **You will be writing resolutions in committee, not directives. If two resolutions conflict with each other, they both cannot be passed.**
- **There will be crisis updates.**
- **There is only one all-encompassing topic. This means you only have to submit one paper in the submission form.**

- **BLACK PAPERS: Black papers are optional, but recommended, especially for more experienced delegates. We encourage you to write one if your actor has a secret agenda that they want to get done, but also hide from the media. \*Submitting a black paper will increase your chance of winning an award!\***

## Topic: 2023 SAG-AFTRA Actors Strike

### Introduction + Background

On July 13th, 2023, the Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists called a strike against Hollywood filmmaking as a whole, leading to the slowest production rate that Hollywood had seen since the 1980's. The Guild of several famous movie stars and artists struck for numerous reasons, such as better pay, more regulations in place to prevent exploitative use of AI, and better working conditions. The strike lasted until 2023, but ultimately ended up in a contract that was satisfying enough for the time being - one that lasts for 3 years and is valued at over one billion dollars. Although this contract provided some better working conditions for actors, more compensation for residuals from streaming services, and protections against AI, many still think that it did not do enough, especially since AI is now much more powerful than it was in 2023, and is a lot more present in the media. Additionally, the use of streaming services in place of cable TV and outdated media technology has also become even more widespread since it was written. The 3-year contract is also designed to no longer be valid in July of 2026, which means more measures will need to be taken to ensure that each and every actor in the Screen Actors Guild is treated equitably.

#### *Timeline of Key Events regarding SAG-AFTRA:*

- **1933** – Screen Actors Guild (SAG) was founded
- **1937** – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) was founded
- **1937-2000** – Various strikes within SAG over wage increases/working conditions
- **2012** – SAG and AFTRA officially merge
- **2016-2017** – Video Game Voice Actor Strike
- **2020** – New contracts covering streaming services during the pandemic era are negotiated
- **2020-2023** – AI grows more powerful, streaming services become more popular, actors become more upset with stagnant wages and subpar working conditions
- **2023** - Strike officially starts July 13
- **2023** - Strike ends November 9th with a contract
- **2026** - Contract will end in July

### Influential Factors + Current Situation (2025)

Although the 2023 strike officially ended with a contract, said contract will come to an end in July of 2026. As it nears its end, SAG-AFTRA and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television

Producers (AMPTP) will begin a new collective agreement to discuss and determine wages, working conditions for the actors, protections against exploitative AI, health and pension, etc. However, if an agreement is not reached, it is very likely that the Hollywood strike will resume, and Hollywood production will slow down once again. If the production rate slows, actors will have an even harder time finding roles to act in, so it is in everyone's best interest to ensure that it does not happen again.

## **Compensation for Streaming Services + More**

Prior to the strike, actors were paid a minimum daily or weekly rate for their work, in addition to any revenue generated from their work that was sold via DVDs, and cable TV, along with cable re-runs. However, patterns in how people are consuming the media that Hollywood actors take part in have been changing dramatically since 2015.

Leading up to 2023, the use of streaming services in households all over the world began “cutting the cord” and switching to streaming. In fact, by the end of 2025, an estimated 77.2 million households will have stopped using cable - an increase from 2023 at 68.9 million. In July of this year, a survey done by the Pew Research Center found that only 36% of Americans still have a cable subscription, compared to a whopping 86% of American households having streaming service subscriptions. Because the written codes for how much actors are paid from streaming were outdated, actors were missing out on millions of dollars generated from their own work.

Once the revenue generated by the sales of media in the form of DVDs and cable started to dwindle, so the the paychecks of thousands of Hollywood actors. Additionally, actors are paid stagnant rates during the time they work based solely on however long they are working with the studio. Actors also had numerous fees to pay, such as compensation for their agents, managers, and lawyers. As if this wasn't enough, actor wages have not quite been keeping up with the rate of inflation, meaning inflation losses, combined with the deductions and a low base salary, meant that actor wages were simply unlivable and unsustainable for their career, leading to increased tensions within the Screen Actors Guild causing the strike.



## **Working Conditions within Hollywood**

Many Hollywood actors have spoken out about poor working conditions on set, which has been a central issue for much of the Screen Actors' Guild's history. Recently heightened due to the rise of streaming services, new filmmaking techniques, and new technology, many actors struggle with irregular hours, debilitating schedules, poor protections and insufficient safety precautions on set. Lately, auditions for movies and shows that are filmed by the actors themselves have been making it increasingly difficult for the actors to get a chance to perform, as self-taped auditions require the actors to prepare their own costumes and filming equipment.

Furthermore, a very limited number of actors earn enough from acting to qualify for pension and union health benefits, further worsening the financial insecurity struggles that a large portion of Hollywood actors have to face. While Hollywood actors' wages still increase over time, the minimal increases remain insufficient in comparison to the rate of inflation.

Much of the 2023 SAG-AFTRA strike targets actor's demands for better pay and working conditions. To prepare for the committee, create solutions that address each issue specifically, including irregular schedules, insufficient pay, and poor safety protections on set, while also keeping in mind where the funding for your solutions will be sourced and how your solutions will affect Hollywood production and efficiency in the long run.

## **Artificial Intelligence**

Technology is opening up new possibilities for studios to make creative content for much cheaper, allowing producers to make similar content as they would without AI, however more efficiently and at much lower production costs. It allows producers to include background performers in their movies and

shows without actually needing to hire actors for it, since they're generated by AI. It even creates the previously impossible opportunity to bring back deceased actors by having AI copy and recreate their likelihood and their voice for the producer's desired performance. However, this is what strikes a lot of concern among Hollywood's actors. Actors fear that AI could remake their performances without compensating them and without asking for consent.

Under the 2023 SAG-AFTRA contract, producers may not attempt to use AI to copy or replicate any actor's performance without clear and informed consent from the actor. The contract also distinguishes between an AI-generated performance of an actor both created with the actor's previous employment with a producer and without it. Both situations strictly require clear consent from the actor and provide compensation. The compensation for the actor is determined by a performer's rate, which means the actor is paid for the number of days that a performance would have taken to film had it been performed in-person rather than AI-generated.

Similar requirements are in place for voice actors. Under the protection of the contract, no AI-generated voice made for a movie or show may replicate or represent any real individuals, unless the voice actor gave clear permission.

AI is rapidly improving and becoming increasingly realistic, so much so that many can mistake an AI video for being real. Although the union has created protections for actors against AI, it still remains an issue as it threatens actor's positions in future Hollywood artistry as well as the control performers have over their identity, performing abilities, voice, and finances.

## **Voice Acting and Video Games**

SAG-AFTRA did not only oversee a strike put on by your standard TV Actors and most famous movie stars. In fact, SAG-AFTRA saw another strike from video game voice actors that lasted from July 2024 through July 2025. Although the main reasons behind this strike were similar to those of the TV Actors strike, the point for the lack of AI protections stood even stronger. Because these voice actors were only really needed for their voice, their work could be much more easily replicated by AI. This of course would mean that many video game companies could get away with realistic-sounding voice lines for their video games without actually having to pay the actors anything. The strike did come to a close with a contract between the union and videogame companies that increased the compensation and provided some AI guardrails, but the problem still stands, especially in less popular game companies and indie studios. AI is also harder to combat in any sort of legal contract because there are almost no regulations or restrictions for AI in the workplace in federal legislation.

## **Influential Figures**

### **AMPTP (Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers)**

The main issue that any of your resolutions will encounter is the AMPTP - and whether they are going to agree to the terms of your resolution. Although AMPTP agreed to the 2023 contract, it is possible they won't cooperate with SAG-AFTRA when creating a new solution once the contract ends.

Meeting the demands of actors usually means having to increase their pay and invest more into safety precautions for the sets, which means AMPTP may be hesitant to agree to the demands of SAG-AFTRA, especially considering that they deem the actors' strike as only harmful to workers.

Many influential figures in this alliance also have the power to control what the AMPTP might agree to - for example, Netflix co-CEO Ted Sarandos had previously accused SAG-AFTRA of making excessive demands, and that the Union's proposed levy on streaming service subscribers would be "a bridge too far". Another example is the CEO of Walt Disney company, Bob Iger, who also called the union's demands "unrealistic". The CEO of HBO and Max, Casey Bloys, shares a similar perspective to Sarandos in that the strike and any potential levies would be damaging to their company as a streaming service.

## **Pro-Strike Actors**

The actors that support the 2023 SAG-AFTRA strike played perhaps the most important role in the strike, as they represented it to the public and were the ones who joined picket lines and spoke out on social media platforms and in interviews about the issues they faced, shaping public perception of the strike and Hollywood itself. More well-known actors also spoke out to help the voices of lesser-known actors, who faced most of the financial pressure because of the lack of health and pension benefits due to insufficient pay.

## **Anti-contract Actors**

Though there were some actors who opposed the contract that resulted from the 2023 strike, they were far and few between. They were also met with a lot of criticism from the public and those who supported the implementation of the contract, so they did not often speak publicly about their opposition. However, some actors saw topics such as AI as opportunities for income. Others opposed the contract because they believed it simply did not do enough to improve the livelihoods of actors.

## **Questions to Consider**

1. How can you ensure the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) will agree to any new conditions your resolution introduces? The CEOs of streaming services?
2. How will your solutions for these actors affect Hollywood production and work efficiency in the long run?
3. How will your solution prevent another short-term drop in the production rate of digital media? (i.e. the result of the 2023 strike)
4. How will your solutions remain sustainable for both the actors and the studios?
5. How can you prevent these videogame companies and film studios from exploiting any loopholes in your resolution?
6. Consider the type of actor you are delegating - what terms should you agree to?



## Source for Preliminary Research:

SAG-AFTRA Homepage [www.sagaftra.org/](http://www.sagaftra.org/) (<--- this website has every SAG-AFTRA topic)

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