



ACTRA Toronto

Local Union Election Guide 2021



“We must open the doors and we must see to it they remain open, so that others can pass through.”

Rosemary Brown, politician, activist, and Canada's first black female member of a provincial legislature

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Introduction

ACTRA Toronto will be electing a new Council in the fall of 2021. The last 18 months have been challenging for everyone as we have navigated our way through the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting to safety protocols on set, managing increasing demands for self-tapes, and “pivoting” online to develop skills, connect and engage with others in the work of the union and our industry. The ACTRA Toronto Council and Committees have continued to meet, hold workshops and Town Halls, prepare for bargaining, promote and celebrate performers and support each other. Elections this fall will be an opportunity for candidates to present their ideas and vision for how ACTRA Toronto will continue to grow and thrive through this period of recovery.

Following the election in 2019, the Election Committee made a number of recommendations that were adopted by the ACTRA Toronto Council and ratified by Members in a referendum on the ACTRA Toronto By-Laws earlier this year. The new By-Laws include the provision for an Election Committee and Election Rules. This Guide, together with the By-Laws, will give you the information and resources to make the decision to run as a candidate and to better understand the election process.

Elections are your opportunity to use your voice and your votes to shape the direction of the Union for the next two years. This is an exciting and challenging time for the union as we need to adapt, grow and build strength in an increasingly online environment.

A few dates to note:

- Council election 2021 launches on October 6th, 2021 with the release of Nomination Forms and rules to eligible Members.
- Deadline for candidates to submit Nomination Forms, headshots and statements: October 19th, 2021.
- Online voting begins November 3rd.
- Voting ends November 12th, 2021.

Election voting is conducted by a third party online voting firm, [Simply Voting](#). Election results will be posted on the ACTRA Toronto website on November 15th. Results will show total number of eligible voters, candidate names, the number of ballots cast for each candidate, the number of spoiled ballots and the overall voter turn-out percentage.

The Election Committee 2021

The Election Committee provides oversight and direction to ensure that the election process is in accordance with the ACTRA Toronto and ACTRA National By-Laws. Members of the Election Committee have agreed that they will not run for Council nor nominate any candidate in the 2021 ACTRA Toronto election.

Chief Electoral Officer: ACTRA Toronto Executive Director

Ferne Downey

David Sparrow

Jean Yoon

To contact the ACTRA Toronto Election Committee, please e-mail: elections@actratoronto.com.

Note, this “Guide,” is an attempt to provide a plain-language and accessible resource for Members engaged in the election process. Where there is a question of interpretation, complaint or disagreement, ACTRA’s Constitution, By-Laws and Policies prevail.

[ACTRA Toronto By-Laws](#)

[ACTRA National Constitution](#) & [ACTRA National By-Laws](#)

The ACTRA Toronto Council

ACTRA Toronto is an independent branch or local union of **ACTRA**, the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists. It is governed by a Council of elected Members of the union with the support of union staff, in accordance with the [ACTRA Toronto By-Laws](#), policies and the [ACTRA National Constitution](#) and [ACTRA National By-Laws](#).

ACTRA Toronto Council is composed of twenty-four (24) ACTRA Toronto Members in good standing, elected every two years by all Full Members as described in Article 5, of the [ACTRA Toronto By-Laws](#).

What does the ACTRA Toronto Council do?

- Develops an annual operating plan and budget
- Establishes policies and procedures for the branch
- Supports committees, caucuses and advocates in outreach, organizing and activism
- Debates and votes on motions to respond to member and industry concerns
- Communicates decisions and actions to Members with one voice
- Holds staff accountable – through the Executive Director
- Elects National Councillors to represent ACTRA Toronto on ACTRA's National Council

Officers of Council

The officers of ACTRA Toronto Council consist of: the President; the immediate Past President; the Treasurer; up to five other Vice-Presidents, who may be given such titles and functions as ACTRA Toronto Council may determine; and the Executive Director, who is an officer of ACTRA Toronto Council with voice but without vote. The officers of ACTRA Toronto Council are commonly referred to collectively as the **ACTRA Toronto Executive Committee**.

Officers other than the President and the Executive Director are named by ACTRA Toronto Council for two-year terms at the first meeting of a newly-elected Council, once it is in office. (ACTRA Toronto Council's delegates to ACTRA National Council are also named for two-year terms at this meeting).

ACTRA Toronto President

The ACTRA Toronto President is elected by the ACTRA Toronto Council every alternate year to the election year. The president chairs the Council meetings and serves as the chief spokesperson for ACTRA Toronto.

How Council Works

It is the practice of [ACTRA Toronto Council](#) to meet on the first Tuesday of every month in the Sean Mulcahy Council Chamber at the ACTRA Toronto office or online through video-

conferencing, except for one month in the summer. Council must meet once every three months. Quorum for regular business is 12 Members or alternates present. The By-Laws define an expanded quorum where issues such as budgets or elections are required.

The [Minutes of Council meetings](#) are posted online once they have been approved by the ACTRA Toronto Council.

ACTRA Toronto's Operating Plan and Budget are set by the Council each year and presented at the Annual General Meeting of Members in February. View the [Operating Plan](#) and [Audited Financial Statements](#) for details.

The Rules of Order

ACTRA Toronto Council meetings are chaired by the ACTRA Toronto President and conducted in accordance with *Bourinot's Rules of Order*.

2021 ACTRA Toronto Council Election - Timeline

August 3, 2021	Establish Election Committee. (At least (45) calendar days prior to the start of the election period).
September 2021	E-blast and web page launch to provide notice of upcoming elections, rules, and process.
September 23, 2021	Members Conference: Election information session
October 6, 2021	Nomination Forms to be distributed to Members in good standing
October 19, 2021	Nominations close. Headshots & Election Statements submitted to Executive Director. (The Nomination period from the call for nominations until the close of nominations is minimum fourteen (14) calendar days).
Oct 20-Nov 12, 2021	Campaign Period
October 26, 2021	Candidate Event TBC (To Be Confirmed)
November 2, 2021	Candidate Event TBC
November 3, 2021	Online voting opens
November 9, 2021	Candidate Event TBC
November 12, 2021	Online voting closes. (The Voting period from the opening of voting until the close of balloting is minimum ten (10) calendar days).
November 15, 2021	Election results posted.
November 30, 2021	Councillor Orientation Meeting.
December 1, 2021	Newly elected Councillors take office.

December 7, 2021 Newly elected Councillors attend December Council Meeting.

January 4, 2022 Election of a Treasurer & up to 5 Vice-Presidents.
Election of 13 National Councillors and alternates to National Council.

ACTRA Toronto Council Election Rules

ACTRA Toronto By-Laws Article 10 – Elections to Council:

- (10.1) The election of the ACTRA Toronto Council shall be held every two (2) years. Results must be known no later than November 15th of the election year. Terms of office commence on December 1st following the election.
- (10.2) The Election Period, from the Call for Nominations until close of balloting, must be at least thirty-eight (38) calendar days. Electronic processes may be used for any part or all of an election. The Election Period is broken down as follows:
- (a) The Nomination Period from the Call for Nominations until the Close of Nominations is minimum fourteen (14) calendar days.
 - (b) The Campaign Period from the Close of Nominations until voting commences is minimum fourteen (14) calendar days.
 - (c) The Voting Period from the opening of voting until the close of balloting is minimum ten (10) calendar days.
- (10.3) At least 45 days prior to the start of the Election Period, the ACTRA Toronto Council shall create an Election Committee comprised of a minimum of three (3) Full Members in good standing and the ACTRA Toronto Executive Director. Full Members may sit on the Election Committee provided they declare in writing that they will not nominate or second a nomination for a candidate or run for a position in that ACTRA Toronto Council election.

The Election Committee shall:

- (a) Establish processes and procedures for the election pursuant to the ACTRA Toronto By-Laws.
- (b) Notify the membership of the Election Period and rules.
- (c) Ensure election rules and ACTRA Toronto policies are observed.
- (d) Approve Nomination Forms, Election Statements and/or audio or video files from candidates, to be made available to Members.
- (e) Approve all election documentation.

- (f) Report the election results to the membership including the number of ballots cast, number of spoiled ballots and the number of ballots cast for each candidate.
- (g) Provide a summary of the election activities and recommendations, if any, regarding future elections to the ACTRA Toronto Council.

(10.4) The Election Rules, to be distributed by the Election Committee must include:

- (a) Eligibility to run for office: Only Full Members of ACTRA Toronto in good standing may run for ACTRA Toronto Council or may nominate or second their candidates.
- (b) Nomination procedure:
 - i. The Call for Nominations must be distributed to all eligible Members and must include:
 1. An overview of the role and expectations of an ACTRA Toronto Councillor.
 2. A copy of the Nomination Form.
 3. The method for submitting the Nomination Form to the Election Committee.
 4. The deadline for nominations. Nominations close fourteen (14) days after the Call for Nominations has been distributed.
 - ii. Nomination Forms will be signed by the proposer and seconder of the nomination and will contain a statement signed by the person nominated signifying their acceptance and affirming they will uphold ACTRA's Constitution & By-Laws and ACTRA Toronto's By-Laws and Policies. Verified electronic signatures will be permitted. The completed form shall be delivered to the Election Committee.
 - iii. Nominees may provide a photograph and Election Statement, not to exceed one hundred (100) words, and links to any personal audio or visual social media sites. Election Statements and photographs must be submitted to the Election Committee by the deadline for the close of nominations. Election Statements and content accessed through the links must be factual and not include any defamatory comments. If a candidate statement fails to comply with these guidelines, and if time

permits, the candidates may be allowed to revise their Election Statements within a time set by the Election Committee. If an Election Statement is not revised to the satisfaction of the Election Committee, it will not be published.

(c) The Campaign Period from the Close of Nominations until voting commences is minimum fourteen (14) days. During this period:

- i. Except as in b (iii) above, candidates, their representatives and all individuals are prohibited from using any Union funds or Union logos for the purposes of campaigning. Candidates in breach of this provision are subject to disciplinary action. Posting in a public forum hosted by the Union (e.g. ACTRA Toronto private Facebook page) for the purposes of the campaign is permitted.
- ii. No staff of the Union, or Member working as a contractor or OSLO for the union may work on any candidate's behalf, express a bias for or against any candidate or provide confidential information to candidates for campaign purposes. A candidate who is also an OSLO may not campaign when engaged as an OSLO on set.
- iii. After the close of nominations, the Election Committee will hold at least one Candidate Forum open to all duly nominated candidates.
- iv. Campaigns and campaign tactics must be respectful and abide by the Union's Constitution, By-Laws and Policies.

(d) The Voting Period:

- i. Following the Campaign Period, there will be a minimum period of ten (10) days from the distribution of the voting package to the close of voting.
- ii. The voting package will be distributed to all Members eligible to vote. The voting package will include a list of all candidates, their election statements, instructions concerning the number of candidates for whom the member is entitled to vote, the voting procedure, and the final date by which all votes must be cast.

- iii. Election results will be posted by the Election Committee on the Union's website no later than November 15th of the election year. Results will show the total number of eligible voters, candidate names, the numbers of ballots cast for each candidate, number of spoiled ballots and the overall voter turn-out percentage.
- iv. The 24 candidates receiving the most votes will be declared elected.
- v. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates for the 24th position, the Election Committee will schedule a 'draw' to take place within five (5) working days from the close of balloting. Candidates may attend in person or appoint a scrutineer to observe the draw. The results of the draw will be posted on the Union's website.
- vi. When paper ballots are used, ACTRA Toronto Council will appoint scrutineers who are Full Members of ACTRA Toronto not running for office, to witness the counting of ballots and ensure a fair and accurate count. Scrutineers will immediately report any issues with the count to Council. Similarly, when online voting systems are used, Council will ensure that all appropriate safeguards are in place to secure a fair and accurate count.

(10.5) Newly elected Councillors take office on December 1st following their election.

(10.6) Subject to the National Constitution, the National By-Laws, these By-Laws, and any other rules or procedures established by ACTRA Toronto Council, the Executive Director of ACTRA Toronto conducts and oversees elections among Members and on ACTRA Toronto Council.

ACTRA Toronto Council Election Nomination Form

We, the undersigned Full Members in good standing of ACTRA Toronto, hereby nominate:

Name (please print): _____

Nominated by: _____ Membership #: _____

Seconded by: _____ Membership #: _____

I, _____ (name of nominee) as a Full Member in good standing of ACTRA Toronto, am eligible under the provisions of the ACTRA National Constitution and By-Laws to stand for office in ACTRA Toronto.

In accepting the nomination for election to the ACTRA Toronto Council, I am aware and agree to abide by ACTRA's Constitution and By-Laws and the ACTRA Toronto By-Laws and Policies. I understand that ACTRA Council welcomes Members who work in other sectors of the industry. In the event of a debate or vote on a matter where I have a conflict of interest, I will inform the Chair and may ask to recuse myself.

While my professional career takes precedence, I fully understand and accept my responsibility as a Councillor to participate in the Council meeting each month and other important meetings as called by the President, to attend the ACTRA Toronto member conferences and to participate fully in task force or committee work. All ACTRA Toronto Council Members are expected to act impartially in carrying out their responsibilities.

Nominee's Signature: _____ Membership #: _____

Please email your completed Election Statement and current headshot with this signed Nomination Form to elections@actratoronto.com, no later than **October 19, 2021. Your Election Statement may not exceed 100 (one hundred) words and a link to one election page on a social media site.**

The Election Committee may edit Election Statements to the prescribed length to be distributed to the membership. Election Statements that contain statements that are materially false, libelous, or otherwise at variance with any law will not be circulated to Members by ACTRA Toronto.

ACTRA Toronto Election 2021

Frequently Asked Questions

Why run for Council?

ACTRA Toronto is a member-run professional union. We work for the interests of professional performers, for Canadian stories, Canadian principles and values. ACTRA Toronto's Council has a strong tradition of advocating for performers at the bargaining table, and through collective action to advocate for more Canadian content on all our screens. Candidates for the ACTRA Toronto Council are Full ACTRA Members in good standing who are:

- passionate about Canadian performers and Canadian art
- interested in contributing to the growth of the industry
- willing to get involved in ACTRA's committees, events and initiatives and
- committed to improving the pay, working conditions and respect for artists.

What does an ACTRA Toronto Councillor do?

The ACTRA Toronto Council is the governing body for the ACTRA Toronto Branch, representing 15,000 performers in Ontario, outside of Ottawa. Councillors together establish policies, set bargaining objectives and advocate for performers and the industry with all levels of government. Councillors are expected to be active on committees and caucuses, attend ACTRA events, and support ACTRA Toronto's initiatives. While Councillors may engage in lively debate, once a decision is reached, Councillors communicate decisions and actions in solidarity – with one voice.

Are Councillors paid?

Elected Councillors are volunteers who receive a per diem to offset their expenses for attending meetings. In 2021, the per diem is \$140 per full day and \$70 per half day.

What if I am elected and can't make it to a meeting?

Councillors are performers and work obligations, including auditions, take precedence and are considered legitimate reasons for being absent. If a Councillor cannot attend a meeting, the Councillor and President may name an Alternate to attend the Council meeting in their place. Under the By-Laws, any Councillor who is absent from three consecutive regular meetings of Council without cause may be subject to removal by motion of the ACTRA Toronto Council.

Is there training for new Councillors?

Orientation training for Councillors takes place on November 30th, 2021. Training includes an overview of Councillor responsibilities and ACTRA Toronto's policies and procedures including the Union's policies on [Equality](#), [Harassment Prevention](#), [Accessibility](#) and the [use of Social Media](#).

What kind of communications can I expect to see during the election?

In addition to the Election Guide and documents on the website, ACTRA Toronto will send out the following to e-blasts:

- Notice of upcoming elections
- Call for Nominations
- Notice of All-Candidate meetings
- Distribution of ballots
- First reminder to vote
- Second reminder to vote
- Third reminder to vote
- Reminders on each of the last 3 days