SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy Category: Communications	**Version: Three**
Drafted By: M. Smith	**Approved by Board on:** **Sept 1, 2020**
Responsible Person: OFI Board Chair	**Scheduled Review Date:** **Sept 1, 2025**

Introduction

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, YouTube and blogging represent a form of communication for not-for-profit organizations allowing them to engage their members and the wider public more easily than ever before.

However, it is also an area in which rules and boundaries are constantly being tested. This policy acts in conjunction with OFI's Media Relations Policy in order to maximize our social media reach while protecting our public reputation.

Purpose

OFI may choose to engage in social media such as:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Google+
- WordPress/Blogger
- YouTube/Vimeo
- iTunes/Podcasting

OFI seeks to encourage information and link-sharing amongst its membership, staff and volunteers, and seeks to utilize the expertise of its employees and volunteers in generating appropriate social media content.

At the same time, social media posts should be in keeping with the image that OFI wishes to present to the public, and posts made through its social media channels should not damage the organization's reputation in any way.

Due to the fast-moving nature of social media and the constant development of new social media programs, it is important that this policy and its procedures be reviewed at regular intervals.

Policy

OFI's social media use shall be consistent with the following core values:

- **Integrity**: OFI will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about its own work, the work of other organizations, or individuals. In addition, it will post in accordance with the organization's Copyright and Privacy policies.
- **Professionalism**: OFI's social media represents the organization as a whole and should seek to maintain a professional and uniform tone. Staff and volunteers may, from time to time and as appropriate, post on behalf of OFI using its online profiles, but the impression should remain one of a singular organization rather than a group of individuals.
- **Information Sharing**: OFI encourages the sharing and reposting of online information that is relevant, appropriate to its aims, and of interest to its members.

OFI should seek to grow its social media base and use this to engage with existing and potential members, donors and stakeholders. At the same time, a professional balance must be struck which avoids placing the organization's reputation at risk.

SOCIAL MEDIA PROCEDURES

Responsibilities

The Board shall nominate a Communications Officer to co-ordinate OFI's social media management.

The Communications Officer will oversee expansion of social media and help to develop the Social Media Strategy in line with the organization's Media Relations Policy.

Staff and volunteers may, from time to time and where appropriate, post on behalf of OFI using the organization's online social media profiles. This is to be done only with the express knowledge and authorization of the Communications Officer.

The Communications Officer has ultimate responsibility for:

- Ensuring that all posts are in keeping with OFI's core Social Media Policy.
- Ensuring appropriate and timely action is taken to correct or remove inappropriate posts (including defamatory and/or illegal content) and in minimizing the risk of a repeat incident.
- Ensuring that appropriate and timely action is taken in repairing relations with any persons or organizations offended by an inappropriate post.
- Moderating and monitoring public response to social media, such as blog comments and Facebook replies, to ensure that trolling and spamming does not occur, to remove offensive or inappropriate replies, or caution offensive posters, and to reply to any further requests for information generated by the post topic.

It is important to maintain the balance between encouraging discussion and information sharing and maintaining a professional and appropriate online presence.

Delegation
Social media is often a 24/7 occupation; as such, such responsibilities as outlined above may be delegated by the Communications Officer to another appropriate staff

Processes
Posting to social media
Before social media posts are made, volunteers and staff should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is the information I am posting, or reposting, likely to be of interest to OFI's members and stakeholders?
- Is the information in keeping with the interests of the organization and its constituted aims?
- Could the post be construed as an attack on another individual, organization or project?
- Would OFI's donors be happy to read the post?
- If there is a link attached to the post, does the link work, and have I read the information it links to and judged it to be an appropriate source?
- If reposting information, is the original poster an individual or organization that OFI would be happy to associate itself with?
- Are the tone and the content of the post in keeping with other posts made by OFI? Does it maintain the organization's overall tone?

If you are at all uncertain about whether the post is suitable, do not post it until you have discussed it with the Communications Officer. A few moments spent checking can save the organization big problems in the future.

Damage limitation
In the event of a damaging or misleading post being made, the Communications Officer should be notified as soon as possible, and the following actions should occur:

- The offending post should be removed.
- Where necessary an apology should be issued, either publicly or to the individual or organization involved.
- The origin of the offending post should be explored, and steps taken to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.

Moderating social media
The reputation of OFI is first and foremost, and this involves maintaining a safe and friendly environment for its members.

From time to time social media forums may be hijacked by trolls or spammers or attract people who attack other posters or the organization aggressively. In order to maintain a pleasant environment for everybody, these posts need to be moderated.

Freedom of speech is to be encouraged, but if posts contain one or more of the following, it is time to act:

- Excessive or inappropriate use of swearing
- Defamatory, slanderous or aggressive attacks on OFI, other individuals, organizations, projects or public figures
- Breach of copyrighted material not within reasonable use, in the public domain, or available under Creative Commons license
- Breach of data protection or privacy laws
- Repetitive advertisements
- Topics which fall outside the realms of interest to members and stakeholders, and which do not appear to be within the context of a legitimate discussion or enquiry.

If a post appears only once:

- Remove the post as soon as possible
- If possible/appropriate, contact the poster privately to explain why you have removed the post and highlighting OFI's posting guidelines.

If a poster continues to post inappropriate content, or if the post can be considered spam:

- Remove the post as soon as possible
- Ban or block the poster to prevent them from posting again.

Banning and blocking should be used as a last resort only, and only when it is clear that the poster intends to continue to contribute inappropriate content. However, if that is the case, action must be taken swiftly to maintain the welfare of other social media users.

The decision to block, ban and remove posts ultimately lies with the Communication Officer, but may, at their discretion, be delegated to responsible staff and volunteers.

Related Documents

- Media Relations Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Copyright Policy

AUTHORISATION

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