

Physical Disability Australia (PDA) Social Media Policy

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| Drafted By | Tim Harte | Most Recent Review Date | 28/09/2024 |
| Person Responsible | PDA CEO | Next Review Date | 28/09/2026 |

INTRODUCTION

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, YouTube and blogging represent a growing form of communication for not-for-profit organisations, 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 Physical Disability Australia's (PDA's) Media Relations Policy in order to maximise our social media reach while protecting our public reputation.

PURPOSE

PDA may choose to engage in social media such as:

- Twitter (now X)/Threads
- Facebook
- Google+
- WordPress/Blogger
- YouTube/Vimeo
- iTunes/Podcasting
- Instagram/TikTok
- LinkedIn

PDA seeks to encourage information and link-sharing amongst its membership, Directors, employees and volunteers, and seeks to utilise 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 PDA wishes to present to the public, and posts made through its social media channels should not damage the organisation'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

Any use of PDA's social media channels shall be consistent with the following principles:

- **Integrity:** PDA members, Directors, employees and volunteers (users) will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about the organisation's work, the work of other organisations, or individuals. In addition, users will post in accordance with PDA's Copyright and Privacy policies.

- **Professionalism:** PDA's social media represents the organisation as a whole and should maintain a professional and uniform tone. Authorised users posting on behalf of PDA should preserve the impression of a singular organisation rather than a group of individuals. Comment posts by PDA members are welcome and encouraged provided they do not bring the organisation into disrepute. Unprofessional posts and comments coming to the attention of the Communications & Engagement Manager may be deleted. Note the personal use of social media by Office Bearers, Directors, employees and volunteers is addressed in the appendix.
- **Information Sharing:** PDA encourages the sharing and reposting of online information that is relevant, appropriate to its aims, and of interest to its members.

PDA aspires 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 organisation's reputation at risk.

Content Ownership and Copyright

Any content created by PDA staff, volunteers, or members for PDA's social media channels is the intellectual property of PDA unless otherwise agreed in writing. Users must ensure that they have the right to use and share any third-party content, including images, videos, and music, on PDA's social media platforms. Copyright infringements must be avoided, and proper attribution should be given where required.

PDA members and external sources contributing blogs for PDA's website (excluding Board members) must sign the PDA Blog Contributor's Agreement form, which must also be countersigned by a PDA representative and once completed, saved in PDA's files.

Training and Support

The Communications & Engagement Manager is responsible for providing training and ongoing support to authorised social media users. This includes educating users on the policy, best practices for social media engagement, and how to handle negative or inappropriate interactions online.

Accessibility Standards

PDA is committed to ensuring that all social media content is accessible to people with disabilities. This includes providing alt text for images, ensuring video content is captioned, and using clear, simple language in posts. Social media posts should follow best practices for digital accessibility to ensure all members of the community can engage with PDA's content.

Evaluation and Metrics

The Communications & Engagement Manager should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of PDA's Social Media Strategy by monitoring engagement metrics, such as likes, shares, comments, and follower growth. Reports on social media performance should be presented to every full Board meeting to inform future strategies.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Board to appoint the Communications & Engagement Manager of the organisation.

The Communications & Engagement Manager is responsible for:

- Overseeing the expansion of PDA's social media presence and overseeing the development and implementation of PDA's Social Media Strategy in line with the organisation's Media Relations Policy;
- Authorising members, Directors, employees and volunteers to make official PDA social media posts and ensuring they are in alignment with this policy;
- Ensuring appropriate and timely action is taken to correct or remove inappropriate posts/tags (including defamatory and/or illegal content) and in minimising the risk of a repeat incident; and
- Monitoring and moderating 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 more information generated by the post.

Data Protection and Privacy

Users must ensure that all posts comply with relevant data protection and privacy laws. Personal information about PDA members, volunteers, or stakeholders should not be shared on social media without their explicit consent. This includes names, contact details, and any other personally identifiable information.

PROCESS

In addition to the Editorial Guidelines (see Appendix below), the following procedures are to be followed by the Communications & Engagement Manager and authorised social media users.

Posting on Social Media

Before social media posts are made, authorised users should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is the information I am posting, or reposting, likely to be of interest to PDA's members and stakeholders?
- Is the information in keeping with the interests of the organisation and its constituted aims?
- Could the post be construed as an attack on another individual, organisation or project?
- Would PDA's funding providers 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 organisation that PDA would be happy to associate itself with?
- Are the tone and the content of the post in keeping with other posts made by PDA?
- Does it maintain the organisation's overall tone?

If users are at all uncertain about whether their posts are suitable, they should not post them until they have discussed it with the Communications & Engagement Manager. A few moments spent checking can save the organisation big problems in the future.

Responding to Damaging Posts

In the event of a damaging or misleading post being made, the Communications & Engagement Manager 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 organisation involved.
- The origin of the offending post should be explored and steps taken to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.
- In the event of a social media crisis, such as widespread negative publicity or a significant error in a post, the Communications & Engagement Manager should immediately escalate the issue to the Executive Team. A crisis management plan should be activated, including issuing a public statement, providing factual information to correct any misunderstandings, and liaising with key stakeholders.

Monitoring and Moderating Responses to Social Media Posts

To preserve the integrity and professionalism of PDA's social media channels, the Communications & Engagement Manager should monitor responses to posts and take action to maintain a pleasant online environment for members and the broader community.

The Communications & Engagement Manager should take moderating action with regard to the following types of post responses:

- Excessive or inappropriate use of swearing;
- Defamatory, slanderous or aggressive attacks on PDA, other individuals, organisations, projects or public figures;

- Material that breaches data protection or privacy laws;
- Unlawful publication of copyrighted material (not within reasonable use, in the public domain, or available under Creative Commons licenses); and
- 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 inquiry.

In the first instance that post responses of this type are made, the Communications & Engagement Manager shall:

- Remove the post response as soon as possible; and
- Where possible, contact the respondent privately to explain why you have removed the post with references to this policy.

If a respondent continues to post inappropriate content, or if the post can be considered spam, the Communications & Engagement Manager shall:

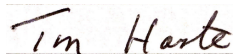
- Remove the responses as soon as possible; and
- Ban or block the respondent to prevent them from posting again.

Banning and blocking should be used as a last resort only, and only when it is clear that the respondent intends to continue to contribute inappropriate content. However, if that is the case, action must be taken swiftly to maintain the integrity and professionalism of PDA's social media channels and a pleasant online environment.

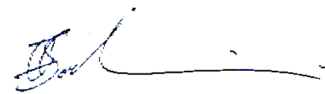
RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Media Relations Policy
- Social Media Strategy

AUTHORISATION



Tim Harte
Interim President
28 September 2024
Physical Disability Australia



Andrew Fairbairn
Interim Executive Officer
28 September 2024
Physical Disability Australia

APPENDIX – EDITORIAL GUIDELINES (FOR BLOG POSTS, NEWSLETTER ARTICLES, VIDEOS AND PODCASTS)

Physical Disability Australia (PDA) is keen to use all forms of social media to engage with members and supporters as well as use it in remaining transparent.

PDA wants to provide members with a voice and an online space to discuss the issues that face people with disabilities.

Submission process and deadlines

Content will need to be sent to the PDA Communications & Engagement Manager at least a week before its proposed publication date.

PDA reserves the right to edit in order to maintain readability and grammatical standards.

All content will be signed off by the PDA President or their proxy (who is the Communications & Engagement Manager).

Formatting

All blog posts should be submitted as a word document and will be published according to the in-house style guide.

Posts should be between 400-800 words long.

Subheading and bullet points are welcome. Photos are encouraged but copyright needs to be attributed.

Referencing Sources

If you are referring to other sources to back up your arguments, please include a hyperlink or links at the end of the document.

Re-posting

PDA encourages cross-media posting but if the content appears for a second time elsewhere, please include “The content of this post first appeared on pda.org.au on <<date>>” as well as the link to the original post.

Author by-lines.

Please include an Author’s by-line and feel free to include your twitter handle or website/LinkedIn address. For example, “*Joe Bloggs is currently studying at Macquarie University and managing his own charity, Charity Name*”.

Videos and podcasts

In addition to the above guidelines as they relate to scripts, video and audio texts should use the highest resolution and fidelity available to the content producer.

APPENDIX – PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

PDA acknowledges that Office Bearers, Directors, employees, and volunteers may use personal social media accounts to express their views and engage with the community. However, when engaging in social media activity on personal accounts, individuals must ensure that their posts do not bring PDA into disrepute or conflict with PDA's values and mission.

GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE:

Professional Conduct

When referring to PDA, its activities, or any stakeholders, individuals should ensure their posts are respectful, accurate, and consistent with PDA's mission and values. Personal opinions should be clearly stated as such and should not imply they are official PDA positions.

Confidentiality

Individuals must not disclose any confidential or proprietary information about PDA, its members, or its operations. This includes but is not limited to, internal discussions, unpublished documents, and private member information.

Disclaimers

If an individual frequently posts about topics related to PDA's work or uses their position at PDA to inform their posts, they should include a disclaimer in their bio or relevant posts, stating: "The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Physical Disability Australia."

Conflict of Interest

Personal social media activities should not conflict with PDA's interests. Individuals should avoid posting content that may be perceived as a conflict of interest or that could negatively impact PDA's reputation or stakeholder relationships.

Prohibited Content

Individuals must not post content that is discriminatory, defamatory, harassing, or otherwise unlawful. Posts should not incite or endorse violence, hatred, or illegal activities.

Public Identification

When publicly identifying themselves as affiliated with PDA on personal social media accounts, individuals should uphold PDA's reputation and reflect the professionalism expected of their role.

Enforcement

PDA reserves the right to address any social media activity that violates this policy. This may include requesting the removal of specific posts, issuing warnings, or taking disciplinary action where necessary, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer roles.

A breach of this policy by a PDA volunteer or staff member in relation to personal social media posts will be regarded as a breach of the PDA Code of Conduct.

Reporting Concerns

If a PDA member, Office Bearer, Director, employee, or volunteer becomes aware of any social media activity that could harm PDA's reputation, they should report it to the Communications & Engagement Manager or the Executive Team immediately.