



The Pearce Foundation Social Media Policy

Introduction:

The Pearce Foundation recognises and embraces the benefits and opportunities that social media can bring as a communication, marketing, influencing and amplification tool. For the purposes of this policy, social media is defined as a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes online social media forums, social apps, blogs, video, and image sharing websites.

This policy is designed to support staff, volunteers and contract staff to use social media effectively, whilst protecting the independence and reputation of the organisation, and preventing any legal issues that may arise.

It is intended for all those who use social media in their work or who reflect an association with The Pearce Foundation on their personal social media accounts.

Please read this policy before engaging in any work-related social media activity, or in any personal social media that might reasonably be seen to be work-related.

Scope and Purpose of this Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to provide encouragement for all support staff, volunteers and contract staff to engage with The Pearce Foundation on social media and to talk about our work, as well as highlighting some of the issues to be aware of when doing so.

This policy is therefore intended to:

- provide guidance on the use of social media in a personal but professional capacity.
- protect and safeguard The Pearce Foundation and its employees when using social media.
- provide guidelines on how to engage with The Pearce Foundation social media content.

This policy deals with the use of all forms of online social media, including but not limited to:

- Popular social networks like **Twitter** and **Facebook**.
- Photographic social networks like **Instagram**.
- Professional social networks like **LinkedIn**.



Responsibilities:

- Everyone who operates a Charity social media account or who uses their personal social media accounts at work has some responsibility for implementing this policy. However, the *Founder* has the key responsibility to ensure that The Pearce Foundation, its staff and volunteers use social media safely, appropriately and in line with the Charity's objectives and to provide apps and tools to manage the Charity's social media presence
- The *Social Media Intern* is responsible to track any key performance indicators. They are also responsible for proactively monitoring for social media security threats, to work with the Founder and Trustees to roll out marketing ideas and campaigns through our social media channels. They are also responsible for ensuring requests for assistance and support made via social media are followed up.

General social media guidelines

The power of social media

The Pearce Foundation recognises that social media offers a platform for the Charity to perform marketing; stay connected with stakeholders and community organisations, and build its profile online.

The Charity also believes its staff should be involved in conversations with other charities/peer groups on social networks. Social media is an excellent way for employees to make useful connections, share ideas and shape discussions.

The Charity therefore encourages employees to use social media to support its goals and objectives.

Basic advice

Regardless of which social networks employees are using, or whether they're using business or personal accounts on Charity time, following these simple rules helps avoid the most common pitfalls:

- a) Know the social network. Employees should spend time becoming familiar with the social network before contributing. It's important to read any FAQs and understand what is and is not acceptable on a network before posting messages or updates.
- b) If unsure, don't post it. Staff should err on the side of caution when posting to social networks. If an employee feels an update or message might cause complaints or offence — or be otherwise unsuitable — they should not post it.
- c) Be thoughtful and polite. Employees should adopt the same level of courtesy used when communicating via email or face to face conversations.



- d) Look out for security threats. Staff members should be on guard for social engineering and phishing attempts. Social networks are also used to distribute spam and malware.
- e) Keep personal use reasonable. Although the Charity believes that having employees who are active on social media can be valuable both to those employees and to the business, staff and volunteers should exercise restraint in how much personal use of social media they make during working hours.
- f) Don't make promises without checking. Some social networks are very public, so employees should not make any commitments or promises on behalf of The Pearce Foundation without checking that the Charity can deliver on the promises. Direct any enquiries to Founder & Trustee, Jane Robbie.
- g) Handle complex queries via other channels. Social networks are not a good place to resolve complicated enquiries. Once an individual/organisation has made contact, employees should handle further communications via the most appropriate channel — usually email or telephone.
- h) Don't escalate things. It's easy to post a quick response to a contentious status update and then regret it. Employees should always take the time to think before responding, and hold back if they are in any doubt at all. Take the discussion off-line out of the public domain. If a response is required this will be handled by the Founder or Social Media Incharge.

Think twice before sending; imagine that you're the recipient - what would your response to the message be?

Use of Charity social media accounts

This part of the social media policy covers all use of social media accounts owned and run by the Charity.

Voice and Tone:

For all the social media conversation – posts, captions, replies, comments, stories, direct message response – use a voice and tone that is Professional, Approachable, Supportive, Warm, Friendly, Kind, Inspiring, Respectful and exhibiting Integrity and connection to People.

Authorised users

- Only people who have been authorised to use the Charity's social networking accounts may do so.
- Authorisation is usually provided by the Founder. It is typically granted when social media-related tasks form a core part of an employee's job.
- Allowing only designated people to use the accounts ensures the Charity's social media presence is consistent and cohesive.

Creating social media accounts



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- New social media accounts in the Charity's name must not be created unless approved by the Founder.
 - The Charity operates its social media presence in line with a strategy that focuses on the most appropriate social networks, given available resources.
 - If there is a case to be made for opening a new account, employees should raise this with the Founder.

Purpose of Charity social media accounts

The Pearce Foundation social media accounts may be used for many different purposes. In general, employee in charge should only post updates, messages or otherwise use these accounts when that use is clearly in line with the Charity's overall objectives. For instance, they may use Charity social media accounts to:

- Respond to enquiries and requests about the Charity's work.
- Share blog posts, articles and other content created by the Charity.
- Share insightful articles, videos, media and other content relevant to the charity sector, but created by others.
- Provide the audience an insight into what goes on at the Charity.
- Promote grant cycle and Charity events/workshops
- Promote the work of Charity Partners.
- To listen and participate in relevant conversations.

Inappropriate content and uses

- Charity social media accounts must not be used to share or spread inappropriate content, or to take part in any activities that could bring the Charity into disrepute.
- When sharing an interesting blog post, article or piece of content, employees should always review the content thoroughly, and should not post a link based solely on a headline.

Use of personal social media accounts at work

The value of social media

The Pearce Foundation recognises that employees' personal social media accounts can generate several benefits. For instance:



- Staff and volunteers can make industry contacts that may be useful in their jobs.
- Employees can discover content to help them learn and develop in their role.
- By posting about the Charity, staff and volunteers can help to build the Charity's profile online.

As a result, the Charity is happy for employees to spend a reasonable amount of time using their personal social media accounts at work.

Personal social media rules

Use during the working day:

- Employees may use their personal social media accounts for work-related purposes during regular hours, but must ensure this is for a specific reason (eg industry research). Social media should not affect the ability of employees to perform their regular duties.
- Use of social media accounts for non-work purposes is restricted to non-work times, such as breaks and during lunch.

Prohibited use:

- You must avoid making any social media communications that could bring the charity into disrepute.
- You should not defame or disparage the charity, its staff and volunteers or professional/charitable contacts and client confidentiality must be upheld at all times.
- You should never post photographs or images of staff colleagues, volunteers, Charity Partners or third parties without their express permission and understanding.

Talking about the Charity:

- Employees and volunteers should ensure it is clear that their social media account does not represent The Pearce Foundation's views or opinions.
- Staff and volunteers may wish to include a disclaimer in social media profiles: 'The views expressed are my own and do not reflect the views of my employer.'

Safe, responsible social media use

The rules in this section apply to any employees using Charity social media accounts.

Users must not:

- Create or transmit material that might be defamatory or incur liability for the Charity.
- Post message, status updates or links to material or content that is inappropriate.



- Inappropriate content includes: pornography, racial or religious slurs, gender-specific comments, information encouraging criminal skills or terrorism, or materials relating to cults, gambling and illegal drugs.
- This definition of inappropriate content or material also covers any text, images or other media that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Use social media for any illegal or criminal activities.
- Broadcast unsolicited views on social, political, religious or other non- business related matters.
- Send or post messages or material that could damage The Pearce Foundation's image or reputation.
- Discuss colleagues, Charity Partners, Skill-Sharers or other stakeholders without their approval.
- Post, upload, forward or link to spam, junk email or chain emails and messages.

Copyright

The Pearce Foundation respects and operates within copyright laws. Users may not use social media to:

- Publish or share any copyrighted software, media or materials owned by third parties, unless permitted by that third party.
- Share links to illegal copies of music, films, games or other software.

If staff and volunteers wish to share content published on another website, they are free to do so if that website has obvious sharing buttons or functions on it.

Security and data protection

Employees should be aware of the security and data protection issues that can arise from using social networks.

Maintain confidentiality

Users must not:

Share or link to any content or information owned by the Charity that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive.

Share or link to any content or information owned by another charity or person that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive.

Share or link to data in any way that could breach the Charity's data protection policy.

Protect social accounts



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- Charity social media accounts should be protected by strong passwords that are changed regularly and shared only with authorised users.
- Staff or volunteers must not use a new piece of software, app or service with any of the Charity's social media accounts without receiving approval from the Founder.

Avoid social scams

- Staff and volunteers should watch for phishing attempts, where scammers may attempt to use deception to obtain information relating to either the Charity or its customers.
- Employees should never reveal sensitive details through social media channels. Customer identities must always be verified in the usual way before any account information is shared or discussed.
- Employees should avoid clicking links in posts, updates and direct messages that look suspicious. In particular, users should look out for URLs contained in generic or vague-sounding direct messages.

Potential sanctions

- Knowingly breaching this social media policy is a serious matter. Users who do so will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
- Employees, contractors and other users may also be held personally liable for violating this policy.
- Where appropriate, the Charity will involve the police or other law enforcement agencies in relation to breaches of this policy.

Addressing complaints

- Any complaints should be discussed between the Founder and Social Media Intern and responded to within 24 hours.
- Complaints should be responded to personally and publicly using the person's name. This personal interaction in the public eye will reflect that the Pearce Foundation cares about the problem being raised.
- Thank the complainant for leaving his or her valuable feedback online and make it clear that the Pearce Foundation values complaints and sees them as an opportunity to improve.
- Do not delete or hide the complaint. Deleting a complaint gives the impression that the Pearce Foundation has something to hide.
- After acknowledging the complaint publicly, approach the complainant privately. Ask them how they would like to communicate (telephone, email or using the private message option on the social media platform). The Founder will discuss the problem with them directly to resolve any issues or misunderstandings.
- Once the complaint is resolved, encourage the complainant to return to social media and post their satisfaction with the outcome if appropriate.
- If after the previous steps, the complainant continues to cause problems and these are unfounded, aggressive or include expletives, racial or cultural slurs, banning or blocking is an



acceptable course of action. If this is the case the Trustees need to be informed and the course of action approved and minuted.

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