



## Social Media Policy

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### 1. Definition of Social media

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

### 2. Why do we use Social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Soundabout’s work. It is important for some Soundabout staff to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of Soundabout's work.

### 3. Scope of this policy

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to Soundabout's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all staff members of all levels, volunteers and trustees, and applies to content posted on both a Soundabout profile and a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, staff must read this policy.

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Soundabout, and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help staff support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

### 4. Social media channels used

Soundabout uses the following social media channels to reach as many families as we can across all age groups:

- Facebook [www.facebook.com/soundaboutuk](http://www.facebook.com/soundaboutuk)
- Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/soundabout.uk/>
- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/soundaboutuk/>
- YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCz kf-oB7V5tTguM36Km5WAA>
- Twitter [www.twitter.com/soundaboutuk](http://www.twitter.com/soundaboutuk)
- TikTok <https://www.tiktok.com/@soundabout.uk>

A social media schedule is implemented and shared with all employees.

### 5. Guidelines

#### 5.1 Appropriate conduct using Soundabout social media channels

1. Everyone having access to our social media channels should be responsible for checking comments and/or enquiries made or escalate to the appropriate team member.
2. Be an ambassador for our charity. Staff should ensure they reflect Soundabout's values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Our tone of voice should be in line with our values, respectful, courteous and friendly. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions in a timely manner, help and engage with them.
3. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images. Please refer to the Inclusive Social Media checklist to ensure all posts are accessible to our beneficiaries (i.e. video captions, font etc).
4. Before posting photos/audio recordings/videos, make sure that all consents have been obtained from all the individuals involved, including staff members. Staff

shouldn't post content about our beneficiaries without their express permission. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.

5. Always check! Staff should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation. Employees should make sure that online postings and communications reflect levels of expertise, and that employees limit their comments to their area of knowledge. Before posting content, it is important to take the time to review the context and what others have said, to be sure that an employee is contributing in an appropriate way.
6. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.
7. Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via Soundabout's social media accounts.
8. Soundabout does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.
9. Staff should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.
10. Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of Soundabout. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, Soundabout can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.
11. Soundabout is not a political or religious organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties or any religious institutions.
12. If a complaint is made on Soundabout's social media channels, staff should seek advice from the CEO before responding. If they are not available, then staff should speak to another Senior Manager. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity.
13. Do not cite or refer to our service users, vendors, business associates or investors, identify them by name or reveal any confidential information related to them without getting their explicit (written) permission in advance. Also, do not discuss or conduct business with a service user, supplier, business associate or investor in an online forum.

14. 14. Everyone having access to our social media channels should monitor them to spot any issues or problems early.
15. Employees are encouraged to create a professional profile instead of using their personal account (i.e. for Facebook, for an employee called Jane Do, use Jane Soundabout).

## 5.2 Appropriate conduct using personal social media

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. Soundabout staff are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with Soundabout's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Soundabout. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Soundabout. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about Soundabout's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "*The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Soundabout's positions, policies or opinions.*"
2. Staff who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at Soundabout should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and CEO, as appropriate. Similarly, staff who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for Soundabout should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and CEO, as appropriate.
3. Staff in senior management must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing Soundabout's view.
4. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with Soundabout and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public, colleagues, partners and funders.
5. Soundabout works with several high profile people, including celebrities and major donors. Please don't approach high profile people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the charity, as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by the CEO. This includes asking for retweets about the charity.
1. If you have any information about high profile people that have a connection to our cause, or if there is someone who you would like to support the charity, please speak to the CEO to share the details.
6. If a staff member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to the charity, they should talk to the CEO immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.
7. Soundabout is not a political or religious organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties or religious institutions. When representing the charity, staff are expected to hold Soundabout's

position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Soundabout, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

8. Never use Soundabout's logos or trademarks for your own personal use.
9. Always protect yourself and the charity. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media sites at work, it is important that you do so safely. Please check your privacy settings on your personal social media.
10. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Do not insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you must always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.
11. We encourage staff to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support Soundabout and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage staff to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the CEO who will respond as appropriate.

As a general guideline, employees should:

- Implement professional boundaries
- Not feel obliged to accept invitations from our community
- Not post any personal opinion that may impact Soundabout's reputation or the confidentiality of the people we serve
- Ensure that all consents have been obtained before posting any photos, videos, audio recordings on our social media

These guidelines should be respected and adhered to at all times for the safety and protection of yourself, other employees, volunteers, our beneficiaries or Music Practitioners.

## **6. Additional considerations**

### **6.1 Copyright law**

It is critical that all staff abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

### **6.2 Compliance and respect of external websites**

Review the terms of use of all social media sites you visit and ensure your use complies with them. Pay particular attention to terms relating to:

- Prohibitions or restrictions on the use of the site, such as those relating to advertising, marketing and promotions or other commercial purposes; for example,

Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (its terms of use) stipulates that those participating in a promotion via Facebook be required to release Facebook from liability in relation to it and acknowledge that it is not sponsored or associating with Facebook.

- Ownership of intellectual property used on the site, or information collected or generated through use of it (for example, any of Soundabout's copyright material and trademarks that might be posted on the site, or service user information that Soundabout collects through the site).
- Requirements for licences allowing the site owner and other third parties to use Soundabout's trademarks or other intellectual property.
- Rights and responsibilities of the site owner and users relating to privacy

### 6.3 Confidentiality

Any communications that staff make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that Soundabout is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

### 6.4 Discrimination and harassment

Staff should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Soundabout social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

### 6.5 Use of social media in the recruitment process

Any advertising of vacancies should be done through the senior management team. Open vacancies are shared on LinkedIn and Soundabout's website.

There should be no systematic or routine checking of candidate's online social media activities during the recruitment process, as conducting these searches might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics, such as religious beliefs or sexual orientation, played a part in a recruitment decision. Please refer to our EDI policy.

### 6.6 Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, staff should ensure the online relationship with Soundabout follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Staff should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. If correspondence via social media is necessary, this should be done using a Soundabout account e.g. Jane Soundabout. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.

## 7. Responsibilities and breach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of Soundabout is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For staff, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Staff who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the CEO.

As social media is constantly changing, this policy will be reviewed regularly (yearly as a minimum) to ensure it is up-to-date.

### Review

	Date	Completed by
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