



Roots *and* Shoots

Social Media Policy

2023-2024

Walnut Tree Walk, Kennington, SE11 6DN

Charity number: 1064070

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Social Media Policy

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Roots and Shoots, 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.

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

Point of Contact for Social Media

The Communications Officer and Officer Manager are responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the Officer Manager. No other staff member can post content on Roots and Shoots' official channels without the permission of the Officer Manager.

Which Social Media Channels Do We Use?

Roots and Shoots uses the following social media channels:

[Roots and Shoots Twitter](#)

- We use our Twitter account to post about Roots and Shoots, promote our events, and to engage with relevant organisations.

[Roots and Shoots Facebook](#)

- We use our Facebook account to post about Roots and Shoots, promote our events, and to engage with the community.

[Roots and Shoots Instagram](#)

- We use our Instagram account to post about Roots and Shoots, promote our events, and to engage with the community.

[Roots and Shoots LinkedIn](#)

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- We use our LinkedIn account to post about Roots and Shoots, advertise job openings, and engage with relevant organisations for our venue hire service.

Guidelines

Using Roots and Shoots' Social Media Channels – Appropriate Conduct

1. The Communications Officer and Officer Manager are responsible for setting up and managing Roots and Shoots' social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Officer Manager will have access to these accounts.
2. Our Communications Officer posts and responds to comments Monday - Thursday, 10am-4pm.
3. Be an ambassador for our brand. Staff should ensure they reflect Roots and Shoots values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Our brand guidelines set out our tone of voice that all staff should refer to when posting content on Roots and Shoots' social media channels.
4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Roots and Shoots, and accurately reflects Roots and Shoots' charitable aims and values.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them
6. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors, and that all images are of a high quality.
7. If other staff wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should speak to the Officer Manager about this.
8. Staff shouldn't post content about supporters or service users without their express permission. If staff are sharing information about supporters, service users or third party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from Roots and Shoots. 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.
9. Always check facts. 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.
10. 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.

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11. Roots and Shoots does not encourage staff or others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.

12. Roots and Shoots does not encourage staff or others 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.

13. Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of Roots and Shoots. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the Senior Management Team can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

14. Roots and Shoots is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but we can't tell people how to vote.

15. Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via Roots and Shoots' social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about Roots and Shoots' position on a particular issue, please speak to the Officer Manager.

17. If a complaint is made on Roots and Shoots' social media channels, staff should seek advice from a member of the senior team depending on the reason for the complaint before responding.

18. 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.

The Senior Management Team regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Roots and Shoots so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a crisis situation, the Senior Management Team will decide what to do next.

If any staff become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on Roots and Shoots' social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Office Manager or a member of the management team immediately.

Use of Personal Social Media Accounts

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

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Roots and Shoots. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Roots and Shoots. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about Roots and Shoots' work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Roots and Shoots' positions, policies or opinions."

2. Staff who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at Roots and Shoots should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and the Senior Management Team. Similarly, staff who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for Roots and Shoots should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and the Senior Management Team.

3. Those in the Senior Management Team, and specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing Roots and Shoots' view.

4. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with Roots and Shoots and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself.

5. Roots and Shoots may occasionally work with high profile people. 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 Communications Officer]. This includes asking for retweets about the charity. 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 Communications Officer to share the details.

7. If a staff member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to Roots and Shoots, they should talk to the Office Manager immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

8. Roots and Shoots is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing Roots and Shoots, staff are expected to hold Roots and Shoots' position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their

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personal political identity from Roots and Shoots, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

9. Never use Roots and Shoots' logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the Office Manager.

10. 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. You can find more information on your responsibilities when using our computer systems in our IT Fair Use Policy.

11. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.

12. 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 Roots and Shoots 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. If you feel that the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to a member of the management team who will respond as appropriate.

Further guidelines

Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring Roots and Shoots into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

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.

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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 Roots and Shoots is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

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 Roots and Shoots 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

Lobbying Act

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law. However, the Lobbying Act, which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

Charities which spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, during the regulated period, need to register with the Electoral Commission. To abide by the Lobbying Act, campaigning activities on social media must not be seen as intending to influence people's voting choice. During these periods, all campaigning activity will be reviewed by the Office Manager.

Use of Social Media in the Recruitment Process

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. This is in line with Roots and Shoots' Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Protection and Intervention

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook. However, if a staff member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Office Manager immediately.

Responsibilities and Breach of Policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of Roots and Shoots 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. Please refer to our Staff Handbook for further information on disciplinary procedures. Staff who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Office Manager.

Public Interest Disclosure

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, if a staff member releases information through Roots and Shoots' social media channels that is considered to be in the interest of the public, Roots and Shoots' Whistleblowing Policy must be initiated before any further action is taken.

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 Roots and Shoots 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. Staff should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and Roots and Shoots content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.

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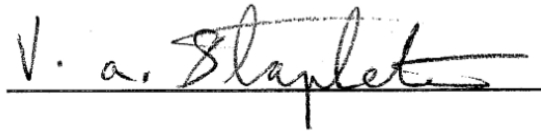
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Signed by the Director:

Handwritten signature of L. C. Phillips in cursive script.

Date: 13/04/2023

Signed by the Chair of Trustees:

Handwritten signature of V. a. Stapleton in cursive script, underlined.

Date: 13/04/2023