INTRODUCTION

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn, 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 and there are significant risk exposures particularly around reputation/brand, legal and regulatory compliance, security and privacy and employee/HR issues. Beyond these risk areas there is also strategic risk involved in social media where social media posts do not align with DCSS Australia's overall strategic goals. This policy acts in conjunction with DCSS Australia Media Relations Policy to maximise our social media reach while protecting our public reputation.

PURPOSE

DCSS Australia may choose to engage in social media such as:

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

DCSS Australia seeks to encourage information and link-sharing amongst its membership, staff 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 DCSS Australia 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.

CORE POLICY

DCSS Australia social media use shall be consistent with the following core values:

Integrity: DCSS Australia will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about its own work, the work of other organisations, or individuals.

In addition, it will post in accordance with the organisation's Copyright and Privacy policies.

Professionalism DCSS Australia social media represents the organisation 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 DCSS Australia using its online profiles, but the impression should remain one of a singular organisations rather than a group of individuals.

Information Sharing: DCSS Australia encourages the sharing and reposting of online information that is relevant, appropriate to its aims, and of interest to its members.

DCSS Australia 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 organisation's reputation at risk.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board shall nominate a Communications Officer to co-ordinate DCSS Australia social media management, with the Managing Director.

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

Staff and volunteers may, from time to time and where appropriate, post on behalf of DCSS Australia using the organisation's online social media profiles.

This is to be done only with the express knowledge and authorisation of the Communications Officer. The Communications Officer has ultimate responsibility for:

- Ensuring that all posts are in keeping with DCSS Australia 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 minimising the risk of a repeat incident.
- Ensuring that appropriate and timely action is taken in repairing relations with any persons or organisations 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 member/volunteer.

PROCESSES

Before social media posts are made, the following two high level principles should act as key controls to address the challenge:

1. Adopt a pre-emptive mindset when it comes to reputation risk – for example, complaints need to be addressed quickly before a systemic trend arises, leaders should advocate a forward-looking approach.

2. Develop capabilities to monitor and manage reputation risk proactively – e.g. read and monitor what people are saying, questions asked, feedback received. Consider the ways DCSS Australia connects with other not-for-profit organisations, its volunteers, regulators etc

As a start, volunteers and staff should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is the information I am posting, or reposting, likely to be of interest to DCSS Australia 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 DCSS Australia 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 organisation that DCSS Australia would be happy to associate itself with?
- Are the tone and the content of the post in keeping with other posts made by DCSS Australia? Does it maintain the organisation'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 organisation 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 organisation involved.
- The origin of the offending post should be explored, and steps taken to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.

If the mistake seems set to grow, or to cause considerable damage to the organisation's reputation, revert to the Media Relations Policy and the Our Community help sheet: What to do in a Media Crisis.

Moderating social media, the reputation of DCSS Australia 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 organisation aggressively.

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 o Defamatory, slanderous or aggressive attacks on DCSS Australia, other individuals, organisations, projects or public figures o 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 o 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 DCSS Australia 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 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 and notify the Managing director ASAP!

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

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Privacy Policy

AUTHORISATION

Version	Reviewed by	Approved by	EMD Approved	Board Endorsement
1	Tom Conley	Tom Conley	10 November 2017	23 November 2017
2	Adriana Saw	Tom Conley	7 November 2018	20 November 2018
3	Kerry Drusetta	Tom Conley	28 February 2019	21 March 2019
Contact: Secretary@dcssaustralia.org				