



Social Media Policy

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Policy Name	Social Media Policy	
Policy Owner	Carol Smithyes, Knowledge Hub	
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Associated Policies		

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Introduction

This policy sets out guidance to Itad staff for using social media.

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard company and employee reputations and help ensure that our messages are shared online responsibly, in line with our values.

The Policy includes guidance on creating content and engaging with others either directly on Itad social media platforms or where there is an identifiable connection to Itad.

It also offers guidance on best practice to use social media to increase awareness, expand networks and realise impact from engaging on social media.

This is not a static policy. The world of social media constantly evolves, so this policy will too. Think of this policy as 'guardrails' rather than train tracks to guide decision making – it will be updated as necessary and adapt to different online situations.

The Policy applies to the use of all forms of social media on any device type.

All staff have a responsibility to follow this Policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it.

Any queries about the interpretation of this policy should be referred to the Knowledge and Communications Manager.

Definitions

In this policy:

Identifiable Personal Use refers to the use of social media where an individual can be identified as an Itad staff member. The identification may be through means such as the person's social media name, character, profile or comments.

Itad staff includes full-time, part-time and fixed-term employees, independent contractors, apprentices, temporary staff, and agency workers. For the purposes of this Policy the term 'staff' encompasses all the above groups of individuals.

Content refers to text, video, imagery or audio created to be shared and communicate information on social media.

Itad owned social media accounts

Itad maintains an active presence on three social media accounts:

BlueSky – @itadltd.bsky.social

LinkedIn – @Itad

X/Twitter – @ItadLtd

They are centrally managed by Itad communications staff, within the Knowledge Hub.

The social media accounts are used to:

- promote engagement with Itad activities and company goals
- share job opportunities
- support collaboration with non-Itad peers (e.g. by helping to amplify messages from our partners as appropriate)
- showcase Itad services, staff, culture, projects, initiatives, global network consultants, evaluations, impact, publications, and events.

Wherever possible, Itad staff are encouraged to engage with Itad owned social media accounts, in-keeping with our values and strategic goals. They can do so by resharing content published by Itad, commenting on published content or submitting an idea to the Knowledge Hub for content that could be published on Itad social media channels.

Other social media accounts with a connection to Itad

Itad staff must read and observe the following before creating a social media account that has a connection to Itad:

- Social media accounts that represent Itad in whole or in part, must be approved by the Communications and Engagement Manager.
- Social media accounts that represent Itad in whole or in substantial part, must clearly indicate that they are maintained by Itad and shall have Itad contact information prominently displayed.
- Content managers of social media accounts that represent Itad in whole or part, must monitor and maintain content to conform with the Itad Ethical Content and Multimedia Guidelines.
- Itad reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy.

Professional use of social media

Itad staff representing the Itad in a professional capacity in social media must conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the company, and in accordance with all Human Resources policies. This includes disclosing themselves as Itad staff within their social media biography.

Itad recognises and protects the concept and practice of freedom of opinion and expression as essential to the proper conduct of research and learning for more effective international development. This right carries with it the duty of Itad staff to use the freedom in a manner consistent with a responsible search for knowledge and truth, grounded in evidence.

Where Itad staff publish comments relating to posts on social media channels, we expect that the comments will relate directly to the individuals area(s) of expertise. In that case, Itad staff may use Itad's name to establish their credentials. This does not restrict the right of an Itad staff member to freely express opinions in their private capacity as an individual member of society, but statements made in this context should not include Itad's name.

Opinion disclaimers

Disclaimers may help limit your legal liability for such things as errors and omissions. If you identify yourself as a member of Itad staff on professional or personal social media profiles please make it clear that the opinions are your own and not those of the company. Some example disclaimers:

- Opinions are my own and not the views of my employer
- My posts are my own
- My opinions are my own
- Own opinions

If you identify yourself as a member of the company, and include a disclaimer, you will still need observe all points of this Policy – the disclaimer will do little to protect you or the company if you are irresponsible online.

Personal use of social media

Itad does not seek to intervene in staff use of social media in their personal lives. However, Itad staff must be aware that their activity could have an impact on the perception of the Itad, directly or indirectly.

For example, for many negative press stories on the aid sector, journalists search Facebook pictures (or similar) for company staff having a fun time (at a hotel, by a pool, partying, etc) and suggesting it is at the tax payers' expense. In order to protect yourselves and the company, we encourage staff to make sure that only your friends can see your personal photos use discretion when posting work-related updates. See privacy settings guidance for [BlueSky](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [X/Twitter](#).

Itad staff are personally responsible for how they use social media in a personal capacity, including for the content they publish.

Rules for using social media

In professional use and identifiable personal use of social media, Itad staff must:

- Only disclose and discuss publicly available information.
- Ensure that all content published complies with all relevant policies of Itad.

- Note that many of our contracts/projects limit the amount and type of external communications we can conduct. If unsure of the confidentiality terms of an Itad project, staff should check with the relevant Project Management Manager.
- Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading.
- Expressly state that the stated views are their own and are not those of Itad (unless they are explicitly authorised by Itad). This means that a personal site or profile must carry this disclaimer and that the Itad-hosted accounts will do so.
- Be professional in nature.
- Adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website.
- Comply with the laws of copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination and harassment, and all other applicable laws.

In professional use and identifiable personal use of social media, Itad staff must not:

- Make any comment or post material that is, or might be construed to be, offensive, obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, hateful, racist or sexist towards any person.
- Make any comment or post material that creates, or might be construed to create, a risk to the health and safety of a staff member, contractor, or other person, including material that amounts to 'unacceptable behaviour' such as bullying, psychological or emotional violence, coercion, harassment, aggressive or abusive comments or behaviour, and/or unreasonable demands or undue pressure.
- Endorse any campaign or appeal on behalf of Itad without prior approval or authorisation.
- Make any comment or post material that infringes copyright, is fraudulent, breaches intellectual property rights, constitutes a contempt of court, constitutes stalking, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful.
- Use the identity or likeness of another employee, contractor, student or other stakeholder of the Itad.
- Use or disclose any confidential information obtained in their capacity as an employee or contractor of Itad.
- Subject to the protection afforded by the UK whistleblowing law as part of the Public Disclosure Act 1998, make any comment or post material that might otherwise cause damage to Itad's reputation or bring it into disrepute.
- Use profane or offensive language or content.
- Include sexually explicit or pornographic content or links to sexually explicit or pornographic content.

- Include information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
- Include solicitations of commerce.
- Use Itad's logo unless prior approval has been obtained from the Communications and Engagement Manager.

Using images/video/audio

Great care must be used when using any images/video/audio on social media, including those obtained by Itad staff in the course of their work. This is because once imagery is published on social media, its distribution cannot be controlled and it can be shared very widely and quickly.

Itad staff are expected to follow the Itad Guidelines on Sourcing and Using Images Ethically and Legally and make reasonable attempts to ask for permission (informed consent) before sharing any content where the participant (contributor) maybe identifiable. This includes explaining to the contributor how the content will be used in work-related social media.

In particular, Itad staff should not post content that might:

- Be embarrassing to any individual featured or that could be construed as placing an individual in a negative or false light.
- Cause someone to believe that their name, image, likeness or other identifying aspect of their identity is being used, without permission, for commercial purposes.
- Identify the individual or their specific location without their informed consent.
- Use any image that distorts the reality of the situation being represented.

Special care must always be taken when dealing with images of vulnerable groups, (e.g. minors, patients or research subjects). Generally speaking, such images should never be used for social media posting or distribution unless prior permission is obtained.

Most images and videos are subject to copyright and occasionally trademark, design and other intellectual property protection. Itad staff members should verify that their use of images and/or video:

- Falls within explicit license terms of the image or video.
- Is covered by copyright permission (as distinct from privacy clearance) to use the image or video in the way proposed.

Further advice on the use of images is contained in the Itad Guidelines on Sourcing and Using Images Ethically and Legally .

Best practice for using social media

For a successful social media presence that enhances professional reputation and increases the awareness and engagement with our work, Itad staff should:

- **Provide a new perspective on an issue or conversation:** apply expertise and insight to give a fresh slant on a topic.
- **Be relevant, accurate and timely:** provide useful information on time and do not publish misleading information.
- **Be respectful:** be professional at all times as this can directly reflect on perception of the individual and Itad.
- **Follow and engage:** actively participate in conversations to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is relevant and of interest to our target audiences.
- **Recognise that social media content can and will live forever:** be aware that social media is not anonymous, and acts as a permanent record. It is a means of engaging directly and building reputation that lasts.
- **Separate the personal from the professional:** there is no clear line between an Itad staff member's work life and personal life. One should always be honest and respectful in both capacities. Itad staff should always publish on social media keeping in mind that other people may know their identity and it is not anonymous. They should never write anything that they would not say openly to all parties involved.
- **Avoid hazardous materials:** refrain from posting or linking to any materials that are defamatory, threatening, harassing, indecent, discriminatory, infringe copyright, constitute a contempt of court, or are otherwise unlawful.
- **Keep confidentiality:** refrain from posting any confidential or proprietary information. If live tweeting, check whether the event you want to live tweet is operating under Chatham House rule – this will limit what you can say online.
- **Be aware of privacy obligations:** these should always be considered prior to posting information on any forum of social media, especially if the identity of an individual can be ascertained from the information provided. In particular, personal information gained through employment or association with Itad should not be posted in social media.
- **Identify, if appropriate:** when relevant, Itad staff should identify their affiliation with the company and their area of specialisation.

For staff working, or planning to work overseas

- **Think before you post:** for example, political posts or those related to LGBTQI issues are fine in the UK but may cause problems for you while travelling, particularly to those countries with repressive or unstable regimes.

- **Do not put yourself at risk:** for example, if you are in a high-risk location, posting from the field could put you in potential danger. Regardless of where you are working, we recommend that you never 'check-in' or geo-tag your posts.

Find out more about [staying safe on social media while travelling](#) (access via Itad M-Files).

Keeping your social media account safe

- Unattended social media accounts can be a target for hackers, who could start posting fraudulent messages under your name – if you have a social media account, particularly one you use for work, please check it and update your password regularly.
- Avoid using passwords based upon information you are likely to post on your social media e.g. family or pet names. A common tactic for hackers is to trawl your social media accounts and use this sort of information to their advantage.
- Third party apps with access to your social media profiles can be particularly vulnerable to hackers – revoke permission for those you don't use and keep up to date with security breaches.
- Phishing scams are common on social media and will try to make you hand over personal information – do not click on links if you are unsure where they lead. Fraudulent support accounts are particularly common (e.g. bank customer support services) – be aware when interacting with them via social media.
- Password/code protect your mobile phone – if an unprotected device is lost or stolen, one tap is all it will take to access your social media accounts.
- 2-Factor Authentication has been proven as the most effective way to secure your accounts. Consider installing it for all your sensitive accounts, if you don't have it is a case of not if but when you will be hacked.

Breach of this Policy

Depending on the circumstances, non-compliance with this Policy may constitute a breach of employment or contractual obligations, misconduct, sexual harassment, discrimination, or some other contravention of policy, procedure or the law. Non-compliance may be investigated under the Disciplinary Policy.

If directed by Itad, an Itad staff member must remove, and cooperate with all attempts to remove, any comment, post or other online content that Itad deems to be in breach of this policy or any other Itad policy.

Itad staff who fail to comply with this Policy may face disciplinary action which could result in termination of their employment or engagement.

Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for reading, understanding and following this Policy.

Itad's Executive Committee has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Policy is implemented effectively.

They delegate day-to-day responsibility to the:

- Head of Human Resources
- Head of Safeguarding
- Knowledge and Communications Manager.

Managing and reporting concerns

Data breaches and any misuse of social media should be reported immediately to the Executive Committee and the Communications and Engagement Manager. Email: exco@itad.com and communications@itad.com

If you would prefer that your concern is treated anonymously, you can e-mail reportingconcerns@itad.com, clearly stating that you wish to remain anonymous.

Once a breach or concern is reported, Itad will investigate the issue, determine the appropriate response, and act accordingly.

Itad staff should not respond individually to issues on social media as this could potentially inflame the situation.

For urgent or general social media support that does not constitute a breach of this Policy, for example if you are trolled or need support responding to a challenging comment that relates to you or your work, please contact the Knowledge and Communications Manager