



Social Media **POLICY** *for Landcare groups*

TEMPLATE 004
VERSION 2 | Date: 20-02-2019

INTRODUCTION Social media provides Hastings Landcare Inc with the opportunity to engage in ongoing conversations with its diverse stakeholder base. It allows Hastings Landcare Inc to connect with the community, improve our understanding of current attitudes and issues and share Landcare activities and programs.

Hastings Landcare Inc supports its employees' and volunteers' participation in social media as a means of complementing traditional communication channels (eg. web, print, radio, television).

DEFINITION Social Media refers to the platforms of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, MySpace, LinkedIn, Vimeo, Pinterest, Sharing Stories and other similar social media platforms that come into being.

SCOPE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE This policy applies to all staff, contractors and committee of Hastings Landcare Inc. It applies to these uses of social media:

- Creating a social media presence as an official representative of Hastings Landcare Inc;
- Publishing messages, responding to comments + uploading content, including data, to official, public facing Hastings Landcare Inc social media channels and / or third party social media channels;
- Making reference to Hastings Landcare Inc within a private capacity on social media; and
- When a staff member participates in discussion that relates directly or indirectly to the field in which they are employed by Hastings Landcare Inc.

PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT Importantly, all content posted on social media sites immediately becomes public information, freely available to those who access it and potentially permanent, difficult to erase, remove or retract.

Staff use of social media should adhere to the same standard of professional practice and conduct associated with all communication activities. Staff are to operate within the Hastings Landcare Inc's social media policy and within

the professional standard of the Hastings Landcare Inc Code of Conduct. This includes:

- Be honest, polite and considerate
- Be apolitical and impartial when using social media for official purposes.
- Demonstrate the values of Hastings Landcare Inc.
- Staff must not do anything that may adversely affect Hastings Landcare Inc, or use social media in a way that could bring Hastings Landcare Inc into disrepute. This may lead to disciplinary action.
- All staff and committee must exercise caution and adopt a risk minimisation approach when using social media.

OFFICIAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Staff / volunteers participating in an official capacity on third party or Hastings Landcare Inc hosted social media platforms must:

- Have the prior consent of the President to act as an authorised social media user.
- Only post or discuss information that is publicly available.
- Disclose in a manner suitable to the platform that they are an employee / volunteer of Hastings Landcare Inc and specify their role within Hastings Landcare Inc.
- Do not mix personal views with official comments.
- Inform the President of any media involvement or interest by journalists.
- Follow and comply with the requirements of existing Hastings Landcare Inc policies.
- Ensure there is no conflict of interest for Hastings Landcare Inc.
- Contribute to reporting on the performance of social media channels against Hastings Landcare Inc targets for community engagement.

PRIVATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Staff / committee participating in social media in a private capacity are expected to:

- Exercise sound judgement and behave in accordance with Hastings Landcare Inc policy, values and Code of Conduct.
- Clearly separate private opinions from the Hastings Landcare Inc official position.
- Not allow the use of social media to undermine their effectiveness at work.
- Use a private social media account, established with a private email address (staff / committee must not use a Hastings Landcare Inc social media account or a Hastings Landcare Inc email address for private use of social media).
- Not disclose confidential information obtained through work.

- Understand the risks, benefits and implications that may arise from making private contributions to discussions that relate to their work.
- Seek advice from the President to address any issues or concerns.

ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT / CHAIRPERSON Roles of the President in relation to social media include:

- Maintain a register of official social media accounts and channels.
- Arrange social media training where appropriate.
- Advise on and approve social media content frameworks.
- Track and monitor discussions and respond to emerging issues.
- Ensure that any staff / volunteers who are authorised to operate social media are aware of this policy.
- Ensure adherence to protocols such as photo release forms + Child Protection Guidelines.
- Oversee the use of social media tools.
- Maintain internal processes to ensure quality, technical accuracy and currency of content posted to social media sites.
- Authorise staff / volunteers to represent Hastings Landcare Inc in approved social media channels.

AUTHORISATION:

This version was approved on: 20-02-2019

This version takes effect on: 20-02-2019

Authorised by: *Walzeroff*

Chairperson: *L. Gale*

Chairperson signature: *L. Gale*

DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of December 2013. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Landcare NSW or the user's independent advisor.

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Department of Primary Industries

