

Social Media Policy and Procedure

IPEM social media guidelines

Updated January 2019

Introduction

The proliferation of social media in the last ten years has enabled organisations to communicate directly with their target audiences, for little or no cost, without the need to rely on 'traditional' media channels (such as newspapers, radio and TV). It also offers the public an easy way to communicate directly with organisations, often with the expectation of an instant response. It is important therefore that IPEM is able to utilise social media to best effect, to increase its reach and its engagement with members, potential members, stakeholders and the wider public.

Social media also gives a public platform to us all as individuals – as employees, volunteers, supporters or customers. We now all have the power to enhance or damage an organisation's reputation at the click of a button.

These guidelines are intended make staff and members aware of the positive and negative impact that their social media use can have, and give guidance on appropriate use of social media, in order to maximise opportunities and minimise risk.

What do we mean by social media?

Social media channels are internet based platforms that allow users to create and share content. Popular examples in the UK include Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Tumblr, Pinterest and Instagram. For the purpose of these guidelines, we are including blogs as a type of social media.

For the purpose of these guidelines mailing lists like Jiscmail are also included since they share a number of the characteristics of social media listed above.

Official IPEM social media channels

IPEM has a Twitter account (@ipemnews) and LinkedIn page, both of which are managed by the National Office. These are good ways for IPEM to raise the profile of its work, and its members' expertise; to promote events and opportunities to members and others; to interest a wider audience in its work; and to keep in touch informally with members and stakeholders, in addition to more regular means of communication.

The External Relations Manager and the Communications and Development Manager are jointly responsible for keeping the channels updated with relevant content from IPEM, monitoring and responding to comments and enquiries that come in via these channels, and promoting the work of other organisations (through 'retweets' for example) as appropriate.

Affiliated social media channels

- The IPEM Trainee Network (ITN) has a Facebook page, which is managed by various members of the Trainee Network.
- The Scope editorial team, and a number of SIGs, have established their own Twitter accounts, as a way to engage with a specific sub-set of the general IPEM audience.
- The Vice President – External has her own blog on Blogspot writing about her own personal views.

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These are also welcome opportunities to highlight specific areas of IPEM's work, to engage with members and other contacts informally, and to promote specific activities such as meetings or events.

Because these accounts use IPEM's name, it is important that anyone tweeting from, or writing for, these accounts is mindful that they will be seen as a representative of IPEM, even if they are not giving a formal statement on behalf of IPEM.

This is a significant responsibility for a volunteer to undertake; anyone doing so may find the following principles helpful:

- **Quality and accuracy.** To ensure your Twitter account/Facebook page/blog gives a good impression of IPEM, make sure content is well written (check for spelling mistakes) and updated regularly. Double check any facts and make sure links are working before you tweet them.
- **Purpose.** Be clear about the purpose of the account, and its intended audience, and ensure all posts, tweets and retweets are relevant to that.
- **Non-discriminatory.** Never tweet (or retweet) anything that could be deemed to be offensive, derogatory, bullying or harassment.
- **Respecting confidentiality.** Never post, tweet (or retweet) anything that might reveal confidential information or intellectual property.
- **Respecting copyright.** Never use someone else's images or content without their permission. Conference speakers may ask that delegates to not tweet pictures of their presentations, and this should always be respected.
- **Respecting privacy.** Don't publish pictures of others without their consent.
- **Upholding IPEM's reputation.** Social media channels are not an appropriate place to criticise IPEM, IPEM's staff, other IPEM members or our partner or stakeholder organisations.
- **Non-political.** As a charity, it is important that IPEM maintains its independence and does not support any one political party, or make comments that can be construed as pursuing a particular political agenda.

If a group within IPEM is interested in setting up a social media account, this should first be discussed within the group to agree the intended purpose and audience, and identify who will be responsible for providing the content and monitoring any interaction. Once a decision has been reached, this should be communicated to the Communications and Development Manager, Eva McClean (eva@ipem.ac.uk) who can assist with branding, promoting the new account etc. If a group is unsure whether or not social media might be a useful tool for them, the Communications and Development Manager or External Relations Manager (sean@ipem.ac.uk) can provide advice.

Oversight and strategy

The National Office, via the Communications and Development Manager and the External Relations Manager, is responsible for overseeing all of IPEM's communications and external relations activity. They monitor activity on social media alongside other forms of communication, to see how well they are supporting the achievement of IPEM's strategic aims. The National Office will review these guidelines, and IPEM's overall communications policy, at regular intervals.

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Staff and members using social media in a personal capacity

Many staff and members will have their own social media accounts. Some will choose to keep them strictly personal but many will refer to their work lives too. We would encourage staff and members to engage with IPEM on social media, 'retweeting' and 'liking' content, for example, to help us reach an ever wider audience.

Employees and members are welcome to say they work for/ are members of IPEM, but where possible, for example, on blogs, should include something in their profile that states *'The views I express here are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer'*.

When commenting on social media, it is important to be clear that you are not speaking for/ on behalf of IPEM so if, for example, you receive a query about IPEM via social media you should refer it to National Office/ the appropriate IPEM official rather than answer it yourself from your personal account. The IPEM logo should not be used on personal social media accounts.

Employees are expected to adhere to principles similar to those listed above, when using social media, to avoid bringing the organisation into disrepute. These can be found in the IPEM Staff Handbook.

Following and retweeting companies

Members are free to follow companies on Twitter and LinkedIn, especially those companies who are corporate members of IPEM (see the Company Members page of the website for a list of current members).

If a member is, however, in some way representing IPEM, or purporting to represent IPEM, there does need to be a degree of judgement shown when retweeting anything a company might tweet about. In general, you should **not** retweet anything which could possibly be construed as endorsement of a company's product or anything that could be seen as blatant self-promotion or is overtly commercial in nature. For example, it is fine to retweet something like XYZ Ltd saying to visit its company stand at a conference or event but not to retweet XYZ Ltd saying it is the world leader in dosimetry equipment.

Members, especially the administrators of the Special Interest Group Twitter accounts, should refer to, and abide by, IPEM's Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct, which can be found on the website.

Existing Twitter accounts

@IPEM_UNIR_SIG - Ultrasound and Non-ionising Radiation SIG
@IPEM_NM_SIG - Nuclear Medicine SIG
@IPEM_MR_SIG - Magnetic Resonance Imaging SIG
@IPEM_RP_SIG - Radiation Protection SIG
@IPEM_RTSIG - Radiotherapy SIG
@REBSIG_IPEM - Rehabilitation Engineering & Biomechanics SIG
@IPEM_technet - Set up by the Technologists Advisory Group
@IPEMScope - Scope magazine's own Twitter account
@IPEMConferences - National Office conference team's Twitter account