

## Introduction

Social media is online media for individuals to gather in online communities to create, share content, and participate, and has become an essential part of our personal and working lives.

For PIA, it provides major platforms for communicating and relating to members, colleagues, government, business and communities. It helps to deliver improved services and enhance transparency and participation.

This policy outlines how PIA uses, manages and engages with the community and industry through social media, for the purposes of PIA’s brand, reputation, and marketing. It helps mitigate risk for PIA and compliance with relevant social media legislation designed to protect people from harm that might arise from the inappropriate use of social media.

This policy also covers employees’ and volunteers’ personal use of social media.

## Contents

Introduction .....	1
Definitions .....	2
Social Media.....	2
Corporate Use .....	2
Personal Use.....	2
Corporate Account.....	2
Groups .....	2
Policy .....	2
Authorisation .....	3
Inappropriate use .....	3
Standards of Use.....	4
Additional Personal Use Guidelines .....	4
Policy Breach.....	4
Corporate Use Procedures .....	5
Accounts.....	5
Creating a new account.....	5
Naming Conventions .....	5
Logos / Cover Photos.....	5
Responsibility for Monitoring and Moderating .....	6
Divisions and Groups.....	6
Related Documentation and Resources.....	6
Version Control .....	7

## Definitions

### Social Media

For the purpose of this policy, social media is defined as ‘any conversation, interaction, or activity that occurs online, where people can publicly share information or data that might impact on PIA or the people who use our services’.

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes, but is not limited to:

- social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)
- video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, Instagram)
- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- micro-blogging (e.g. X)
- wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups)
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second Life)
- comments on online news articles.

### Corporate Use

Corporate use is when an employee, volunteer or contractor uses social media as an authorised representative of PIA. An alternative definition is when an employee, volunteer or contractor is posting from a social media account that is labelled as an official ‘PIA’ account.

### Personal Use

Personal use is when an employee or volunteer uses social media as themselves, not officially representing the PIA organisation, but identifying themselves as affiliated with PIA in their online biographies, profiles or posts, or through other digital platforms.

### Corporate Account

A corporate account (e.g. a blog, webpage, X account, Facebook page, etc.) that represents PIA should stipulate this within its bio, page or account description. It must be sanctioned by the Chief Executive Officer.

### Groups

A Group is an official PIA Group such as a network (e.g. Emerging Planners Network).

## Policy

Employees must understand the potential for damage (either directly or indirectly) to PIA when using social media in an authorised or personal capacity when they can be identified as an employee of PIA.

Accordingly, all employees who use social media, either as part of their job or personally, must adhere to PIA’s social media policy to ensure that the risk of such damage is minimised.

Personal use of social media is up to the individual employee; however, individuals are accountable for the consequences of their actions on social media and will be disciplined according to the policies and code of conduct of PIA and/or their individual employment agreements.

## Authorisation

Before engaging in social media as a representative of PIA, including publishing information or making any comment on its behalf, you must have authorisation to do so. You may not comment about or for PIA unless you are authorised by the relevant Delegations of Authority of the Chief Executive Officer.

## Inappropriate use

When using social media for Corporate Use or Personal Use, you must not:

- Conduct a private business on PIA's social media presence
- Stalk, bully, troll or marginalise any individual or group
- Post, respond to, or react to (thumbs up, angry face, laugh emoji, etc.) material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory<sup>1</sup>, threatening, harassing, bullying<sup>2</sup>, discriminatory, racist, sexist, or that breaches any applicable legislation
- Use language that is discriminatory, defamatory, abusive or otherwise objectionable
- Access or upload pornographic, gambling or illegal content, including extreme images of graphic content (blood and gore etc.) or information regarding activity relating to firearms, bombs, terrorism etc.
- Access sites that promote hatred or extreme/fundamental beliefs and values
- Hack or attempt to infiltrate the systems of PIA or another organisation
- Denigrate or unreasonably criticise external organisations, or their employees, volunteers or supporters
- Engage in any activity that interferes with work commitments
- Use or disclose any of PIA's confidential information (including personal information about members, suppliers, or employees) or intellectual property
- Disclose information that is not in the public domain, unless it's only a PIA announcement
- Use copyrighted images or material without permission
- Promote paid endorsements of any kind, including in-kind services or gifts (excluding paid advertising which will benefit PIA members)
- Imply that you are authorised to speak as a representative of PIA, or give the impression that the views you express are those of PIA unless you are authorised to do so;
- Suggest or imply that PIA endorses individual businesses, moneymaking ventures or particular political candidates or parties
- Make any comment, post any material, or engage in any activity that might otherwise cause damage to PIA, its employees, clients, members or suppliers or bring PIA into disrepute.

It is the duty of everyone who is affiliated with PIA to alert the National Marketing and Brand Manager, Chief Operating Officer or Chief Executive Officer to any inappropriate content they encounter.

---

<sup>1</sup> You should refrain from publishing material that may cause injury to another person, organisation, association or PIA's reputation.

<sup>2</sup> You are also expected to treat your colleagues with respect and dignity and must ensure any posting on social media sites or via social media direct messaging services does not constitute bullying and/or harassment.

## Standards of Use

PIA employees and volunteers are encouraged to participate in social media. Whenever you are interacting on social media in a Corporate Use or Personal Use capacity, the following standards should be observed. You shall:

- respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally
- not do anything that breaches your terms of employment or reference
- not harass, bully or intimidate
- acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly
- not knowingly post inaccurate or misleading information
- link to online references and original source materials directly, where relevant
- champion PIA and its services
- only disclose and comment on information that is in the public domain
- comply with the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws
- ensure that all content published complies with PIA's policies and relevant legislation
- do no harm or potential harm to PIA or any of PIA's employees, volunteers, business associates, members or clients or any other groups or entities that PIA may be associated with (this includes harm that is reasonably foreseeable, such as harm or potential harm to PIA's reputation or external relationships).

## Additional Personal Use Guidelines

Social Media accounts owned by employees or volunteers for personal reasons can display an affiliation to PIA as long as the following is undertaken:

- It should not have the affiliation with PIA as the primary identifier (for example, the PIA logo should not be the account avatar or profile picture).
- The account should include a statement that all views expressed on the platform are the person's own, and any posts or comments that may be construed as representing PIA should have this stated explicitly

Employees and volunteers who use social media but do not identify themselves as affiliated with PIA in their online biographies, profiles or posts should still be mindful that the nature of the online world means that they could be traced back to the organisation through their online presence.

## Policy Breach

Misuse of social media can have serious consequences for PIA, and therefore serious consequences in terms of disciplinary action for employees and volunteers.

PIA managers are responsible for ensuring adherence to the Official Social Media Policy by their employees and/or volunteers. This includes undertaking appropriate risk assessment and performance management or disciplinary action following any suspected or identified breach.

In the event of serious misconduct, disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal may occur.

## Corporate Use Procedures

### Accounts

The ONLY approved corporate PIA accounts are listed in the PIA Staff Handbook in the MarComms, Social Media Accounts section. The National Marketing and Brand Manager is responsible for managing the list.

### Creating a new account

Permission from the Chief Executive Officer is required to establish any corporate social media account. This is to ensure:

- Consistency across naming conventions to differentiate National and Division accounts and Groups across Divisions;
- That Divisions and Groups are not disadvantaged by other Groups securing a generalised domain or social media account name;
- That all PIA social media accounts are monitored and remain current and in use to avoid dormancy;
- That all login information is stored centrally.

Permission to establish social media accounts should be sought from the Chief Executive Officer via a written proposal that includes a trial period.

The Chief Executive Officer shall be provided with the login details and password for the account and may modify posts or disable the account without notice.

After a successful trial period the new account should be added to the list of Corporate PIA Accounts in the PIA Staff Handbook, MarComms, Social Media Accounts section. If unsuccessful, the account must be closed.

The login and password details of all social media accounts shall be given to the Brand and Marketing Manager and stored on a central system accessible by authorised employees only. The Chief Executive Officer or delegate may operate, disable, or close any PIA social media accounts without notice if required for the protection of PIA's brand and reputation.

### Naming Conventions

Social media account names or descriptions can make reference to the State or Territory or geographical location, as appropriate.

For example, Facebook names:

- Planning Institute of Australia
- Planning Institute of Australia - Victoria
- Queensland Emerging Planners
- Victorian Emerging Planners

### Logos / Cover Photos

An account's profile picture/avatar should always be PIA's logo or the Group's approved PIA logo.

A cover photo or banner does not need to be an officially approved PIA logo or banner, but users are reminded to be aware of copyright restrictions. It is always recommended to work with National Brand and Marketing Manager on these images or using PIA's corporate Canva account.

## Responsibility for Monitoring and Moderating

Moderating is the process of checking online content and removing offensive material. This is usually by 'hiding' the problem content from view. It can also mean intervening in conversations that are heated or where misunderstandings have emerged, to warn participants or to help steer conversations in a more positive direction.

PIA has a duty to minimise any harm that could result from any of its social media platforms. This means that PIA must endeavour to keep its social media presence free of content – including comments made by the public responding to PIA content – that could reasonably be perceived as harmful, discriminatory, defamatory, bullying, harassing, etc.

Failure to remove potentially harmful content or comments can have serious moral and legal consequences.

Every PIA employee and volunteer using social media has a general responsibility to report any potentially harmful content to their manager, the National Marketing and Brand Manager, the Chief Operating Officer or the Chief Executive Officer as soon as possible so it can be moderated.

The designated 'admin' for a social media page is responsible for monitoring and moderating their platform. The designated admin with this responsibility will be identified in the PIA Social Media Accounts spreadsheet.

## Divisions and Groups

PIA Divisions and Groups have responsibility over their operations regarding social media delivered in their name. However, they should be aware of, and coordinate their activities with, PIA's broader social media presence where necessary. They must also heed all directions given to them by PIA staff.

Divisions and Groups have an obligation to ensure they comply with this policy, that their social media account is maintained, that best practices are used, and that operators are adequately trained to use the medium.

Social media accounts run by volunteers should nominate a designated admin person as the primary contact person, notify their relevant PIA manager of who this person is. The admin person's name and details will be recorded on the central spreadsheet with all of PIA's account login details. Whilst the admin will have access to the account password, all passwords must be kept up to date at all times with the Brand and Marketing Manager.

At least one PIA staff member must be given admin access to the social media account, with the highest possible permissions, for example, "full control" in Facebook. This is to ensure account security and continuity of the account during periods of volunteer rotation.

## Related Documentation and Resources

- PIA **HR01** Employee Code of Conduct
- PIA **HR03** Prevention of Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying
- PIA **HR09** Telephone, Internet, and Email
- PIA **MC04** Spokesperson Policy

## Version Control

---

**Authorising Entity:** Chief Executive Officer

---

<b>Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Revision Notes</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>
1.	Multiple	Original documents – 1. Corporate Use of Social Media and 2. Personal Use of Social Media	13 August 2019
2.	Multiple	Personal Use of Social Media – Spinach Ventures review	11 December 2023
3.	Brenda Payne, Executive and Board Coordinator Kelsey Rowe, National Marketing and Brand Manager Matt Collins, Chief Executive Officer	Review and merger of Corporate Use and Personal Use of Social Media Policies into one policy. Introduction of <i>Responsibility for Monitoring and Moderating</i> section.	4 July 2025
3.1	Brenda Payne, Executive and Board Coordinator	Minor update to a point under Inappropriate Use.	11 August 2025

---