

## **IOR Policy on Social Media**

### **Introduction**

The widespread availability and use of social networking applications bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with our audiences and members in new ways. It is important that we use these technologies and services effectively, flexibly and with some elements of consistency in messaging and style in order to build a recognisable profile for the IOR. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our obligations as a Charity and our duties to members, stakeholders, legal responsibilities, and IOR's standing and reputation in the RACHP community.

Fundamentally, the IOR aims to use social media engagement to:

- Increase awareness of the IOR's Charitable objectives and its activities
- Increase engagement with members and potential members
- Increase engagement with stakeholders and other partners
- Disseminate relevant and timely information
- Drive traffic to the IOR website

There is an opportunity to reach and influence target audiences through their online discussions and demonstrate that the IOR is a listening, helpful and technologically modern organisation, attuned and responsive to its members needs and interests, its stakeholders and the public. It is important to remember that social media output must not conflict with IOR's charitable objects and policies, and that negative messages should not be allowed to proliferate.

These helpful tips and guidance and the policy notes are designed for:

- Staff, trustees or volunteers setting up a social media account in connection to the IOR.
- Staff, trustees or volunteers using IOR social media.
- Staff using IOR social media in connection with work
- Staff closing a social media account in connection to work

They will help ensure that volunteers, trustees, and staff generating IOR related social media content have useful guidance to help them formulate appropriate communications with confidence. The aim is that all IOR social media communications are representative of the IOR's objectives and policies, that the IOR is not exposed to legal and governance risks and that the reputation of IOR is protected.

### **Section 1 – Helpful hints and guidance**

The public in general, and the IOR's employees, trustees, members, volunteers and stakeholders, reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view. Do not say anything contradictory or in conflict with the IOR website or published policies. This includes not only the obvious (diversity, equality, respect for other individuals, non-commercial etc) but also consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such personal views on suitability of equipment, refrigerant, commercial suppliers, employers etc. It may be necessary to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of the

IOR. However, do not rely on this as some users may still perceive your comments to be official IOR views.

- Be topical. This helps grab users' attention if you can link your content with current events using the topical hashtags and tagging relevant accounts.
- Aim to post positive and encouraging comments and ensure you fact check before you post.
- Always check spelling carefully. If in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, do not feel under pressure to respond immediately, wait sit and look at it again or ask someone else to check and give you a second opinion.
- Be careful about confidentiality. Do talk about the work of the IOR and have a dialogue with the community, but do not publish anything that is not currently in the public domain e.g. financial information, personal data etc.
- Data protection - Be aware that you must not disclose personal information about a 3rd party such as email address, telephone contacts or even photos of other persons, without their permission. Any data security breach must be reported to the IOR Data Controller – the CEO.
- Protect your own privacy and that of other members. Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the IOR website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you or other IOR staff, trustee, or volunteer would not want the public to see.
- Remember who you are representing. When you use social media it is not your opinion but that of the IOR that you are presenting - be clear who you are, and identify that you work for, or you volunteer for, the IOR. If you have a vested interest in a topic do not engage in a public comment or debate. Protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.
- Respect Copyright Laws. Consider copyright and do not use copyrighted material owned by others without permission, including use of photographs, images etc as well as IOR copyrights and brands. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it. Be mindful that this includes images.
- IOR Staff, trustees, volunteers, members, stakeholders, partners or suppliers should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify IOR Staff, and IOR trustee, or an IOR member, stakeholder, partner or supplier by name without prior permission and never disclose their confidential details.
- Keep everyone informed - Make sure you copy the IOR main social media accounts on your activity so that Staff, Trustees and other volunteers are aware of campaigns and debates that are ongoing and can help you to maximise their impact – for example include @thecoolinghub on tweets, repost linked-in items to the IOR Members Discussion Group, ask for You Tube videos to be added to IOR playlists.

## **Section 2 - Avoiding Problems and Controversy**

- Think in advance about consequences of any communications you publish as these will be around for a long time and can be widely and easily circulate. Inappropriate use of IOR social medial accounts may lead to withdrawal of your right to use IOR social media accounts.
- If you see misrepresentations made about the IOR in the media, you may point that out but always do so with respect and with the facts. Avoid arguments: online brawls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Do not try to settle scores or other online users into inflammatory

debates. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct and polite. Should you have any concerns about a comment on social media or need any guidance or advice, contact the IOR CEO.

- If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately and advise the CEO.
- Wherever practical, you can use a disclaimer saying that while you work, are a trustee, or volunteer for the IOR, anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinions of the IOR. This is particularly relevant to IOR Trustees and chairs of Committees or Branches. Many social media users include a prominent disclaimer saying who they work for, but that they are not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but do not count on it to avoid trouble - it may not have much legal effect.

### **Section 3 - Statement of IOR Policy on Social Media**

This policy governs the posting and commentary on social media by staff, trustees, or volunteers of the IOR on IOR related social media platforms. For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation: blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

All staff members, Trustees and volunteers have a personal responsibility to ensure that this policy is adhered to. The IOR CEO is responsible for the delivery and maintenance of this policy.

1. IOR staff, trustees, and volunteers are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy.
2. IOR employees are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as an IOR employee (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to the IOR).
3. Publication and commentary on social media carry the same obligations as any other kind of publication or commentary.
4. All users of social media must follow the same ethical standards that are required of IOR Members in the IOR Code of Conduct and that which IOR employees normally follow for work and must always avoid commercialism that may be deemed to be promoting or favouring a commercial businesses products or services. IOR policies on Conduct, use of Logo and other relevant matters are available at: <https://ior.org.uk/about/policies-and-practices>
5. Permission must be gained from the IOR CEO before any new, official, IOR social media group is set up. This includes volunteer interest groups. Assistance in setting up social media accounts and their settings may be obtained from the IOR's CEO or designated IOR staff. Full access and ownership of any such accounts must be granted to the IOR. In practice this means that:
  - 5.1 All Account names, user names and passwords, recovery emails etc must be registered with the IOR CEO.
  - 5.2 Any changes of account user as above must be advised to the IOR.
  - 5.3 Wherever possible an IOR staff member must be added to accounts with co-admin/manager access rights equal to the main account operator to ensure that accounts do not fall into disuse or become inaccessible should a volunteer relinquish their involvement.

- 5.4 All account users must be members at any grade of the IOR and must relinquish their role as an account user if their membership of the IOR is terminated.
- 5.5 Data Security - You may only operate accounts from computers that have an active and up to date virus protection software available and must keep your passwords secure and take all reasonable steps to avoid security breaches.
- 5.6 The IOR logo and other branding elements should be used where appropriate to indicate the IOR support. The logo should not be used on social networking applications which are unrelated to or are not representative of the IOR official position. Use of the IOR logo must always comply with the current IOR policy for logo use, and have the permission of the CEO.
6. The IOR reserves the right to require the closure of any applications or removal of content published by IOR representatives (staff, trustees or volunteers) which in the opinion of the CEO may adversely affect the reputation of the IOR or put it at risk of legal action. Disciplinary matters may be referred to the Board of Trustees.

**Related documents available:**

Copies of the following policy documents are available at <https://ior.org.uk/about/policies-and-practices>

IOR Objectives

Code of Conduct IOR Members

IOR Committees - Policy on Conflict of Interest

IOR Disciplinary Policy

Available on request from the IOR office:

Brand guidelines for the use of the IOR logo and messaging

IOR Branch Start Up Kit

*Agreed by IOR Board Dec 2020*