



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

RI-SFGP13

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Social Media Policy and Scope

The term social media is used in relation to social networking sites that allow users to create personal profiles, share photos and videos, and communicate with others. Used correctly, social media enriches the value and perception of Rowing Ireland in the rowing community.

Social media is an important area that Rowing Ireland fully embraces. Most Rowing Ireland social media activity takes place on digital platforms like Twitter and Facebook on a daily basis, and YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Snap Chat on an occasional basis.

Rowing Ireland will only have one account with FB, Twitter etc. The logo and Rowing Ireland brand will only be used on the official Rowing Ireland Facebook/Twitter etc pages. Authorisation to use the Rowing Ireland logo on any multi-media medium must be given by the CEO.

This Social Media Policy Document provides an outline for Rowing Ireland staff, Team members, Branches, sub-committees or groups within Rowing Ireland to develop an active, positive, responsible and prominent presence online, thus contributing to the growing online Rowing community. This policy does not cover other communication channels such as the Rowing Ireland website and the member newsletters.

Rowing Ireland recognises key challenges with the use of social media amongst the rowing community:

- When members share opinions online, they may reflect positively or negatively on our organisation.
- Individuals or organisations outside of Rowing Ireland may use digital and social media to challenge our actions, rules and regulations and if necessary, Rowing Ireland will defend its position in such circumstances. This defence should come in consultation with the Rowing Ireland Operations Officer(s) and CEO.
- Rowing topics are widely discussed throughout all social media platforms. It is important that we can use these same, or similar, platforms to promote and outline official Rowing Ireland policies approved by the Rowing Ireland Board.

Rowing Ireland Staff members/Board members and athletes (team and carded)

Rowing Ireland staff and Board members must be conscious of their online activity, as there can be a blurred line between personal and professional online profiles. At all times Rowing Ireland staff members must be aware that their posts can be deemed to reflect the opinion and views of Rowing Ireland.

Staff Members/Athletes using Personal Social Media Accounts:

- Staff should aim to avoid posting activities during their core working hours, unless they are in relation to Rowing Ireland activities.
- Staff should avoid commenting on work related issues via social media, as their opinions can be interpreted as the views of Rowing Ireland.
- Staff should be conscious of any personal content or activities that could be seen to be damaging to the reputation of Rowing Ireland.
- Staff may be privy to confidential information that is not intended for the general public. They should be careful not to disclose information to others or online if it is not already available in the public.
- Data Protection Rules, Laws of Defamation and Libel Laws should be considered at all times. Recent court awards have confirmed that the Irish Libel Law extends to social media and what is posted online may render the individual liable to pay compensation if a case is lost.
- At all times online posts should be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures. Disrespectful posts and comment on personal social media outlets not only reflect badly on the individual but also reflects negatively on Rowing Ireland.
- Staff members should at all times respect brand, trademark, and copyrighted information and imagery of Rowing Ireland.

Social Media:

- When Rowing Ireland members contact Rowing Ireland through social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter their queries should be addressed publicly if they are deemed serious; the response should be carefully worded, directing the query offline via direct messaging or to an email address. Discourage the public posting of personal information such as contact details.
- If a staff member becomes aware of posts on social media that include false allegations, a link to the correct information can be provided, or it can be raised with the Communications, Officer(s) or CEO.
- If a staff member suspects that a Rowing Ireland social media channel has been hacked notify the Communications Officer(s) or CEO immediately.
- If staff members are representing Rowing Ireland in an official capacity, it is important that the posts convey the same positive, volunteer-led spirit that the organisation uses in all of its communications.
- Internet postings must respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure, and other applicable laws.
- At all times online posts should be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures. How the social media Page is managed online reflects directly on the organisation.
- Data Protection Rules, Laws of Defamation and Libel Laws should be considered at all times. Recent court awards have confirmed that the Irish

Libel Law extends to social media and what is posted online may render the individual liable to pay compensation if a case is lost.

- When posting from a Rowing Ireland social media account the first person should not be used. Use “we” rather than “I” at all times as your post is reflecting the view of the organisation.
- Where possible use the relevant hashtag and tag the relevant people. Ensure that you are not over-tagging people or individuals as it is important to not become irritating. #Greenblades should be used on official tweets to promote the team and the sport. Another theme which should be used is #onecrewonevision #weareallrowingireland
- Twitter is an ideal platform for interacting in conversation with other organisations, thus increasing engagement, presence and relevance.
- Facebook is an ideal platform for less items but more information as this is where people are more likely to read the content of the shared items.
- Instagram and Snapchat are the best platforms for engaging with a younger audience.

Rowing Ireland Team Members (Rowers and Officials):

Having an active presence on social media is an everyday reality for most athletes, and sportspeople, and indeed it presents great opportunity; the chance to tell your own story, in your own words, but common sense and sound judgement must always be to the forefront when telling that story.

- Team Members and Board members must obey the Code of Conduct and adhere to the social media Policy.
- While representing Rowing Ireland be conscious that there is a division between personal comment and official duty. When in doubt of whether a post is personal or official – don’t post. When in doubt, leave it out.
- Rowers should not announce selection or non-selection until this information has been officially released by Rowing Ireland.
- Rowers should be conscious of a general confidentiality clause and be careful to not disclose information to others or online if it is not already available in the public.
- Data Protection Rules, Laws of Defamation and Libel Laws should be considered at all times. Recent court awards have confirmed that the Irish Libel Law extends to social media and what is posted online may render the individual liable to pay compensation if a case is lost.
- For the duration of events team members should not post information pertaining directly to team activities, team plans, or post contentious photos of other team members.

Team Members should not post on-line any negative comments about:

- ❖ Fellow squad members
 - ❖ Competitors
 - ❖ Event organisers
 - ❖ Support staff
- Team Members should not use bad language in postings and should note that journalists may quote anything controversial that is posted and use it as a news story.
 - Team Members should be appreciative of those who support them e.g. family, coaches, support staff.

Social Media:

- Team Members should always remember that a positive spin can be put on every story, so even if Rowers are disappointed with their result, they should think of at least one plus to be gained and focus on that.
- If in any doubt, Team Members should check with their Team Manager before posting online or responding to a post. If a conversation turns nasty report, it immediately and block the offender.
- At all times Team Members should respect brand, trademark, and copyrighted information and imagery of Rowing Ireland.
- Team Members should never post embarrassing pictures or pictures of others without their permission.
- Team Members should never post photos of themselves or others in official clothing, or with sponsor's product, in compromising or derogatory contexts. Team Rowers should never be photographed in official clothing when behaving in an unprofessional or unsporting manner.

Branches/Committees or groups within Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland has a full complement and range of social media platforms. These platforms should be used in all cases to promote the Rowing Ireland brand and sport.

Administrators and editors of these applications can only be given following authorisation from the CEO and in agreement of the above-mentioned policy.

Compliance with the above policy will ensure that Rowing Ireland is represented positively online, and that the organisation makes best practice use of social media to engage a wider audience and build the entire rowing community.