



Social Media Public Policy

September 2016

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1. Objective

This public policy explains how the Department of Communications and the Arts engages in social media and moderation of our online consultations and blogs. It outlines what you can expect from us and the things we expect from you when you engage with us.

2. Use of social media

We use social media to communicate and engage with the public and our stakeholders about our policies and programs.

2.1. Our accounts:

Twitter

- @CommsAu
- @artsculturegov
- @ArtbankAu

Facebook

- Department of Communications and the Arts Graduate Program
- Prime Minister's Literary Awards
- Artbank
- Sturgeon Magazine
- Australia at the Festival of Pacific Arts

YouTube

- DeptCommsAu
- RTIRC 2015

LinkedIn

- Department of Communications and the Arts

Instagram

- @ArtbankAU

We have blogs and a consultation platform on our website that encourages constructive conversation.

We may also participate in various groups and forums where appropriate and contribute to wikis, blogs and social news sites. We may also share and retweet content. This should not be taken as endorsement.

3. How we work

As public servants in the Australian Government we are bound by the Australian Public Service Commission's guidelines on [Australian Public Service Commission's guidelines on online participation](#). These include:

- behaving with respect and courtesy, and without harassment

- dealing appropriately with information, recognising that some information needs to remain confidential
- delivering services fairly, effectively, impartially and courteously to the Australian public
- being sensitive to the diversity of the Australian public
- taking reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest
- making proper use of Commonwealth resources
- upholding the APS Values and the integrity and good reputation of the APS
- not acting in a way that would call into question the APS employee's ability to be apolitical, impartial and professional in the performance of their duties.

4. Our expectations of you

We welcome constructive and respectful engagement in line with the following guidelines:

- keep your content relevant to the online community, or topic
- protect your personal privacy by not including the personal information of either yourself or others (e.g. email addresses, private addresses or phone numbers)
- don't defame, insult, abuse, harass, stalk, threaten or attack anyone
- don't use language that is obscene, offensive
- don't discriminate against any particular gender, sexual preference, religion or race/ethnicity
- don't advertise or promote commercial interests (may be at the discretion of the manager of the consultation /blog)
- don't promote illegal or unethical activities.

Similarly, please show respect to other members of the online community, and remember, what you contribute is in the public domain, so please don't share private information.

If necessary we will not post or will remove content that doesn't comply with these guidelines. If an individual and/or group continue to breach these guidelines we will block, ban, delete or report the user/s. People wishing to send us material and submissions should [contact us through our website](#).

This policy is in addition to the 'user policy' and 'terms and conditions' of each social media channel (e.g. Facebook/Twitter), and specific 'Terms of Use' relevant to each online community, which you can read about via the relevant social media channels.

We may update this policy at any time.

5. Twitter

The following policy applies to all Department of Communications managed Twitter accounts, including @CommsAu, @artsculturegov and @ArtbankAu.

We aim to share relevant information and promote public engagement. This includes providing information about media releases, conferences and other activities involving the department, as well as Australian Government information (including tweets from other agencies) and general information relevant to the communications and arts portfolio.

By linking to content, retweeting or acknowledging the source of a tweet, we are not endorsing that content or source. We are simply sharing information we believe may be of interest to people interested in matters relating to this portfolio and/or attributing a source.

If you send a message or question, either publicly or via direct message, the team managing the Twitter account will liaise with the relevant area in the department and endeavour to respond by the next business day. Please note that, as a general rule, we will monitor the channel during business hours only.

Contacting the department via a Twitter account is not the best way to send through a formal enquiry. If you have a formal request, comment or enquiry, please consider contacting us via the [contacts page](#).

If you have feedback for other government agencies, including those who we tweet about or retweet, you should send your feedback to them directly. We will not routinely contact other agencies to share any comments about them that you send to us.

5.1. Our follow policy

We do not automatically follow any account that follows our accounts.

We use our Twitter accounts in combination with social media software to find tweets to retweet or reply to. Our policy is to follow accounts that are relevant to the department's portfolio as stakeholders, news organisations and thought leaders, but our sources of information and tweets are not limited to our following list.

Following a Twitter account does not imply the department endorses the organisation/individual or their tweets.

5.2. Public and Protected Tweets

Be aware that Twitter is a public space, unless you make your tweets protected or send direct messages, all interaction is publicly viewable and searchable over time. To learn more about Twitter's public and protected accounts, read this help page provided by Twitter:

- [About public and protected tweets](#)

5.3. Feedback

If you have any feedback about the department's Twitter accounts, please send us a tweet, direct message or an email to socialmedia@communications.gov.au.

6. Online consultations and blogs

We are interested in hearing your opinions on the development of our policies and programmes. The 'Have your say' section on our website uses a range of consultation tools for you to contribute your ideas, including polls, ideas boards and formal submissions. We also welcome your comments on the various blogs on the website.

All comments will go through automated checks to detect spam and offensive language. Comments will also be pre-moderated prior to publishing. We monitor channels during business hours, Monday to Friday, with comments published as soon as moderation is complete.

To help us ensure your comments are published quickly, please make sure:

- your comments are relevant and on-topic
- your comments are not inflammatory, unreasonable or obscene
- you are civil and respectful of others and their opinions (including not impersonating anyone and not posting someone's personal information)
- you protect your personal privacy (don't include personal information)
- don't advertise or promote commercial interests (may be at the discretion of the manager of the consultation /blog)
- your behaviour is in line with relevant laws.

Due to the confidentiality requirements of some of our consultations, your submission may not be published until the consultation period has ended. Formal submissions require your name and contact details to be provided, however you have the option for your submission to remain anonymous or alternatively you can opt to have your submission to not be made public.

When submitting comments, you will be asked to provide a name and valid email however, you have the option of using a pseudonym.

Please refer to our Privacy Policy for information on how your personal information may be used.

If you have any comments or questions relating to our moderation policy please [contact us through our website](#).

The Department is not responsible for any comments submitted on a consultation or blog. They are the views and ideas of the person submitting the post.

The Department's publication of a comment on a consultation, blog or forum is not an indication of the Commonwealth's endorsement of any views or comments contained in that post.