

6.6 Social Media Policy

Approved for final comment at the Council Meeting of 6 April 2013

Adopted at Council Meeting of 1 June 2013

Purpose

WIRES Inc recognises that Social Media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities and create, share or consume content.

WIRES Inc recognises that social media offers new opportunities to influence people and engage in conversations with members, animal advocates, and the general public and other communities with shared interests.

WIRES Inc embraces social media as an important tool of engagement and recognises that employees and volunteers use social media in a personal capacity. WIRES Inc encourage employees and volunteers to reach out and share approved WIRES Inc information and views with friends and communities.

With the rapid growth and application of social media, WIRES Inc recognises the need to have a policy which ensures that employees and volunteers who use social media either as part of their job, or in a personal capacity, have guidance as to the organisation's expectations where the social media engagement is about WIRES Inc, its views, policies, campaigns, positions and/or services; its people, its business relationships and/or other business related individuals or organisations.

This policy contains the guidelines for social media that are designed to protect the interests of WIRES Inc, its employees and volunteers.

In brief, WIRES Inc asks that when engaging in social media you be clear about who you are representing, you take responsibility for ensuring that any references to WIRES Inc is factually correct and accurate and do not breach confidentiality requirements, or WIRES Inc policies and that you show respect for the individuals and communities with which you interact.

It is important to note that this policy does not apply to employees' or volunteers personal use of social media platforms where the person makes no reference to WIRES Inc or its activities.

Given the rapid development and uptake of social media and its growing relevance to organisational activity, this policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant and applicable

Application

This policy applies to all WIRES employees, volunteers, contractors, branch (FB) page administrators and to any other person who is or may be considered to be representing WIRES Inc.

If you require clarification about any aspects of this policy and how it applies to your own circumstances, please contact the General Manager in the first instance.

WIRES Inc appreciates the value in using social media to build more meaningful relationships with our members, potential members, animal advocates, the general public, communities and other relevant stakeholders. If you are approved to represent WIRES Inc in social media you will be notified of this, or your manager will have included it in your position description, you are required to follow this Policy. If you are discussing WIRES Inc or WIRES business related issues in your personal use of social media platforms, you are required to follow this Policy.

Social media tools include:

- social networking sites eg Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster;
- video and photo sharing websites e.g. Flickr, YouTube;
- micro-blogging sites e.g. Twitter;
- weblogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications;
- forums and discussion boards such as Whirlpool, Yahoo! Groups or Google Groups;
- online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia;
- any other web sites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools.

WIRES Inc requires employees and volunteers utilising these forms of media to focus on representation, responsibility and respect. These apply when:

- you are authorised to represent WIRES Inc on social media platforms and are using a social media platform for business purposes. Further information is outlined in the section below - Social Media Engagement for WIRES Inc purposes;
- you choose to make references to WIRES Inc, its people, products or services, and/or other business related individuals or organisations when you are using a social media platform in a personal capacity. Further information is outlined in the section below - General use by employees and General Use by volunteers.

WIRES Inc Social Media Policy does not apply to personal use of social media platforms where you make no reference to WIRES activities or animals acquired under the WIRES Inc NPWS Licence.

Part A - Social Media Engagement for WIRES Inc Purposes

Before you can become an authorised WIRES Inc representative on a social media platform, you must have approval from the WIRES Board and General Manager.

Approval can be given to:

1. WIRES Inc employees; and
2. Volunteers to administer WIRES Branch Facebook Pages, Branch Websites and E-Newsletters bearing the WIRES logo.

When representing WIRES Inc on social media you are required to:

- Disclose that you are a WIRES Inc employee or volunteer;
- Disclose only publicly available information. You must not comment on or disclose confidential WIRES Inc information (such as financial information, internal policies, member or person of interest details, financial performance, business plans,). If you require clarification about what WIRES Inc information is in the public domain, you should refer to material such as www.wires.org.au, and the WIRES Inc annual report. You could also consult with the General Manager.
- Comply with the WIRES code of Conduct and WIRES Policies.

WIRES Inc IT administrator is responsible for ensuring that any content published is factually accurate and complies with relevant WIRES policies, particularly those relating to confidentiality and disclosure. They are also responsible for ensuring that they are not the first to make a WIRES announcement unless they have received the appropriate internal clearances and approvals in accordance with WIRES policy.

When using social media it is important that all authorised WIRES representatives only offer advice, support or comment on topics that fall within their area of responsibility at WIRES. For other matters, you must alert the relevant manager (For employees) or WIRES Inc (For volunteers) , and if the situation requires a real time response, let the other party know that the request has reached WIRES for response.

User Generated Content (UGC)

Some of the content with a link to/from WIRES sites is generated by members of the public, for instance in blogs, message boards and photo-sharing sites. UGC will be moderated to ensure that the content is suitable for the likely WIRES audience, which may include children. The following points must be considered at all times:

- The views expressed are those of the public and unless specifically stated are not those of WIRES Inc.;
- WIRES Inc representatives must make it clear that the WIRES Inc does not endorse and is not responsible for the content on sites to which users link. Particular care must be exercised when linking to sites that may have content that is contentious;
- The placement of links should not give prominence to commercial products or services; and
- If an employee considers any content to be in breach of the WIRES rules they should notify the WIRES IT Administrator or the administrator of the site where the material appears.

When assessing a user-submitted links, consideration should be given to:

- how long the link is likely to remain available;
- the need to regularly monitor the quality of the material on the pages being linked to;
- potential legal risks; and
- how to remove the link quickly should removal become necessary or desirable.

Moderation of comments

The WIRES Inc IT Administrator will work with staff and volunteers from across the organisation to moderate comments if and when they are posted on WIRES social media and will work toward ensuring that all WIRES websites are protected by technologies to eliminate spam comments. Anything deemed to be unlawful, abusive, defamatory, and invasive of another's privacy, or obscene to a reasonable person will be immediately deleted before appearing on the link.

Video/Audio, sign-posts and other multimedia content and participation

Increasingly WIRES is using emerging technologies to advance the WIRES brand nationally and internationally, to bring about a broader, online 'audience experience' in the use of multimedia content and participation.

You should be aware that any such material must follow these general guidelines:

- Any material associated with the WIRES web presence which is NOT suitable for children should contain a warning.
- The first click from the WIRES homepages should not normally lead straight to a page, object and or link which includes material unsuitable for general audience, and where appropriate, users must be informed of the nature of the material they might expect to see or hear by clear labelling.

Attribution

When quoting any other link or publication, a link to the original must be used where possible and quotation marks or block quotes (for longer texts) must indicate a quote. In addition, the 'date accessed' should be included as a standard citation practice for web resources.

When using a photograph found elsewhere on the web, confirm that it can be used and is not subject to copyright. If an image is used, credit where it was sourced from by using a hyperlink.

Part B - General use by employees

All employees choosing to use social media are required to:

- be respectful of all individuals and communities with which you interact online;
- be polite and respectful of others' opinions, even in times of heated discussion and debate;
- adhere to the terms of use, and seek to conform to the cultural and behavioural norms, of the social media platform being used;

- respect copyright, privacy, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms. Check with your manager if you are not certain about what you can reproduce or disclose on social media platforms;
- ensure you do not imply in any way that you are authorised to speak on WIRES behalf;
- ensure you do not imply in any way that you are representing the WIRES opinion;
- ensure that photos of animals in care are not posted;
- ensure you do not knowingly use the identity of another WIRES employee or an employee of a WIRES business partner or competitor (including name or variation of a name);
- be mindful during your social media engagements of the importance of not damaging the WIRES reputation, commercial interests and/or bringing WIRES into disrepute;
- disclose only publicly available information. You must not comment on or disclose confidential WIRES information (such as financial information, internal policies, member of the public's details, financial performance, business plans);
- not include WIRES logos or trademarks in your postings;
- Employees must ensure that they do not post material that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity, including WIRES, its employees, its contractors, its partners, its competitors and/or other business related individuals or organisations. Employees must also ensure they do not disclose other people's personal information in social media venues, and comply with all WIRES Policies.

You are personally responsible for the content of your posts online. In this context, you have a responsibility to ensure that:

- any information about WIRES services that you provide is informed and factually accurate. If you wish to express your opinions please state they are your personal opinions;
- if you are offering your personal perspective on a matter related to WIRES, be mindful that your commentary and opinion does not cause damage to WIRES or its commercial interests;
- You adhere to WIRES policy on acceptable levels of personal use of WIRES internet services made available to you as an employee (such as email, internet access and instant messaging) and must be within reasonable limits and not interfere with your work;
- you reference only publicly available information such as that on www.wires.org.au or other official WIRES sites, or in WIRES annual report.

Part C - General use by Volunteers

All Volunteers choosing to use social media are required to:

- be respectful of all individuals and communities with which you interact online when representing yourself as a WIRES volunteer;
- be polite and respectful of others' opinions, even in times of heated discussion and debate when speaking as a WIRES volunteer;
- ensure you do not imply in any way that you are **authorised** to speak on WIRES behalf;
- ensure you do not imply in any way that you are representing the WIRES opinion;

- ensure that photos of animals in care comply with WIRES Inc 'Image and Photography ' Guidelines;
- ensure you do not knowingly use the identity of a WIRES employee or volunteer;
- be mindful during your social media engagements of the importance of not damaging the WIRES reputation, commercial interests and/or bringing WIRES into disrepute;
- disclose only publicly available information. You must not comment on or disclose confidential WIRES information (such as financial information, internal policies, member of the public's details, financial performance, business plans);
- not include WIRES logos without permission and in accordance with the 'Use of Logo Policy'.
- When contributing to WIRES Inc Social Media Platforms, Branch Facebook Pages, websites, E-newsletter - volunteers must ensure that they do not post material that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity, including WIRES, its employees, its volunteers, its contractors, its partners, its competitors and/or other business related individuals or organisations.
- Volunteers must also ensure they do not disclose other people's personal information in social media venues, and comply with the WIRES Code of Conduct and all WIRES Policies.

Part D – Branch (Volunteer) Facebook Page, Website Administrators

- All WIRES branch Facebook pages and branch websites will require permission from WIRES Inc for use of the logo.
- WIRES Branch Facebook pages are required to be closed groups for current financial WIRES members only.
- WIRES branch websites will require a WIRES Inc sub-domain.
- WIRES Inc shall have administrator access to all WIRES branch Facebook pages and websites.
- Approved Branch Facebook Page and branch website administrators will ensure they are familiar with the WIRES Code of Conduct and Social Media Policy.
- Approved Branch Facebook Page administrators are required to use the WIRES Facebook Community Guidelines when moderating WIRES Facebook pages.

Responsibility

WIRES Employees and Volunteers are personally responsible for the content of your posts online. In this context, you have a responsibility to ensure that:

- any information about WIRES services that you provide is informed and factually accurate. If you wish to express your opinions please state they are your personal opinions;
- if you are offering your personal perspective on a matter related to WIRES, be mindful that your commentary and opinion does not cause damage to WIRES or its commercial interests;
- any information about WIRES or posted in an online forum, website, Facebook page, e-newsletter and bearing the WIRES logo must be respectful, courteous and consider the audience. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure the content does not offend, embarrasses or humiliates others.

Breach of Policy

As is the case with all of WIRES Inc policies, if you do not comply with this Policy you may face disciplinary action under WIRES Inc counselling and disciplinary process. This disciplinary action may involve a verbal or written warning or, in serious cases, termination of your employment or engagement with WIRES Inc as a volunteer.

Employee Declaration

WIRES Inc may recover from you any costs incurred as a result of a breach of this Policy.

If you break the law you may also be personally liable.

Date Issued:		No of pages:	8
Revision Date:		Authorised by: Signature	Leanne Taylor – General Manager

I have read and understand the information contained in the contents of the Social Media Policy.

I understand that as a WIRES Inc representative I operate within the obligations imposed upon me in this Policy, as well as any employment agreement relevant to me and WIRES Inc policies as varied from time to time.

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Employee Name (Print)

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Employee's Signature

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Date