



Social Media Policy

Social media is an effective communication tool, and TLA encourages its units and members to take advantage of social media for purposes such as helping to raise awareness about the mission and work of the Association and its units, building a sense of community within the Association, improving the knowledge or skills of librarians and library workers, and providing a virtual means to engage members of the Association.

However, sometimes it can be challenging for members to reconcile their public and private social media activities in terms of their role within TLA activities and units. This policy provides a framework for effective and ethical engagement in social media activities by TLA members, administrative assistants, consultants, and liaisons in their roles as such.

For the purposes of this document, “social media” means any tool for online publication and commentary, including, but not limited to interactive websites, blogs, wikis, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Goodreads, Flickr, and YouTube.

Statement of Policy

Keep in mind that you are posting as a member or other representative of TLA or your particular unit. Know and respect your audience at all times, including TLA and its members.

I. Rules

A. Do this

When posting, you **must**:

- Abide by the Terms of Service, Terms of Use, privacy policies, and all other policies and requirements of the service on which you are posting (e.g., Facebook or Twitter).
- Abide by all relevant TLA policies, including the TLA External Communications Policy and the TLA and Unit Mark Usage Policy. Members of award committees must abide by the rules of those committees regarding public communications generally.
- Be clear that any views expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of TLA.
- Post only content that you have the rights to post and that does not infringe the rights of anyone else, including but not limited to copyrights or other intellectual property rights. This means that if you post content created by someone else, you must have permission from the rights owner to post that content.
- If you post content other than your own (with permission), credit the author and/or rights owner appropriately.
- Use your real name, and, as appropriate for the context, identify what capacity you serve in TLA or your unit.

A unit chair is the ultimate spokesperson for the unit. Therefore, unit members must comply if the chair asks that members limit their social media discussions about unit business. Chairs should remind unit members of this at the start of each conference year.

B. Don't do this

As noted above, when you post on TLA social media tools, you are representing the voice of the Association. Certain types of comments that may be appropriate for posting with your personal social media tools are not appropriate for posting via TLA social media. The following rules should not be construed as an attempt to limit your speech on your own personal social media accounts.

You may **not** post content that:

- 1 Contains personally identifying information about any individual, such as name, contact information, or details of their personal life, without their permission; or photos of someone else without their permission.
- 2 Criticizes in any way other than constructively a TLA unit, member, partner, or sponsor, or TLA itself, or the work of any of these.
- 3 Without prior permission of the Executive Director, makes any comment other than neutral comments about any sponsor, partner, or vendor/exhibitor of TLA. This includes but is not limited to endorsements, comparisons, product reviews, complaints, and criticisms.
- 4 Contains confidential details of any individual's or organization's engagement with the Association.
- 5 Contains any information about award committee activities prior, during or after closed award committee meetings, discussions, or votes.
- 6 Constitutes hate speech or defamation, is personally insulting, is threatening, infringes someone else's privacy, or is in any other way inappropriate for or harmful to the purpose of TLA generally or any of its units.
- 7 Serves to bully, intimidate, or harass any person or otherwise treat any person in an intentionally demeaning or hurtful manner.
- 8 Calls for a boycott of a product or company.
- 9 Endorses or opposes any federal, state, or local candidate running for political office.
- 10 Is posted anonymously or using pseudonyms or false screen names.

II. Best Practices

- 1 Use specific tags when posting TLA/unit content (e.g. #txla) to help ensure your message reaches its targeted audience.
- 2 Post regularly and respond to comments and replies from others quickly and accurately.
- 3 Protect your privacy by taking simple steps such as avoiding posting personal details, like phone numbers, and making use of privacy settings on social media sites, etc.
- 4 Avoid arguments and debates.
- 5 Limit your posts to sharing information about the work of or news about your unit and announcements from the unit.
- 6 Strive to make sure it is accurate and professional.
- 7 Before posting, ask yourself if the post will improve knowledge or skills of TLA members, contributes directly or indirectly to the improvement of TLA, builds a sense of community, or helps to promote TLA's mission. If the answer is yes, post the content. If it's no, then don't post it.
- 8 Write about what you know (always verify any facts, dates, etc. before posting anything.)
- 9 What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully.
- 10 When possible, link to others' work rather than reproducing it.
- 11 Bring out your own personality and share your thoughts in a respectful and professional tone

III. Questions and Final Authority

The TLA Executive Board has final decision-making authority over the use of social media on behalf of TLA and its units.

TLA reserves the right to remove or make efforts to remove any posting that it believes conflicts with the terms of this Policy.

If a member is unsure whether or not something is appropriate to post on social media, he or she should contact the unit chair before posting. A chair who is unsure about policy compliance or has other questions about the use of social media for TLA purposes should contact his or her TLA Executive Board Liaison.

If a member, for whatever reason, takes an action that conflicts with this policy, he or she will be contacted to resolve the situation and may be asked to withdraw, correct, or revise postings. If the post is determined to be egregious, or intentionally hurtful, the individual may be asked to resign from his or her position.

Approved by the TLA Executive Board on 04/13/2015