

SUMMARY

The use of social media platforms to support the work of the Texas Library Association is governed by both the TLA External Communications Policy and the TLA Social Media Policy. The document is a guide for best practices for using creating and using social media to conduct TLA business and applies to all TLA SM forums including those created by members as official forums for TLA units and committees.

Definition: Social media can be defined as any web-based application, site, software, or account created and maintained by TLA staff and committees that facilitate an environment for to engage and discuss current events, items of interest, or TLA related subjects/issues. Some examples of social media outlets are:

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, YouTube, Tumblr, Flickr, Pinterest, etc.

Purpose: The use of social media for TLA activities is intended to supplement the means of communication currently in place for press, news, events, and announcements.

MISSION/GOALS

TLA actively participates in social media to:

- Reach out and engage members, patrons, readers, educators, publishers, etc.
- Cultivate an open, professional, and responsive dialog with our users.
- Communicate to association members and conduct business.
- Showcase TLA events and happenings.
- Promote research tips and useful tools for librarians.
- Promote the value and importance of the services offered by libraries and librarians of the state of Texas.

BASIC ADMINISTRATION

The development of TLA's social media presence is a collaborative effort that is moderated by more than one person. TLA staff and members will work together to periodically assess the role of each social media site. All members and staff are encouraged to contribute content.

All TLA units must provide the TLA Office (socialmedia@txla.org) with administrative login rights and information (username and password). TLA will assist units in assuring continuity of social media platforms even as officers and members transition.

All units must advise members that they must adhere to TLA and forum policies.

Unit administrators must advise members that posts on social media sites should be professional in tone and in good taste.

Use your “professional lens” when naming pages or accounts, selecting a profile picture or icon, and selecting content to post. Note that names, profile images, and posts should all be clearly linked to the particular divisions, round table, committees, or members.

Unit administrators should advise members to be respectful of TLA, its services, members, employees, and stakeholders. Understand that social media is public, permanent, and retrievable. Messages can be read by anyone, even those not on the friend/subscriber list. There should be no expectation of privacy.

Unit administrators should advise members that failure to follow TLA and SM site policies and terms of use may result in the removal of post or loss of access to SM forums.

BEST PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES ON POSTS

- Make titles and messages brief, but add value: Post content that will be useful, interesting, or engaging to your audience. Don't just post several links to other items.
- **Before posting, check facts, cite sources, and check spelling and grammar.** Do not use copyrighted photos and/or images.
- Post regularly. Simply having a presence isn't enough — you need to populate the site with good, relevant content. We recommend a maximum of one post per day on weekdays (ie: up to five posts per week). Make the post count.
- Are you not entertained? Ask questions in your posts. Don't just talk at your readers — engage them.
- Monitor your page, and keep up with the conversation. Regularly read all the posts on your page, including those posted by others. Sometimes, colleagues will ask important questions via social media rather than phone or email. Make sure to find these questions and answer them directly on the page.
- Don't use all upper case letters when writing, unless you are referencing a book title. THIS is considered shouting.
- Protect confidential and proprietary information.
- Do not censor negative comments. Use your best judgment as to whether you want to try to reply officially and respectfully, or simply ignore the comment. At times, it's best to not draw attention to the negativity. However, any comments that violate TLA or site policies should be immediately reported.
- Unit administrators and members may not post personal attacks, insults, threatening language, potentially libelous statements.
- The use or inclusion of plagiarized copyrighted materials, commercial promotions, spam, or unauthorized images or content is strictly prohibited.
- Report any harassing, inappropriate, or illegal content to TLA and the SM site (if appropriate).

“FOLLOWING” – WHO TO FOLLOW AND WHY?

Social media presence is open for interaction with all members of the public.

TLA will accept connections, followers or “friends” from everyone except:

- Users who have violated the TLA’s social media policies
- Users who post any inflammatory, offensive, or exploitative materials
- Unofficial TLA platforms

TLA will “follow back” any fans or followers that are:

- Libraries, librarians, TLA members and literary- or academic-related users
- Non-commercial in nature
- Of possible interest to the TLA community

DISCLAIMERS

TLA does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use personal information stored on any third party site in any way other than to communicate with users on that site. TLA may use your content in another forum, but will never do so without explicit credit. Users may remove themselves at any time from the TLA’s lists and social media forums. Users should be aware that third party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly.

TLA reserves the right to remove any posts or comments.

TLA assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction created or posted by any participant in any TLA-sponsored social media service, and does not endorse content outside the “pages” created by Library faculty or staff. These guidelines only govern the official TLA social media sites and not the personal accounts of members and staff.

TLA is not responsible or liable for content posted by subscribers in any forum, message board, or other social media resource, and such subscriber comments do not reflect the opinions and/or positions of TLA, its administrators, or its employees.