

ASV Social Media Policy

A guide for Active Supporters and Volunteers (ASVs) on using social media to promote the work of IOM3.

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, at least once a year.

1. Introduction

1.1 *What is social media?*

Social media means web-based tools and apps that let people create and share content such as words, images, videos and audio. It also helps people connect by sharing information, opinions and knowledge. Examples include LinkedIn, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Bluesky, TikTok, YouTube and Instagram.

1.2 *Why do we use social media?*

Social media is essential for sharing the work of IOM3. Some Active Supporters and Volunteers (ASVs) take part to engage with our audiences, join relevant conversations and raise the profile of IOM3. ASVs may also want to celebrate their involvement with IOM3.

1.3 *Why social media advocacy is important for ASVs*

Social media advocacy helps ASVs promote IOM3 initiatives, events and achievements. By sharing our messages on their own channels, volunteers help us reach more people and build trust. Being an IOM3 ambassador online means you can:

- **Amplify our message:** sharing IOM3 content spreads our mission and activities to a wider audience
- **Reach more people:** when volunteers share our messages, they reach audiences beyond our official channels
- **Build trust:** people tend to trust information shared by individuals they know more than official company posts. This personal touch makes the message more credible.
- **Better engagement:** posts from individuals often receive more likes, comments, and shares, which helps to spread the message even further.
- **Engage with the community:** volunteers can engage with peers, professionals and the public, nurturing a sense of community and collaboration.
- **Showcase involvement:** highlighting their participation and contributions, volunteers can inspire others to get involved and demonstrate the impact of IOM3 activities.
- **Stay informed:** by following IOM3 social media channels, volunteers can stay updated on the latest news, events, and opportunities within the organisation.

We encourage all ASVs to get involved in social media advocacy to help us grow our reach and strengthen our online community.

1.4 *Why do we need a social media policy?*

Many IOM3 ASVs use social media widely and responsibly. However, recent challenges mean the Charity Commission requires charities to have a social media policy for ASVs. For ASVs of a professional body like IOM3, it is important to understand that on social media the line between personal and professional

opinions can be blurred, especially when discussing matters related to the Institute. While we encourage the use of social media, we ask all ASVs to follow certain standards set out in this policy. Publishing or commenting on social media carries the same responsibilities as any public statement or commentary in the public domain.

1.5 Who is this policy for?

This policy applies to all ASVs, including trustees. It covers content posted on official IOM3 accounts and personal accounts where IOM3 is mentioned. All ASVs must read this policy before taking part in IOM3-related social media activity.

1.6 Setting out the social media policy

This policy provides guidance on using social media to support and promote IOM3. It covers the use of social media by ASVs both professionally and personally. It explains what you need to be aware of when posting or engaging online. The aim is to help ASVs support our official channels while protecting the Institute's reputation and avoiding legal issues.

1.7 Point of contact for social media

The IOM3 Marketing and Communications (MarComms) team manages the official IOM3 social media channels. If you have questions about these channels, please contact the team at: marketingcomms@iom3.org. You can also contact the team for advice and training.

1.8 Which social media channels do we use?

IOM3 uses the following social media channels:

- [IOM3 LinkedIn](#)
- [IOM3 Facebook](#)
- [IOM3 Instagram](#)
- [IOM3 Bluesky](#)
- [IOM3 Twitter/X](#)

1.9 Differentiating social media account types

Setting up individual personal social media accounts:

- ASVs are encouraged if they feel comfortable to create and post on their own personal social media accounts while following the wider social media policy. Promoting IOM3 as individuals is sustainable and valuable, as it fits naturally with your own networks and time.
- These personal accounts are not managed or accessed by IOM3.
- The MarComms team can offer best practice advice and guidelines to support you.

Setting up social media accounts or groups for ASV activities:

We advise against setting up social media accounts related to IOM3 without prior consultation. Please consider the following before setting up an account:

- **Consultation for best practices:** ASVs should contact the Head of Marketing before creating any IOM3-related social media accounts. This ensures compliance with our MarComms goals and brand guidelines.
- **Brand reputation:** independent accounts can affect the IOM3 brand over time. Without proper oversight, messaging may become inconsistent or unclear, which can misrepresent IOM3. It's also important to have clear responsibility for maintaining and updating accounts to protect our brand integrity.
- **Avoiding brand dilution:** multiple uncoordinated accounts weaken our brand. Centralised management helps maintain the strength and consistency of IOM3 identity.
- **Access for business continuity:** while IOM3 staff will not manage these accounts daily, the MarComms team must have access and added as 'super admins' to ensure professional management if original administrators are unavailable.

We value the enthusiasm of our ASVs and encourage you to promote IOM3 through your own channels. However, running independent accounts or ASV-only pages that require regular content and ongoing management is not sustainable given volunteers' time commitments. It can also risk brand consistency and reputation.

Before setting up any IOM3-related accounts, please contact the Head of Marketing for guidance to ensure your efforts align with our marketing goals and brand guidelines. If you have an existing dormant IOM3-related account, please get in touch with the Head of Marketing to arrange closure and redirect followers to official IOM3 accounts.

2. Guidelines

2.1. Representing IOM3 on social media channels — appropriate conduct

ASVs are ambassadors for IOM3. We ask that you reflect IOM3 values in what you post online. The MarComms team is here to help and can provide brand guidelines or support when sharing IOM3-related content.

Before posting, consider the purpose and how it benefits IOM3. All content should align with the Institute's agreed position and bring value to our audiences by answering questions, offering help or encouraging engagement.

Take care with presentation. Make sure posts are free from spelling or grammar mistakes, and that IOM3 is always referred to correctly (not IoM3 or I.M3). Use high-quality copy-right images and only where you have permission from the copyright holder.

Using copyright-free images, music and other media is essential to avoid potential legal issues or fines. Only use content where you have the right permissions, and never assume something online is free to use. Please don't create your own IOM3 designs or branding materials. We have a full suite of approved assets, and using unofficial designs can harm the consistency and impact of our brand. If you need support or access to design materials, contact the MarComms team.

Pause and think before you post. That said, respond to comments in a timely and respectful way, when appropriate. Our MarComms team monitors official IOM3 channels and removes inappropriate comments where necessary.

Always check facts before posting. Don't assume material is accurate. Be cautious with statistics, visual content and any manipulated images. Say only what you know to be true or have a trusted source for. If you make a mistake, correct it openly and promptly.

If you have information about a high-profile individual connected to our cause, or someone who may be interested in supporting IOM3, please share this with the MarComms team.

ASVs should not share personal opinions on official IOM3 social media channels. If you're unsure of the Institute's position on a topic, speak to the MarComms team before posting.

Do not encourage anyone to put themselves or others at risk to create social content. Never request or use unauthorised footage. Always get the relevant rights and permissions before posting material, especially content involving children or supporters. If you're sharing interviews, videos or images that clearly identify a child or young person, make sure you have consent from a parent or guardian.

ASVs should not create separate social media accounts (eg LinkedIn pages, Facebook groups, X (Twitter) accounts) or other social media channels on behalf of IOM3. Doing so can create confusion around our messaging and weaken our brand. Our official social media accounts are carefully managed to ensure consistency and build a strong following.

If you would like to explore setting up a new IOM3-affiliated account, please speak to the MarComms team first. Some Boards or Committees may choose to create individual personal accounts to promote their work. If this happens, the MarComms team must be informed. These accounts must follow IOM3 brand guidelines and this policy.

IOM3 is not a political organisation. We do not support any political party or express views on how people should vote. While we may comment on policy where relevant, we expect ASVs to maintain a position of neutrality when representing IOM3.

If you are politically active in a personal capacity, you must keep this separate from your IOM3 role and avoid any potential conflicts of interest.

1.10 Complaint handling

If a complaint is made on an IOM3 channel, refer it to the MarComms team and allow them to respond officially. If you see online comments that could escalate into a wider issue, whether on our channels or elsewhere, alert the team immediately.

1.11 Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

This policy does not prevent ASVs from using personal social media. However, it does highlight where conflicts might arise. ASVs are expected to act in ways that reflect IOM3 values, both online and offline. Be aware that anything you post publicly could influence how IOM3 is perceived.

If you're posting about IOM3 in a personal capacity, include a disclaimer such as:

'The views expressed on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of IOM3.'

If you have a personal blog or website that references your ASV role, please speak to the MarComms team about any potential conflicts of interest.

ASVs in trustee or senior roles, or those well known in their field, must be especially careful that their personal posts are not mistaken for IOM3 views. Use good judgement and common sense. Make sure your online presence reflects how you want to be seen in relation to IOM3.

If the press contacts you about your social media activity in connection with IOM3, do not respond directly. Instead, contact the MarComms team at marketingcomms@iom3.org immediately.

Never use IOM3 logos or trademarks without permission. Contact the MarComms team to request approval.

Be careful with your personal information online. Once something is posted, it can remain visible for a long time. Always consider your own privacy and the charity's reputation.

Think about how your tone and comments might be received. Express opinions respectfully. You can disagree with others, but always be polite and constructive. Be the first to acknowledge and correct any mistakes.

We encourage you to share IOM3 posts and engage with our content online. If you see an opportunity to support IOM3 through your own channels, we welcome that. It brings a human voice to our work. However, if something is misrepresented or controversial, flag it to the MarComms team who will respond appropriately.

3. Legal and Ethical Considerations

1.12 *Libel*

Libel is when a false written statement that damages someone's reputation is published online or in print. Whether you are posting in a personal capacity or on behalf of IOM3, avoid making defamatory comments about individuals, organisations or groups. These could bring IOM3 into disrepute.

Some issues on social media can escalate quickly and become reputational risks. Our MarComms team monitors IOM3 channels and will respond where needed. If you see something that could damage the organisation's reputation, let the team know immediately at marketingcomms@iom3.org

1.13 *Copyright law*

All ASVs must follow copyright law under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 ([Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/42)). Do not use or adapt someone else's images, written content or creative work without written permission. Even if permission has been given, you must credit the source appropriately. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

1.14 *Confidentiality*

Do not share confidential or internal IOM3 information online. This includes financial information, internal communications, member data and future plans. Avoid sharing anything not yet intended for public release, such as embargoed announcements. Any communications that ASVs make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. Do not share personal data (email addresses, phone numbers,

etc) publicly, and to handle member data in accordance with GDPR and IOM3 policies. If you're unsure, ask the MarComms team before posting.

1.15 Discrimination and harassment

Content that could be seen as discriminatory, bullying or harassing others must never be posted, whether on IOM3 channels or personal accounts. This includes:

- Offensive or derogatory comments related to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- Bullying individuals through social media
- Sharing offensive or discriminatory content (eg, videos, images or links)

1.16 Lobbying Act

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law. However, the Lobbying Act ([Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/86/section/1)), which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

Charities which spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, during the regulated period, need to register with the Electoral Commission. To abide by the Lobbying Act and to stay compliant, all campaigning activity on social media must avoid suggesting how people should vote. During these periods, relevant content via main IOM3 channels activity will be reviewed by the MarComms Team.

1.17 Use of social media in the recruitment process

Advertising of IOM3 employee and ASV roles is managed by our HR and MarComms teams. Vacancies are promoted through official IOM3 channels such as LinkedIn and the website.

We do not routinely review candidates' personal social media accounts. Doing so could raise concerns about protected characteristics being used in the selection process.

1.18 Protection and intervention

The first line of defence on social media platforms is their own reporting and moderation tools. If you believe someone is at risk of harm, report it immediately to the IOM3 Director of Business Support. Each platform also offers guidance on how to report and manage concerning content.

1.19 Under 18s and vulnerable people

Social media can pose risks for young or vulnerable people, including online bullying, oversharing or inappropriate contact. When you know you are engaging with someone under 18 on social media, follow the same safeguarding expectations as you would offline.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, ASVs should ensure the online relationship with IOM3 follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. ASVs should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as

necessary. ASVs should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and that IOM3 content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.

1.20 Responsibilities and beach of policy

You are responsible for following this policy. Contributing to IOM3 social media is a privilege and must be treated with respect. If you are unsure whether something may breach this policy, ask the MarComms team before posting.

1.21 Public Interest Disclosure

If you believe something you are sharing through IOM3 social media may be in the public interest, refer to the IOM3 Whistleblowing Policy before taking any further action. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 may apply, and proper processes must be followed.

4. Contact details

- MarComms team email: marketingcomms@iom3.org
- Head of Marketing, Fabiola Franco (fabiola.franco@iom3.org)
- Communications Manager, Kovida Mehra (kovida.mehra@iom3.org)
- Other – Director of Business Support, Collette Marriott (collette.marriott@iom3.org)
- ASV Hub and link to IOM3 policies [IOM3 | What is expected of me?](#)

5. Approval

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