# Social Media Policy

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**Policy Aim and Purpose**

At Thread Ahead, we recognise that social media provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information. We are committed to defending and upholding the right of people to freedom of expression and we value and encourage the role that social media can play in facilitating this. However, misuse of social media can contradict our values, create harm for others and damage our reputation.

This policy sets out Thread Ahead's approach to the use of social media across all platforms, to make sure it is used in a positive manner that supports our values. It should be read alongside Thread Ahead's Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct, Equality and Diversity Policy, and Data Protection/Privacy Policy.

**Who This Policy Applies To**

The following people must follow this policy and the procedures that go with it (collectively referred to as "our people"):

- Thread Ahead staff;
- Thread Ahead trustees;
- Thread Ahead volunteers

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

**How Thread Ahead uses Social Media**

Thread Ahead's objectives for social media

For Thread Ahead, social media spaces play a key role in our fundraising efforts, brand outreach, and in communicating with and building our community. Thread Ahead may also engage in issue-based advocacy and public discussion where this supports our charitable objectives and values.

Through social media, we can introduce new and existing audiences to our work and encourage them to get involved. It allows us to listen to what they're saying, answer

questions in an open and public way, and better understand how we can communicate Thread Ahead's work in an impactful and motivating manner.

Social Media Moderation and interaction with third parties

Thread Ahead moderates social media in line with our community guidelines. See Appendix One for more information.

Sharing social media content from partner organisations and activists is a great way for Thread Ahead to show solidarity and support. Each instance of sharing is assessed against the goals and objectives of Thread Ahead's strategy. Sharing social media content from a partner organisation or activist is not an endorsement of the organisation or their work as a whole.

**Account Access and Security**

Access to Thread Ahead social media accounts will be limited to authorised staff, freelancers, or volunteers whose role requires it. Authorisation is provided by the CEO. This ensures Thread Ahead's social media presence is consistent, cohesive and minimises risk of content being posted that doesn't align with our values and aims.

The CEO or delegated staff member will maintain oversight of:

- account ownership and recovery details;
- password management;
- access permissions; and
- two-factor authentication settings (two-factor authentication is set up on all of our social media accounts)
- Social media community management and moderation

Social media content on Thread Ahead channels is developed, scheduled, and posted by the relevant staff team in line with relevant approvals processes.

Where possible, shared access tools or password managers should be used rather than sharing passwords directly.

Access permissions must be reviewed regularly and removed promptly when a staff member, volunteer, freelancer, or contractor leaves their role or no longer requires access.

Those with access to Thread Ahead's social media accounts should be wary of phishing attempts and never click on suspicious links or reveal personal, confidential or sensitive information about themselves, supporters or Thread Ahead.

**Required conduct for those managing social media accounts**

In addition to this policy, Thread Ahead expects those posting from social media accounts to behave in accordance with our values and to comply with the following policies:

- The Code of Fundraising Practice
- Safeguarding Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

All communications should be in line with the latest version of our brand guidelines and our organisational values, particularly that of dignity.

Consent must be sought prior to the sharing of images featuring the faces of others on Thread Ahead social media channels.

Staff, volunteers, and freelancers should not respond to media enquiries through social media unless authorised to do so on behalf of Thread Ahead.

Failure to comply with any or all of the above may lead to proportionate disciplinary action.

**Use of AI and Generative Tools**

Artificial intelligence (AI) and generative tools may be used to support communications work where appropriate. Any content created or assisted by AI must:

- be reviewed by a human before publication;

- be fact-checked for accuracy;
- reflect Thread Ahead's tone, values, and safeguarding responsibilities; and
- avoid misleading, fabricated, or deceptive representations.

Confidential, personal, or safeguarding-related information must never be entered into publicly available AI systems.

AI-generated imagery or stories must not depict beneficiaries, participants, or communities in misleading or exploitative ways.

**Personal Use of Social Media**

Thread Ahead respects the right of staff, volunteers, and freelancers to use personal social media accounts in their own time.

Provided our people do not include any reference to their role at Thread Ahead in their social media biographies or content, they are welcome to use social media channels to express their personal opinions freely. They are welcome to share Thread Ahead's posted content as individuals, but this will not be expected of them.

If any of our people choose to include their role at Thread Ahead in their biography, they are bound by the same rules of adherence to Thread Ahead policies and values as they would be if they were running an official Thread Ahead account. Failure to comply with this could lead to disciplinary action.

Regardless of whether Thread Ahead is mentioned in their social media biography, if any of our people's personal use of social media is found to bring the organisation into disrepute, for instance through illegal activity or hate speech, Thread Ahead's relevant disciplinary policy will apply, in the same way that it would if this activity took place in any other setting, regardless of whether the activity took place during working hours or not. Our people should avoid online behaviour that could reasonably harm the reputation of the charity, undermine its values, breach confidentiality, or negatively affect colleagues, beneficiaries, partners, or communities connected to our work. Our people may be required to remove posts on the internet or social media which Thread Ahead deems to breach this policy.

We expect our people to be sensitive about using other people's images. Our people must not share images from their work with Thread Ahead in which people can be

identified, unless they have consent from the individuals pictured and use of these images has been cleared by their line manager/staff contact.

Direct messaging from personal accounts with children or vulnerable individuals connected to Thread Ahead should be avoided unless this forms part of an approved safeguarding process.

**Online Safety and Safeguarding**

Serious incidents must be escalated promptly to the designated safeguarding lead. This includes:

- safeguarding concerns or disclosures;
- harassment or credible threats;
- hate speech;
- data breaches;
- impersonation of the organisation; or
- significant reputational risks.

Where appropriate, screenshots or records should be retained to support safeguarding, reporting, or investigation processes.

Additional care must be taken when posting content relating to beneficiaries, participants, migrants, refugees, or others who may be vulnerable. Staff and volunteers must not share identifying details, personal histories, immigration information, locations, or images without explicit and informed consent.

If an individual experiences online abuse, they can find useful guidance from the charity Glitch here. If they would appreciate support from Thread Ahead, they are encouraged to speak to their line manager/staff contact. Alternatively, staff or volunteers experiencing abuse online can contact Thread Ahead's Safeguarding Lead or Trustee Safeguarding Lead (contact details for both can be found in our Safeguarding Policy).

**Accessibility**

Thread Ahead aims to make its social media content as accessible and inclusive as possible.

Where practical, staff and volunteers should:

- include alt text for images;
- caption video content;
- use clear and readable language;
- avoid excessive emojis, flashing content, or difficult formatting; and
- consider accessibility when choosing colours, fonts, and graphics.

**Responding to incidents**

Thread Ahead will make informed decisions on when and if to respond to complaints and concerns raised on social media.

The CEO should be informed of any incident that may present a risk of significant harm to Thread Ahead or those it comes into contact with. All such incidents will be reported to the Board at the next available meeting, or (if urgent) between meetings. Where relevant, the Trustees will determine whether an incident merits a serious incident report to the Charity Commission.

**Policy Review**

Our social media policy will be reviewed and updated every year. We will also take the opportunity to review this policy after any major announcement from a leading social media platform that would change how Thread Ahead would operate on social media, if a serious incident (as defined by the Charity Commission) has occurred, or if relevant Charity Commission guidelines change.

## Appendix 1: Community Guidelines

### Community Rules

The following community rules relate to Thread Ahead's social media channels, including Facebook, X (formerly known as 'Twitter'), Instagram, TikTok and LinkedIn. We want our platforms to be safe and welcoming to everyone.

### What we encourage you to do in our communities

Thread Ahead has its own presence on many social media channels, and we encourage you to connect with us on our social media spaces - it is your input that makes them. We encourage you to:

- Share your views, content, and comments on our social media spaces.
- Respect others - we ask that all community members use respectful language and treat others with respect and kindness, even if they disagree with their opinions.
- Stay on topic - we encourage discussion about sustainability, the UK immigration system and Thread Ahead's work. However, we ask that conversations remain relevant and on-topic.
- Fact-check information before sharing, as misinformation and fake news can spread quickly on social media.

### What we do not allow

All comments, messages and posts are moderated, and we want to avoid anything being shared on our pages that could put you or others at risk. We ask that you adhere to the following:

- Don't use hate speech - hate speech directly attacks a person or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, disease, age, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity.
- Don't bully or harass - we welcome debate and different opinions, but don't resort to personal attacks; refrain from trolling and using derogatory language.

- Don't post content only available in another language. We are unable to be sure of its suitability for our supporters and may have to delete it.
- Don't post videos or images people may find distressing - such as videos of graphic violence.
- Don't use our page to advertise products or services for profit, or to promote a group or charity not related to our work.
- Don’t share obscenities - sexually explicit and vulgar language - including images, GIFs or the inappropriate use of emojis.
- Don’t share personal details about you or other people - such as your own or anyone else’s phone numbers, addresses, bank details, email addresses etc.

**Comment Moderation and Response**

We will do our best to moderate and respond quickly to your comments and feedback. Our channels are moderated Monday to Friday during working hours.

Although we are moderating our channels to make sure that users’ posts comply with these community rules, we cannot be responsible for the accuracy or reliability of any comments or materials posted by users.

Thread Ahead reserves the right to hide or delete any comments or content deemed to be inappropriate. If you repeatedly ignore our community rules, we reserve the right to ‘ban’ or ‘block’ users without warning.