



# Social Media Policy

Last Updated: April 2026

## 1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Response Ability Theatre (RAT) uses social media responsibly and in a way that protects the charity's beneficiaries, supporters, staff, volunteers and reputation, and ensures compliance with charity law and other relevant legislation.

The policy supports trustees in meeting their legal duties to:

- act in the charity's best interests
- protect the charity's reputation and assets
- manage risk appropriately
- ensure the charity operates for the public benefit.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all staff, volunteers, freelancers and trustees
- use of social media in both a professional and personal capacity where there is a connection to RAT
- all digital platforms, including social networking sites, blogs, forums, podcasts and messaging apps

It applies regardless of the device used.

## 3. Definition of Social Media

Social media refers to online platforms and tools that enable users to create, share or exchange content and to interact publicly or privately. This includes text, images, video and audio content.

## 4. Governance, Accountability and Oversight

The trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that RAT's use of social media supports its charitable purposes and complies with legal and regulatory requirements. We will not use platforms that don't align with our values or charitable aims, and we will regularly review which channels we use.

Operational responsibility for RAT's official social media accounts is delegated to the Founder, who acts under the authority of the trustees.

The Founder is responsible for:

- approving all content published on RAT's official social media channels
- monitoring activity and managing risks
- responding to enquiries, complaints or incidents
- escalating issues to the trustees where appropriate.

No other individual may post, comment or respond on behalf of RAT without explicit authorisation from the Founder.

## PART A: USE OF RAT'S OFFICIAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

### 5. Standards of Conduct

All social media activity carried out on behalf of RAT must:



- be lawful, accurate and fair
- be consistent with RAT's charitable objectives, values and public benefit
- be respectful and non-discriminatory
- avoid causing harm to individuals or the charity

Those acting on RAT's behalf must not:

- publish content that is misleading, defamatory or offensive
- harass, bully or intimidate others
- disclose confidential or personal data
- engage in arguments or inflammatory exchanges

Errors must be corrected promptly and transparently, following guidance from the Founder.

## **6. Purpose and Accuracy of Content**

All content published on RAT's social media accounts must:

- serve a clear purpose that supports RAT's charitable aims
- be factually accurate and based on reliable sources
- clearly distinguish between RAT's own content and third-party material

Reasonable steps must be taken to verify information before publication.

## **7. Political Activity and Neutrality**

RAT is politically neutral and independent.

In line with Charity Commission guidance:

- RAT may campaign on issues or policies that further its charitable purposes
- RAT must not support or oppose a political party or candidate
- care must be taken to avoid content that could reasonably be perceived as party-political

Trustees and staff must ensure that RAT's political activity, where undertaken, remains lawful, proportionate and in the charity's best interests.

## **8. Consent, Safeguarding and Data Protection**

RAT is committed to safeguarding and protecting personal data.

- Personal information must not be shared without appropriate consent
- Images, videos or stories involving identifiable individuals require explicit consent (or parental/guardian consent for those under 18) – photo consent is opt-in rather than opt-out for participants, and photographic permission is confirmed in professional contracts
- Content involving beneficiaries or vulnerable individuals must be handled with particular care
- All activity must comply with data protection legislation

## **9. Enquiries, Complaints and Risk Management**

RAT aims to respond to enquiries promptly and constructively.

If a complaint or critical comment is made:

- it must be referred to the Founder before any response
- responses must be proportionate, factual and respectful

Where social media activity presents a risk of escalation, reputational damage or safeguarding concern, this must be reported immediately to the Founder, who will determine whether trustee involvement is required.



Only the Founder may amend or remove content during a complaint or incident.

## **10. Legal Compliance**

All social media activity must comply with relevant laws, including:

- copyright and intellectual property
- defamation
- data protection
- safeguarding

Appropriate rights and permissions must be obtained before publishing material.

## **PART B: PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **11. Personal Use and Association with RAT**

RAT respects individuals' right to personal social media use. However, staff, volunteers and trustees must be mindful that personal activity may be associated with the charity and may affect public trust and confidence.

Individuals must:

- make clear when expressing personal views that they are not speaking on behalf of RAT
- avoid content that could reasonably be seen as damaging to RAT's reputation or contrary to its values

### **12. Trustees, Senior Staff and Public-Facing Roles**

Trustees and individuals in senior or public-facing roles must take additional care, as their views may be perceived as representing the charity.

They should:

- avoid public statements that conflict with RAT's purposes
- consider reputational risk before engaging in controversial debate

### **13. Conflicts of Interest and Political Activity**

Any actual or potential conflicts of interest arising from personal social media activity must be declared in line with RAT's conflicts of interest policy.

Trustees and staff who engage in political activity in a personal capacity must:

- clearly separate this from their role at RAT
- ensure their activity does not compromise the charity's neutrality
- inform the Chair where relevant

### **14. Conduct, Wellbeing and Respect**

All individuals associated with RAT are expected to:

- treat others respectfully
- engage constructively in disagreement
- avoid abusive or harmful behaviour

RAT recognises the potential impact of online abuse and encourages individuals to seek support and guidance where needed.

### **15. Privacy, Security and Online Safety**

Individuals should:

- use appropriate privacy settings on personal accounts



- keep login details secure
- avoid sharing confidential or sensitive information
- remain alert to fake or impersonation accounts and report concerns

## **16. Supporting RAT Appropriately**

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to share and support RAT's content where appropriate and suitable.

Personal accounts used to promote RAT should be consistent with the charity's values and appropriate for public audiences.