

**CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITY (CHIETA)**

**Policy on the use of social media for advocacy and communication**

## CONTENTS

1. PURPOSE.....	3
2. OBJECTIVES.....	3
3. THE SCOPE OF THE POLICY .....	4
4. DEFINITIONS .....	5
5. BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CHIETA .....	5
6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CUSTODIAN.....	6
7. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS.....	6
8. THE CHIETA REQUIREMENTS .....	6
9. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA CONDUCT .....	7
10. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES .....	7
11. EFFECTIVE DATE, DATE OF APPROVAL VERSION CONTROL AND QUALITY ASSURANCE.....	8

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## 1. PURPOSE

Social media is defined as all forms of public web-based communication and expressions. It includes blogs, link-blogs, wikis, bookmark sites, photo sharing sites, video sharing sites, forums, mailing lists, discussion groups, chat rooms and social networks.

It's an evolution of the communication environment which allows the viewer/customer/community member to tailor their brand experience in a way that makes it more meaningful for them. This ensures better message retention, increased loyalty, and a proactive, two-way relationship that maximises return-on-investment (ROI)

It can create a community of loyal stakeholders who can engage in a more interactive way with CHIETA. By creating a social media platform, it encourages community contributors and builds a loyalty base.

It is critical that social media leaders determine the purpose of their initiatives before they deploy them and that those responsible for social media initiatives articulate how the organisation's mission, strategy, values and desired outcomes inform and impact on these initiatives. A social media strategy plan is one means of conveying this information.

This policy applies to any corporate social media platform as well as to individuals contributing to the web. It's a reflection of an expectation of sound judgement as it is applied to the concrete issues and circumstances of social media initiatives.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is to establish CHIETA requirements for employees using social media for official advocacy and communication purposes.

This policy outlines the standards required for all CHIETA staff to observe when using social media platforms in their own capacity or on behalf of the organisation.

Furthermore the policy aims to:

- To establish practical, reasonable, and enforceable guidelines by which CHIETA employees can conduct responsible, constructive social media engagement in both their official and unofficial capacities.

- To prepare the organisation and employees to utilize social media channels appropriately to communicate with stakeholders particularly in the event of a crisis, disaster, or emergency.
- To protect the company and employees from violating or infringing any laws of CHIETA, government, and stakeholders at large.

This policy supplements the CHIETA Information Technology (IT) policy.

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

### 3. THE SCOPE OF THE POLICY

All employees are expected to always comply with this policy to protect the privacy, confidentiality, and interests of CHIETA and its services, employees, partners and stakeholders All employees, contractors, learners, fixed term employees, labour broker employees and volunteers (social media users).

All employees and other persons covered by the scope of this social media policy shall comply with the established guidelines incorporated in this policy.

The social media policy guidelines are informed and based on the CHIETA code of conduct, business standards and corporate governance policy and principles.

Users of social media platforms shall be mindful of risks of the content when posting on any social media platform. These risks include:

- Impact that the post may have on the CHIETA or its employees.
- Any adverse reaction to the posts that may affect your relationship with CHIETA, or its services.
- A compromise to any classified information, protection of personal information or other confidential information
- Negative impact on the reputation of CHIETA
- Compromise to systems, processes, and know-how technology of the CHIETA.
- It is important not to post any internal reports, policies, procedures, or other business-related information. It is not allowed to use your company email to register on social networks or other personal social media platforms unless it is authorised by the CEO.

CH-HR-03-0012

REV A

2022/04/01

Page 4 of 11

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Breach of this policy may be dealt with under the CHIETA Human Resources policy and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

**4.1 CEO:** Chief Executive Officer

**4.2 Custodian:** The CHIETA Division which takes responsibility for the development, review and implementation of this policy and its related procedure.

**4.3 ROI:** Return on Investment

**4.4 Social media:** Web and mobile based technologies, or applications, which are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue among organisations, communities and individuals.

#### 5. BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CHIETA

The benefits to CHIETA include:

- increasing access to the organisation's audiences
- improving the accessibility of the organisation's communication.
- allowing organisations to adjust or refocus communications quickly, where necessary.
- improving the long-term cost effectiveness of the organisation's communication.
- increasing the speed of constituent feedback and input.
- reaching specific audiences on specific issues; and
- reducing the organisation's dependence on traditional media channels to communicate with constituents.
- cost effectiveness of social media.

CHIETA aims to use social media to engage with internal and external stakeholders by facilitating one or more of the following:

- communication.
- disseminating information.
- interaction; and/or education.
- Improving delivery.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CUSTODIAN

The custodian should be responsible for:

- Designing the social media strategy.
- Managing the risks associated with the social media strategy.
- Identifying social media sites to be used for official purposes.
- Coaching and training employees on social media.
- Working with other Divisions to ensure that there is always a dedicated person keeping audiences engaged and interested in experiencing CHIETA and its products and services.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the social media strategy.
- Keeping a register of social media sites and employees on social media sites in their professional capacity.

## 7. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

In line with CHIETA strategic objectives, the organisation will focus on the following social media platforms:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- YouTube.

## 8. THE CHIETA REQUIREMENTS

- CHIETA has strict requirements regarding the use of the organisation's name logo or any material belonging to the organisation, including on social media.
- All communication using a CHIETA social media platform / on behalf of the organisation which relates to the promotion of the organisation brand or any of its stakeholders can only be processed by the Stakeholder Relations Team after approval by the CHIETA CEO prior to posting.
- All social media posts must be formally approved by the CEO.
- Otherwise, an employee may not make any communication using approved CHIETA social media which promotes the CHIETA brand in the employee's personal capacity or behalf.

## 9. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA CONDUCT

- CHIETA employees should be aware of the possible risk of reputational damage that their actions may have on their personal image, as well as CHIETA's image. The information that employees post or publish may be public information for a long time.
- In their personal capacity employees should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to CHIETA, its employees, clients, or stakeholders.
- Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct includes posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile work environment.
- Employees are not to publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential or not public. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, employees should check with the Human Resources Department and/or a supervisor.
- Subject to applicable law, social media activity that violates CHIETA's Code of Conduct or any other company policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action or termination.
- If employees publish content in their personal capacity that involves work or subjects associated with CHIETA, they must include a disclaimer saying their opinions and comments do not necessarily reflect the point of view of CHIETA or its management.
- If an employee mentions CHIETA in the profile of their personal social media page, they must include a disclaimer saying their opinions and comments do not necessarily reflect the point of view of CHIETA or its management.

## 10. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

- Personal social media usage should not interfere with employee's responsibilities at CHIETA.
- CHIETA permits the incidental use of social media websites for personal use, subject to certain conditions set out below. However, this is a privilege and not a right. It must neither be abused nor overused, and CHIETA reserves the right to withdraw permission at any time at its entire discretion.
- The following conditions must be met for personal use to continue:
  - (a) Use must be minimal unless or supporting the CHIETA's social media platforms.

- (b) Use must not breach any of the rules set out in this policy or any CHIETA policy or employment contract.
- (c) Use must not interfere with business or office commitments.

## 11. EFFECTIVE DATE, DATE OF APPROVAL VERSION CONTROL AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Approved by CHIETA Governing Board on:
30 May 2024
Effective Date:
1 June 2024
Next Review Date:
1 June 2025
Version Control:
2
Annual Quality Assurance
Executive Manager: Corporate Services



## ADDENDUM

### WHY SOCIAL MEDIA?

- Social media platforms will allow the organisation to not only disseminate information but listen to stakeholders and conversations they have about the organisation or relating to it; analyse the conversation and turn it into insights that impact the bottom line.
- The Internet and social media is where the customers of all ages are spending their time and getting their information.
- Whenever you write something helpful, it builds your online credentials.
- It helps you build your online presence.
- In South Africa, social media has crossed the age barrier, the urban/rural divide and even the relationship gap, therefore, not limited in its reach.
- Social media is FREE and helps the search engines find you.
- Since most youth are on social media platforms, social media is the best away to reaching youth that are otherwise not reachable using other mediums.
- Using social media, the organisation is able to leverage the CHIETA brand through optimum use of social media that is less costly but still able to reach the intended objective.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

#### Expert commentary

- Stick to your area of expertise or approved sphere of influence.
- Any content relating to issues outside of your field of expertise to be referred to social media panel for guidance.
- Avoid giving advice and don't make any predictions.
- be credible – accurate, fair, thorough, and transparent.
- be respectful – encourage constructive criticism and deliberation.
- be cordial, honest, and professional always.
- listen before you talk – before entering any conversation you need to understand the context, who is the potential audience?
- is there a good reason to place a comment or respond?

CH-HR-03-0012

REV A

2022/04/01

Page 9 of 11

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- write what you know – you must know your facts and cite credible sources.
- acknowledge if a mistake is made through your comment or response and respond to it immediately.
- be both reactive and responsive – when you gain insight share it where appropriate.

### Personal disclaimer

- If you publish outside of CHIETA use the approved disclaimer.
- Respect brand, intellectual property, copyright, trademarks, confidential information, trade secrets and financial disclosure laws.
- You may be personally responsible for your content and inappropriate or unauthorised communications may have severe repercussions for CHIETA.
- Familiarise and adhere to CHIETA policy framework.
  - Approved public disclosure and communication policy.
  - Information security policy

### Be transparent.

- When you blog on behalf of CHIETA, use your real name, identify that you work for CHIETA and be clear about your role.
- If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, then point it out first.
- Confidentiality around proprietary information and content is always essential.

### Protect personal and proprietary information.

- Safeguard CHIETA's stakeholders' personal information, CHIETA's proprietary information and don't jeopardise the integrity of any information sources, databases or disclose any personal information without the source's express consent to do so.
- Be aware of and abide by applicable law, rules and guidelines governing privacy and personal information protection.
- When in doubt, consult with your manager or the Social Media Panel.

### Be judicious.

CH-HR-03-0012

REV A

2022/04/01

Page 10 of 11

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- Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties CHIETA is in litigation with without appropriate approval and spokesperson.
- Only representatives who have specific authority to comment on legal issues may do so.

### **Perception is reality.**

- Identify yourself as a CHIETA employee; you are creating perceptions about yourself and CHIETA.
- Be sure all content associated with you is consistent with your work and the values and professional standards of CHIETA.
- Any content you publish (Twitter or Face Book) will affect both your and CHIETA's reputation.

### **It's a conversation.**

- Keep interactions polite and appropriate.
- Provide unique, individual perspective.
- Post meaningful, respectful comments – no spam and no derogatory remarks.
- Think before posting – reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
- Keep records of online conversations.

### **Apply common sense.**

- Do not denigrate any party and do not respond to every criticism.
- Avoid contentious and sensitive topics like politics or religion.
- Know the internet is permanent.
- Always act with integrity.

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