

## National Geographic Society Social Media Guidelines for the Explorer Community

At the National Geographic Society, our Explorer community (made up of our grantees, awardees, Emerging Explorers, Fellows, Explorers-in-Residence, and Explorers-at-Large) is at the heart of our work. We are passionate about what we do and what you do, and we encourage you, our Explorer community, to use social media to share that passion with others. Likewise, we want you to use social media to share your work and association with National Geographic. While social media can be an incredible resource, it also presents new and unfamiliar challenges. The lines can easily blur between your personal and professional lives and between what is public or private. As a member of the National Geographic family, you are effectively a brand ambassador, and anything that you post online will reflect on both you and National Geographic. So please use discretion and follow these general guidelines when using social media.

- **Don't pose as National Geographic.** Your social media accounts should not include content that gives the impression that you are speaking on behalf of National Geographic. Do not create an account that suggests that you are an authorized spokesperson for National Geographic (such authorization comes from National Geographic's Marketing & Engagement department). This includes using words such as "NatGeo," "NG" or names of National Geographic products or services in your username, profile name, @ handle, or using a National Geographic mark or logo for your profile photo in a way that appears to others that your account is associated with National Geographic.

Accuracy remains our overriding concern at National Geographic. Statements that purport to be or give the impression that they are on behalf of National Geographic should only be issued by identified spokesperson(s) or shared once an official position has been released, on an as-needed basis. Please refrain from making such statements.

- **Know that you can be quoted.** If your social media account is public, know that what you post online is akin to being "on the record" with a journalist. If your post is available publicly, it may be used for promotion by the social platform or cited by a news outlet. If your post gives the impression that you are speaking on behalf of National Geographic, please make sure you have obtained all necessary approvals prior to posting. Also, if you see a comment, post, content, or situation that you think may violate this policy or pose a risk to National Geographic, report the matter right away to your main National Geographic point of contact (likely your Program Officer). He/She can appropriately assess the situation and decide on any crisis management plans as necessary.

If you are approached by a member of the media to speak on behalf of National Geographic, please contact your National Geographic point of contact before responding.

- **Be measured in what you post online.** Assume that any and all messages and information posted, re-posted, or retweeted on social may be read or accessed by someone other than the intended or designated recipient—even content that is restricted to viewing only by friends and followers. Material you reshare, repost or retweet may appear as an endorsement. Even when a message is deleted, it is possible to retrieve it.
- **Be a responsible and respectful member of the community.** Keep in mind that even if you don't indicate your affiliation with National Geographic on social media, you are still representing National Geographic online. Don't just follow the Terms of Service for the network you're using; also know and be respectful of the norms of the community. Know your audience and understand that local actions can have global impact.

Finally, it's okay to disagree—just be civil. Treat those you encounter online with respect—just as you would offline. Don't use ethnic slurs, discriminatory remarks, personal insults, obscenity or any similar conduct that would not be appropriate or acceptable at the National Geographic Society. The [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#) policy, shared with all of our Explorers, outlines National Geographic' zero-tolerance policy. Even comments made in jest can be taken out of context or misunderstood.

- **Be accurate.** Err on the side of caution. Before you share on social media, think about whether it would reflect poorly on you. Don't believe (or reshare) everything you read online.
- **Be impartial.** As a nonprofit, it is important that National Geographic be neutral and refrain from political activity or advocacy, and this includes our presence on social media. If you choose to publicly express your political views, be mindful of how your posts may reflect on National Geographic. Avoid commenting on controversial issues that impact National Geographic, unless given express permission by a representative of National Geographic working with the Marketing & Engagement team. Refrain from activities that could call our nonprofit status into question, such as including political affiliations in your online profile(s) in tandem with your role with National Geographic and/or membership/participation in inappropriate online groups.
- **Maintain grant agreement guidelines.** If you are on an active grant, please contact your program officer before posting about your National Geographic funded work. Extra attention should be paid to embargoed materials and content from unpublished stories or research expeditions. Regardless of the account type (personal, professional, brand, partner, etc.), information that is embargoed should not be shared on social platforms. These guidelines should be reviewed by all of the participants of the expedition, assignment, event, etc. If you are going on assignment or planning a long-term project,

work with your National Geographic Program Officer to determine appropriate use of social media as it relates to the organization.

- **Tag @insidenatgeo.** We love seeing your work in the field, and often social media is the simplest way to promote it. Feel free to tag the National Geographic Society accounts (@insidenatgeo on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) to identify yourself as an Explorer and show your Nat Geo pride. Just remember that if you have an amazing find or a once-in-a-lifetime photo, for example, give your National Geographic POC a heads-up before you post it, so we can vet on our end if it's something we want to promote.

**Note:** If you see an account that you believe is not an official National Geographic account, but purports to be one or gives the impression that it is, please email your National Geographic point of contact so they can investigate and help determine the appropriate course of action.

**Note:** If you are performing work for National Geographic under a separate agreement, the agreement will supersede the License portion in section #2A above.