**Social Media Policy**

**for Staff and Volunteers**

1. **Introduction**

Social media is essential to the success of communicating WAY Widowed and Young 's work. It is important for the charity, staff and volunteers to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of WAY’s work.

As a WAY staff member or volunteer, you’re in a unique position to use these networks to make a difference to the work we undertake. Connecting with us on these networks is the best way to stay up to date and share our official messages. It sounds simple, but you can make a massive difference by helping us to spread the word.

We encourage the responsible use of social media. This document is to set out what we expect from you when using social media. It is important to remember that we are all ambassadors for the charity and that social media is never private.

1. **Scope of this policy**

This policy is intended for staff members and volunteers across all social media networks including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, snapchat, Linkedin and Youtube.

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise.

WAY Widowed and Young staff and volunteers are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with WAY Widowed and Young's values and policies, both online and in real life to safeguard our charity, members, staff and volunteers.

1. Why do we need a social media policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to WAY Widowed and Young's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy aims to:

* Comply with relevant legislation and protect you as a member of staff or volunteer
* Protect the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues
* Help you draw a line between your private lives and your paid/volunteering work
1. **Guidelines for responsible use of social media**

Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive WAY Widowed and Young. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of WAY Widowed and Young. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with WAY Widowed and Young and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public, colleagues, members and funders.

Please note that purely personal use of social media does not fall within WAY's responsibilities under data protection law.

* 1. **Always protect yourself and the charity.** Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. We ask that staff and volunteers do not list WAY Widowed and Young as their place of work on social media accounts. The only exception to this is LinkedIn and accounts that may be created by WAY for specific roles such as the Chief Executive or Chair.
	2. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive WAY Widowed and Young. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of WAY Widowed and Young. Include a simple statement such as *“Any views expressed on this account are my own and not that of WAY Widowed and Young.”*
	3. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.
	4. **The Charity and Politics**. WAY Widowed and Young is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing WAY Widowed and Young, staff and volunteers are expected to hold WAY Widowed and Young's position of neutrality. Staff and volunteers who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from WAY Widowed and Young and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
	5. **Press Enquiries.** If a staff member or volunteer is contacted by the press about their social media posts or other matters that relate to WAY Widowed and Young, they should contact Communications Manager as soon as possible via media@widowedandyoung.org.uk who will offer further guidance and support.
	6. **Keep Sharing!** We encourage staff and volunteers to share tweets, posts and links to the website that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support WAY Widowed and Young and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage staff and volunteers to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the operations team at enquiries@widowedandyoung.org.uk who will respond as appropriate.
1. **Changes to this Policy**

WAY Widowed and Young, reserve the right to change this policy at anytime.  In which case the amended policy will be updated on our website and will apply from the date we post them.

The format and content of our website changes constantly. You should refresh your browser each time you visit our sites to ensure that you access the most up to date version.

1. **Our Contact Details**

We can be contacted in the following ways: WAY- Widowed and Young

Advantage House, Stowe Court, Stowe Street, Lichfield. WS13 6A.

or enquiries@widowedandyoung.org.uk

1. **Policy Control**

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| **Version** | 3 | First Issue Date MM/YY | 06/19 | Last Review Date MM/YY | 07.24 | Next Review Date MM/YY | 07.25 |
| **Signed****(Chair or Trustee)** | Agreed by WAY Trustees Meeting Date 13th July 2024 |

**\*\*END OF POLICY\***