MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN - SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

With the recent surge of technology and social networking devices such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and blogging, the Garden seeks to advance its reach into online community building. Therefore, the Garden has adopted the following Social Media Policy. This Policy is subject to change, and the Garden reserves the right to make any amendments in the future.

A. The Missouri Botanical Garden Social Media Accounts

1. Reason for Social Media

The Garden’s Facebook, Twitter, and other social media accounts offer a unique and creative way for us to participate in authentic discussions with the public.

2. Goals for Social Media

By creating and engaging in social media, the Garden hopes to:

   a. Take a creative and proactive approach to assisting its visitors, donors and members
   b. Identify and engage advocates and supporters
   c. Monitor and participate in online conversations to build brand visibility and thought leadership
   d. Author tweets, status updates, blog posts, articles, podcasts, and videos to engage the public
   e. Create an initial point of contact for inbound social media requests and questions
   f. Facilitate the transfer of information to the appropriate departments so that they can respond accordingly
   g. Identify and analyze issues, patterns and trends in visitor/fan requests and commentary
   h. Stay up to date with new social media tools, trends and practices, including how social media is utilized by other companies and organizations, so the Garden can remain an early adopter of new technology
   i. Participate in professional networking by interacting with peers and influencers and by attending events
   j. Establish metrics and report on them regularly
   k. Enhance our ability to proactively bring issues, observations, opportunities, and insights to the attention of the executive team
3. **Staffing for Social Media Accounts**

   a. Websites, blogs, and social media pages that serve as a public voice of the Garden will be created and managed by the Communications Division’s Web Content Editor.

4. **Policies Regarding the Garden’s Social Media Accounts**

   a. **Authorization to Create Garden Media Accounts** Some Garden staff may be interested in engaging in internet conversations for work-related purposes, or may be asked by supervisors or leadership to participate, in support of the Garden’s organizational objectives. Such engagement on behalf of the Garden, including establishment of official sites representing the Garden or Garden affiliates, must be approved and coordinated through the Communications Division.

   b. **Garden Media Accounts** Unless permission has been granted by the Communications Division, staff are not authorized to blog, speak, or tweet on behalf of the Garden or any of its affiliates (Butterfly House, EarthWays Center, and Shaw Nature Reserve). This also includes, but is not limited to, gaining approval to post anything regarding Garden imagery and information.

   c. **Use of External Websites** Use of external Web sites for work-related purposes (e.g. photo sharing through Flickr.com) must first be approved by the Communications Division.

   d. **Adherence to Applicable Laws** All proposed images or additions to the Garden’s social media accounts must adhere to applicable laws, including intellectual property, publicity and privacy laws.

   e. **Suggestions to Accounts Welcome** Staff members are encouraged and welcome to submit ideas for social media posts to the Communications Division. We will consider your information based on relevance, schedule, and the criteria referenced above.

   f. **Guidelines for Maintaining Accounts** Staff members who are approved to speak for the Garden on its official social media accounts should adhere to the following guidelines:

      (i) **Check Your Sources** It is important that the Garden’s social media pages contain honest and truthful information. Make every effort to verify the source of the information being posted and
ensure the information is appropriate for publication. When appropriate, provide citations to sources in your publication.

(ii) **Correct Errors or Omissions** If you notice any errors or omissions, promptly correct mistakes and make a notation of the change. If you do not have approval to make the change, please bring the error or omission to the attention of the Communications Division.

(iii) **Reply When Appropriate** While you cannot necessarily respond to every comment, it is important to be aware of what others are posting on our pages. If a post or comment requires a response, make an effort to respond promptly and respectfully.

(iv) **Link Directly** When referencing any external material, if possible, link directly to the online reference and original source materials. As stated above, if external material is not accessible online, consider providing a citation to your source.

**B. Policies Regarding Outside Participation In the Garden’s Social Media Accounts**

One of the benefits of social media is that it creates an interactive dialogue between the Garden and others in the community. To maintain the integrity of these sites, the Garden sets forth the following participation guidelines for its users:

1. **The Right to Review** The Garden reserves the right to review posts prior to posting on one of its social networking accounts. In addition, the Garden reserves sole discretion to determine which posts are appropriate for publication on its accounts.

2. **No Inappropriate Posts** The Garden may remove any posts or comments it determines to be threatening, harassing, obscene, defamatory, slanderous, or hostile toward any individual or entity, or otherwise inappropriate.

3. **Legal Considerations** The Garden reserves the right to remove phone numbers, address, e-mail addresses or any other personal information contained in a post that may infringe on privacy rights. In addition, the Garden may remove any material that infringes on applicable intellectual property or publication rights, or that is otherwise prohibited by law.

4. **No Solicitations or Spam** The Garden may remove any material that advertises a commercial product or solicits membership or financial or other support in any business, group or organization. In addition, the Garden may remove any chain letters, multiple posts for the same comment, or “spam” posts.

**C. Guidelines for Garden Staff Regarding Social Media Participation**

The Garden does not discourage staff from participating in social media during off hours. However, it is important to be mindful of your activity online and realize that actions
taken in your personal capacity that adversely affect your job performance, the performance of fellow staff members, or otherwise adversely affect members, customers, suppliers, people who work on behalf of the Garden, or the Garden’s legitimate business interests, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Therefore, the Garden sets forth the following guidelines for its staff:

1. **Mention of the Garden on Other Sites** If you are developing a website, writing a blog, or posting anything that will mention the Garden, its staff, partners, members, and supporters, you must identify that you are a staff member of the Garden and that the views expressed on your blog or website are yours alone and do not necessarily represent the views of the Garden. You must also identify yourself as a staff member of the Garden if you create a link to the Garden’s internal or external websites and social media accounts from personal blogs, sites or posts.

2. **Intellectual Property Laws** Staff should ensure that they respect all copyright and other intellectual property laws when using social media. For the Garden’s protection as well as your own, it is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright, fair use of copyrighted material owned by others, trademarks, and other intellectual property, including the Garden’s or its affiliates’ copyrights, trademarks, and brands.

3. **Social Media During Work Time** The Garden does not permit its staff to use social media while on work time or on equipment we provide, unless it is work-related as authorized by your manager or consistent with the Garden’s Computer Usage policy.

4. **Non-Disclosure of Confidential or Proprietary Information** You may not share information that is confidential and proprietary about the Garden. This includes, but is not limited to, information about trademarks, events, internal financial reports, strategy, internal business-related confidential communications, and any other similar information that has not been publicly released by the Garden. These are given as examples only and do not cover the range of what the Garden considers confidential and proprietary. If you have any question about whether information has been released publicly or have doubts of any kind, speak with your manager and the Communications Division before releasing information that could potentially harm the Garden, its affiliates, staff, volunteers, members, donors, or trustees.

5. **Prohibition of Work E-Mail Address for Identification** Just as you would not use Garden stationary for a letter to the editor with your personal views, do not use a Garden e-mail address for your personal views posted to other social media sites or to register on social networks, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal use.

6. **Posts Regarding the Garden** The Garden expects its staff to always be respectful to fellow staff members, customers, members, suppliers, and
people who work on behalf of the Garden, including when using social media. Staff should not post statements, photographs, video, or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, threatening, intimidating, or that disparage customers, members, staff members, suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Content that you know to be false about the Garden, fellow staff, members, customers, suppliers, or its affiliates should also never be posted.

7. **Company Policies Applicable Online** The Garden requires its staff to abide by all applicable company policies while engaging in social media online and you may be held legally liable or disciplined for any online posts that would be considered a violation of company policy. Social media content that reasonably could be viewed as harassment, discrimination, or retaliation is not permissible between co-workers online, even if posted after hours away from the Garden, just as it is not permissible in the workplace. Examples of such might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone’s reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, or any other status protected by law or Garden policy.