

## IAFSS Social Media Guidelines

This document provides guidelines for official activity of the IAFSS on social media. The IAFSS communications subcommittee is responsible for implementation of these guidelines with approval from the IAFSS Executive Committee.

### Introduction

This document describes guidelines for all people representing IAFSS in social media, e.g. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and other online forums. On social media, IAFSS members and representatives have the opportunity to market the IAFSS, strengthen the IAFSS trademark, create contacts, and communicate. Communication over the internet also means risks, as posts can be widely spread and difficult to stop. The purpose of this document is to provide members and in particular representatives of the organization with guidelines so that social media is used in a positive way.

The IAFSS is supportive of members and representatives being active in various ways on social media. Social media is potentially a powerful tool to promote research into the science of preventing and mitigating the adverse effects of fires, especially in the dissemination of the results of such research. A presence in social media also strengthens the image of the association as open, accessible, and technically relevant.

All IAFSS representatives (e.g. communications committee members, board members, general members, etc.) who use social media *in the name of IAFSS* should comply with this document and with the recommendations it contains. In general, posts from official IAFSS media accounts should only come from the communications subcommittee, following these guidelines. Therefore, members, including officers, should send official posts representing the IAFSS to the communications subcommittee for posting rather than posting it as an “official” statement on their personal accounts.

### General Guidelines

Posts, reposts, likes, etc. should be in line with the general objective of the association, that is *to promote research into the science of preventing and mitigating the adverse effects of fires and the dissemination of the results of such research*. By remaining active on social media, the organization hopes to retain the attention of members between conferences and provide forums for sharing of information related to fire science.

*The IAFSS should be neutral and not take part in any debate on social media;* however, posts, reposts, likes, etc. can be made in order to alert members and other people in the fire science community about a certain topic or debate in the community. While these posts may stir discussion, IAFSS should never officially post anything in such a way that appears one-sided in

contentious debate. The obvious exception is in support of further scientific understanding of fire, for the improvement of public safety.

*For example*, after a major high-rise building disaster it would be appropriate, following these guidelines, to re-post a link to Twitter, Facebook, etc. to a news article describing the disaster or ongoing debate. A quote from the article or mention of the disaster, need for more research or fire science, highlight of potential cause (cited in the article), could be included. What should not be included is any representation of an *opinion* from the organization, e.g. stating certain commercial products should be banned, placing blame or responsibility, etc. *An exception is encouraging further fire science research into the topic*, which is the mission and purpose of the organization.

## **Goals**

The goal of IAFSS' interaction on social media is to increase the presence and prominence of the organization in relation to its mission of increasing fire safety science. Examples of posts, reposts, likes, etc. that should be created or shared by the IAFSS are presented below.

## **Encouraged Posts**

- In general any news published on iafss.org or other webpages associated with the IAFSS (e.g. the IAFSS symposia, associated local conferences, etc.) should be shared on social media. These may be reposted, promoted, etc. over time.
- Information on upcoming symposium or conferences that are organised or associated with the IAFSS should be shared often. This includes information about paper, abstract and registration deadlines.
- Highlights of research from the organization's official journal (currently Fire Safety Journal, published by Elsevier) should be shared to promote the journal and status of the organization.
- Highlights of the organization such as member benefits, photos (with permission) from past image contests, educational resources, etc.
- Highlights of information in the member newsletter, Fire Safety Science News. This may include articles, updates from member organizations, awards to members, new research, upcoming events, etc., linked to the newsletter.

## **Encouraged Re-posts**

In general, reposted information should be information that is of interest to IAFSS members but not necessarily something that IAFSS would on its own website. This may include re-posting tweets, links to webpages, articles, etc. The topic should be of non-commercial nature and of interest to the community. Examples of reposts by the IAFSS are:

- Information about conferences that are considered to be of interest to the IAFSS members and other people active in fire science research, e.g. those that would be included in the conference list on the website.
- Reposts of information from scientific journals, (e.g. information about special issues, new journals, highlighted articles, etc.)
- Reposts of scientific results or projects in fire science research from universities, established research institutes, reputable journals (e.g. those provided on our links page), etc.
- Reposts of special educational activities in fire science (e.g. post-graduate courses or research workshops)
- Reposts of information from related organizations that is of benefit to members is encouraged. This might include resources from other organizations of interest to members (a report or guideline), a survey that is also of benefit to our members, or other significant news that could be of use to members and is unbiased and in the interest of the IAFSS.
- Highlighting member achievements and work. For instance, *significant* awards that might appear in upcoming *Fire Safety Science News* articles (e.g. awards from the FORUM, career awards in fire, etc.).

## **Likes**

Examples of likes, thumbs up, or other recognition on social media by the IAFSS do not condone approval of any kind, however they should still be carefully selected. Examples of these are:

- Likes of scientific or engineering results, projects and announcements from predominately universities and established research institutes with active fire science research.
- Likes of news in established media where the IAFSS members have made announcements with references to scientific results, projects etc.
- Likes of announcements from scientific journals, (e.g. information about special issues, new journals)
- Likes of fire science related awards, publications, or other highlights on member's social media accounts.
- Likes of photos, notes, or other information during IAFSS conferences from members.

## **Communication**

To keep information fair there must be a simple means for organizations to share updates and information with the communications subcommittee. The main point of contact will be [socialmedia@iafss.org](mailto:socialmedia@iafss.org). We will also solicit member recommendations for content by messages and shares on social media.

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Issues or complaints on posts will first be resolved by the chair of the communications subcommittee. They will be collected and shared with the executive and management committee as requested by the Chair. When conflicts appear, they will be forwarded to representatives of the executive committee appointed by the Chair for resolution.

### **Procedure for approval of Posts and Reposts**

Items which directly apply as examples in this document and have clear benefit will be reposted by members of the committee, following these guidelines. Any potential conflicts will be sent first to the chair of the communications subcommittee, which upon inspection may be sent to one of several pre-selected representatives of the executive committee or IAFSS chairperson.

### **Prohibited Activity**

All posts, re-posts, likes or other online activity should always provide a good representation of the IAFSS. Any statements, images, shares, likes, etc. that include blatant commercial promotion, derogatory or defamatory statements, etc. should never be posted and, if found, will be immediately removed from all relevant online platforms. Individual members should never post any statements on their personal accounts appearing to officially come from the IAFSS, however if such prohibited statements are made in the name of IAFSS on accounts not under its control that information will be forwarded to the Chair of the organization for further action.

#### *Commercial Activity*

As an independent organization devoted towards advancing fire safety science, it is in the organization's interest to promote fire science research whether that be from universities, laboratories, or corporations. We should not, however, promote any specific product, commercial entity, etc. Sharing recent scientific advances, even if they appear from a commercial entity, may still be appropriate, e.g. a major research study from a for-profit laboratory. Most of these cases would be forwarded for approval prior to posting. Care must be taken to not appear to condone any particular for-profit interest.

#### *Privacy and Confidentiality*

Confidential or privileged information must not be posted, shared, re-tweeted, etc. This includes member's personal information.

### **Copyright**

IAFSS will follow all applicable copyright and trademark laws while sharing. For instance, permission must be granted for images that are shared by the authors or copyright owners of the images.