# Enhancing Your Research Impact through Social Media: Action Plan

This plan is for you to take away after today's session and use to help you plan your next steps for developing your social media presence, whether through blogging, your Twitter presence and activity, YouTube, LinkedIn, ResearchGate, etc. Note any key issues to resolve, resources to create, questions to ask, etc.

**Thinking of the next 12 months what do want to achieve with your social media activity?**

Reflect on the purpose of your social media presence(s) and think about the audience you want to reach and the impact you want your activities to have.

**Do you have the appropriate goals, tools and skills in place to monitor the impact of your social media activity?** Do you have the information to ensure your posts, tweets, videos, etc. are performing successfully? What would success look like or mean for you?

Think about any SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-related) goals, KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), and any other reporting or impact criteria that may be important for reporting on your work, or reflecting on your own practice.

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**How do your current social media activities and posts fit into wider communications & engagement activities?** What other channels are available for promoting and sharing your blog posts, Twitter chats, etc?

Think about who your audience(s) is, and how they find your social media presences and activities, and how this fits into wider events, campaigns, etc. Are there opportunities to make better connections between different channels?

**Are there any changes required to the look, feel or settings of your blog, Twitter or social media other presence?**

Is your blog easy to find, easy to navigate? Have you tagged blog and/or twitter posts, presentations, etc.? Is your presence branded appropriately – with suitable personal (name, profile pic) or project branding? Have you checked privacy/discussion settings, accessibility, and mobile experience? Are you using the best URL settings for SEO (Search Engine Optimisation)?
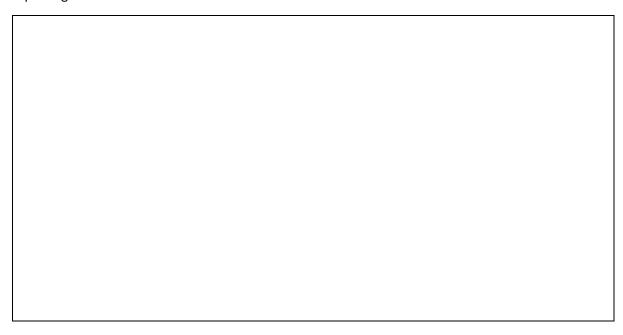
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**What is your comment moderation process?** This might be for comments on your blog, Facebook page/group etc… How do you deal with challenging behaviour on Twitter?

Do you have spam prevention plugins/software/settings in place (e.g. Akismet)? If you are working as part of a project or collaborative space (e.g. Facebook group) you have "house rules" or do you want to have a clear policy or personal/project process for dealing with problematic comments?

Think about whether you are well set up for potential problems – is your branding consistent and in line with professional or organizational guidance; are privacy settings appropriate for the type of interaction you want to have with your audience; can a colleague access any project/event channels you manage in case of an emergency or out of hours issue? Do you know the process for blocking or reporting users?

Some useful (local) resources that may be useful around social media settings, privacy and security, and dealing with difficult comments/situations include:

**University of Edinburgh Social Media Guidelines**: http://www.ed.ac.uk/website-programme/training-support/guidelines/social-media

**University of Edinburgh Digital Footprints Service:** http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/about-us/projects/digital-footprint

**Managing Your Digital Footprint: Social Media for Educators – Analytics, Reporting and best practice resources**: https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=311151998

**Are the audiences you want to engage actually reading and engaging with your social media presence at present?** What content particularly works well? What attracts them to take part? Which

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posts are most popular/engaged with? How might you encourage greater participation, or more engagement from harder to reach audiences?

Think about whether your content encourages participation, and how it shapes the types of interaction you get. Consider if you are using the right space or writing style for your target audience(s). Could you review what you do, the type of content you share, with input from or based on feedback from your audience(s)? Are you making appropriate use of relevant calls to action?

**Do you have a suitable plan for posting new content? Are there key planned events or activities around your social media presence(s)?** Think about how might you create better quality and/or more frequent posts?

Think about key issues, milestones in your research or project activity, etc. that are coming up over the next 12 months. What existing resources – images, video, audio, etc. - do you have available to share and create content around? Think about your longer term objectives and how you might develop a content plan, to help plan your activity. Who will be responsible for creating content – just you or do you have collaborators or guest contributors? Can any of your posts or content be prepared in advance?

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| | Actions | Notes | Date Completed |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Your social media presences are appropriately branded with the right permissions & privacy/discussion settings in place for the intended purpose. | | |
| | Objectives (personal or project depending on your context), desired outcomes and goals for the next 12 months have been identified. | | |
| | Existing content assets (images, videos, etc.) have been captured (and the list updated regularly). Ideas for exploiting this content as new posts are captured and scheduled/planned. | | |
| | For collaborative spaces: Any guest bloggers/authors/creators to be featured, etc. are noted in your plan. There is a process for approaching and supporting guest authors to contribute. | | |
| | A content plan has been developed for the next 6-12 months, with reference to "key messages" (priorities/focal areas), dates, and priorities. | | |
| | Regular updates are planned for your social media schedule, with any other contributors part of discussion/scheduled check ins at a suitable interval (e.g. every 3 months). | | |
| | Your target audience understands how to be part of discussion on your blog with any "house rules" or other required information (e.g. guidance on how to comment) provided on the blog or social media space. | | |
| | For projects/collaborations: the social media presence can be accessed by several named responsible people providing coverage during absence, out of hours, etc. | | |
| | Monitoring tools and resources are in place to enable you to reflect (and perhaps report) on what is working well, and less well, on your social media presence, and how your audience are responding. | | |

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