

Official Use of Social Media

- **Work is work:** These recommendations concern the use of social media as part of your official duties. If you use these media during working hours, it must be to help you do your work better, not for personal reasons or to keep in touch with people. Talk with your supervisors to find out whether and to what extent you can use, for example, Facebook or Twitter for work purposes (e.g. to make contacts, acquire new knowledge, network or offer advice).
- **Everything legal:** Everyone is responsible for their own actions in Web 2.0. The same legal obligations apply in the virtual world as in “real” life. Data protection and official secrecy requirements in particular must be observed at all times, especially on the Internet. Confidential information does not belong there. Also observe copyrights by, for example, only publishing photographs and videos if you or the University have the rights to use them. Indicate the source and author of the image in the image description and make sure the people shown have given their consent. Employee names should also only be used if they have explicitly given their consent.
- **Employees are also personal messengers for the University of Bonn:** No one is just a private person on the web and the areas of overlap are frequently blurry. Keep in mind, therefore, that if you indicate that you work at the University of Bonn, you will also always be seen as a member of the University in Web 2.0. What you say about the University is especially important. Do not use University logos in personal contexts.
- **Transparency desired:** Use your “real” name in Web 2.0 or the name of your organizational unit. Do not post anonymous comments or use an alias. Make it clear that you are an employee of the University of Bonn. False statements or omissions can be easily checked in the Internet and are quickly exposed.
- **Remain neutral:** To prevent misunderstandings, you should avoid expressing personal opinions when using social media for official purposes, especially religious and political opinions.
- **Keep calm and remain objective:** Always keep your posts friendly and objective, even when unfair, critical or emotional comments are made about you or the University. If in doubt, sleep on it, instead of giving an answer that you later regret.
- **Protect yourself and your privacy:** Be careful about your privacy when using Web 2.0 applications and don't disclose personal information unnecessarily. Remember that the Internet has a long memory. Anything that is published spreads quickly and is almost impossible to delete. Do not publish anything you would not want everyone to read. Do not rely on your information remaining available to just a closed group of users. You can never rule out the possibility that even posts like these could be made accessible to the broad public.
- **Central coordination:** The Internet generally operates in a decentralized manner. To be seen as an organization, however, social media activities require some degree of coordination. The Press and Communication section of the University administration performs this coordination on behalf of the Rectorate. It is also your first point of contact for all questions concerned with social media.

