

Social Media

Considering today's global communication capabilities and their importance to the ISI team in maintaining connection with international students, volunteers, donors, and ministry partners, the use of social media is encouraged by ISI. Social media includes but is not limited to email, blogging, social networks, and instant messaging systems.

Employees are personally responsible for the content they publish. ISI's standards of Ethics and Conduct (see Page 1) and Confidentiality of Information (Page 4) as well as all other ISI standards and common sense must be applied to the use of such media.

Recognizing that the line between ISI ministry and team members' personal lives is often difficult to distinguish, it should be considered that any and all communications via such media is representational of ISI unless the communications clearly state that they are being offered purely in a personal capacity. ISI team members must exercise great wisdom and caution in all use of such media as even reputedly purely personal comments can negatively impact their Christian faith testimony and/or ISI. The Bible should be used as the touchstone in determining the appropriateness of all communications.

Additionally, communications that clearly violate U.S. laws including but not limited to U.S. defamation of character laws must be avoided. The team member posting anything related to ISI and its ministry must clearly identify themselves as being affiliated with ISI and make it clear whether their comments/inputs are being offered in a representational role or purport to represent a management position. Nothing in this guideline is meant to interfere with employees' rights under federal law to engage in protected and concerted activity.

Media Releases

The internet is a powerful yet simple way for us to attract students, volunteers, and supporters to the ministry of ISI and to keep them informed instantaneously. ISI provides to staff and Ministry Representatives web sites to enhance ministry to international students. Testimonies and pictures play a vital role in sharing ISI's ministry and attracting others to become involved in our mission.

This raises the need for us to exercise wisdom and caution regarding what we post publicly—where anyone in the world can view it with a mere click of a button. Unauthorized use of such information may have legal ramifications impacting the Team member and ISI, and also may create serious security issues for students from countries where an association with Christianity puts them at great risk. We do not want to risk a student's safety or well-being due to our negligence.

It is therefore important to obtain written permission for every name, testimony, and especially photo used on ISI's or any website or in your mailings. If it is not possible to obtain a student's signature, at a minimum, you must obtain and document verbal permission for every person's picture and story used which is specific enough to potentially allow identification of the student. This applies to photographs and other identifying information even if the student's name is not used or is changed. While obtaining authorization may be inconvenient, it is further evidence of our Christian love and concern for internationals and our respect for their privacy rights.

Questions regarding this issue should be directed to ISI's Production and Web Site Coordinator.