PERFORMING ARTS NETWORK OF SOUTH AFRICA

Postnet Suite 237, P/Bag X18, Rondebosch, 7700 • Tel: 021 448 3513 • E-mail: info@pansa.org.za •
3b Beach Road, Woodstock, 7925
Website:www.pansa.org.za
Registered Non Profit Organisation: 019-469-NPO
PBO no: 930017636 PAYE no: 7550756755

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COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

This document contains the policies and procedures governing the use of communications within the Performing Arts Network South Africa (PANSA).

PURPOSE

PANSA strives to provide accurate and timely information, communicated in a professional manner.

SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for all internal and external communication using various mediums including:

- Printed materials such as newsletters, articles, and brochures.
- Electronic materials such as email, postings to web sites or social media sites.
- Media relations such as requests for interviews, news releases, and media inquiries.
- Telephonic communications

PANSA also recognizes that employees and committee members may sometimes comment on performing arts matters outside of their official role as an employee or Committee member. Therefore, this policy also provides guidelines for employees and committee members when communicating as a private individual.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

PANSA strives to communicate in an accurate and timely manner, with a professional attitude.

1. All communications will be respectful in nature
2. All communications will follow other policies regarding technology use, code of conduct, and data management
3. All external communications will work towards the overall branding of PANSA
4. The privacy of PANSA staff and committee members is paramount
5. All communications will fall within the law, and not contain any explicit, hateful, or libellous content
6. Official PANSA communications are in English, however if staff are capable of communicating in other languages and this is appropriate, it is to be encouraged.
7. PANSA will never demonstrate bias towards any political party or belief system

1.1 HANDLING GENERAL REQUESTS

All staff is responsible for communicating basic and routine information to the public in relation to their specific job duties. Requests for private data or information outside of the scope of an individual's job duties should be routed to the appropriate Project Manager, Regional Coordinator or the National Director, who will involve the Chairpeople or committees at their discretion.

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1.2 HANDLING MEDIA REQUESTS

With the exception of routine events and basic information that is readily available to the public, all requests for interviews or information from the media are to be routed through the National Director or their designated representative. Media requests include anything intended to be published or viewable to others in some form such as television, radio, newspapers, newsletters, and web sites and online formats.

When responding to media requests, PANSA should follow these steps

1.2.1 If the request is for routine or public information (such as a meeting time or agenda) provide the information and notify the relevant parties of the request.

1.2.2 If the request is regarding information about PANSA members, controversial issues, an opinion on an industry matter, or if you are unsure if it is a "routine" question, forward the request to the National Director or their designated authority. An appropriate response would be, "I'm sorry, I don't have the full information regarding that issue. Let me take some basic information and submit your request to the appropriate person who will get back to you as soon as he/she can.

1.2.3 In all instances above, ask the media representative's name, questions, deadline, and contact information.

1.3 COMMUNICATING ON BEHALF OF PANSA

The National Director, Regional Coordinators, Assistant Regional Coordinators, Project Staff, and Committee members are authorized to communicate on behalf of PANSA to the public and PANSA membership where they have the requisite information to do so

1.3.1 Representatives must identify themselves as representing PANSA. If operating officially, email addresses and account names on social media sites must clearly be connected to PANSA and approved by the National Director or their designated authority

1.3.2 All information must be respectful, professional and truthful. Corrections must be issued when needed.

1.3,3 Personal opinions generally don't belong in PANSA communications. One exception is communication related to promoting an event or project. For example, if an employee posted on the Facebook page, "My friend came to one of PANSA's tax workshops and today she got her SARS refund!". Employees who have been approved to use social media sites on behalf of PANSA should seek assistance from the Regional Coordinators and National Director in this regard

1.3.4 Employees need to notify the National Director if they will be using their personal technology (cell phones, home computer, cameras, etc) for PANSA business. Employees should be aware that the data transmitted or stored may be subject to the organisations Data and Communications Policies

1.3.5 Committee members are subject to the same guidelines as staff when representing PANSA, and should bear in mind that even when not explicitly stated they will be perceived as PANSA reps. If a conflict of interest is foreseen regarding their personal work and PANSA matters this should be communicated to the National Director so that it can be resolved.

1.4 ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

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It is important for employees to remember that the personal communications of employees and committee may reflect on PANSA, especially if employees are commenting on PANSA or industry business. The following guidelines apply to personal communications including various forms such as social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, etc), letters to the editor of newspapers, and personal endorsements:

1.4.1 Remember that what you write is public, and will be so for a long time. It may also be spread to large audiences. Use common sense when using email or social media sites. It is a good idea to refrain from sending or posting information that you would not want your colleagues to read, or that you would be embarrassed to see in the newspaper.
1.4.2 PANSA expects its employees to be truthful, courteous and respectful towards colleagues, members, public and other persons associated with PANSA. Do not engage in name-calling or personal attacks.
1.4.3 If you publish something related to PANSA, identify yourself and use a disclaimer such as, "I am an employee of the PANSA. However, these are my own opinions and do not represent those of PANSA."
1.4.4 PANSA resources, working time, or official titles cannot be used for personal profit or business interests, or to participate in personal political activity. For example, an employee could not use PANSA's logo, email, or working time to promote his/her side business or interest.
1.4.5 Personal social media account names or email names should not be tied to PANSA
1.4.6 Personal communications, email, telephone, and other online media is allowed during office hours but should be kept to a minimum

1.5 PRIVACY

The personal contact details of PANSA staff and committee members will never be given out without their express permission. Even if these details have been given willingly, PANSA staff and committee are under no obligation to respond to communication outside of office hours.

2 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

As the majority of PANSA's members operate in the online environment, the majority of PANSA's communications will be in this medium.

2.1 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

2.1.1 While maintaining a respectful tone, there is room for electronic communications to have a slightly lighter tone. This should be gauged by the National Director or their designated authority and monitored on an ongoing basis.
2.1.2 Content going out across different electronic mediums should be differentiated to avoid duplication of material. The context of reception should be considered and accommodated in the creation of content.
2.1.3 All emails should have clear subject lines for swift and easy consumption

2.2 EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS TO MEMBERS

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2.2.1 The newsletter is a national communications tool, and is distributed every month by the National Director's designated authority. A clear deadline for submission of material will be set by the designated authority and no late submissions will be accepted. The newsletter will include:

- PANSA news and information
- Regional reports
- Opportunities for members (workshops/auditions/festivals/job opportunities)
- Advertisements of up to 100 words for paid up PANSA members
- The PANSA logo and logos of all relevant sponsors/funders/partners

2.2.2 In addition to the monthly newsletter, newsflashes may be sent out twice weekly on a national basis. These will include urgent information which cannot wait for the newsletter, as well as ongoing PANSA information. The deadlines and distribution days for these will be set by the National Director's designated authority, and will be clearly communicated to all the regions and to membership.

2.2.3 Regional or more targeted communications (eg to writers only, or participants in particular workshops) can be sent more frequently, but this should be negotiated with the National Director's designated authority so as to avoid overloading members with mail communications.

2.2.4 Email signatures of PANSA staff should include PANSA's logo and contact information, and be updated frequently to include a single line to reflect current PANSA projects and events

2.2.5 All emails from members or public will be acknowledged within 2 working days, and replied to in full within 5 working days unless they require deeper investigation

2.2.6 If you are to be out of office an auto reply must be set, ideally offering other channels of communication for urgent requests

2.2.7 It should always be possible for members to opt out of receiving information, other than direct personal emails, and these requests and settings should be noted and adhered to

2.3 **INTERNAL EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS**

2.3.1 Unless a project or issue has more pressing deadlines, the same deadline of a response within two working days and a full solution within five working days applies to internal email communications

2.3.2 It is important to copy all relevant parties on emails so that no information is lost. Specifically, if a mail is sent to a group of people, replies should reply all unless otherwise specified

2.3.3 If you are giving an instruction/request to a staff member, ensure that their direct superior is included in the communication and thus aware of the instruction/request

2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA

It is important to note that social media is a process of building a communicative and networked membership base, and not a one way communication channel.

2.4.1 Facebook

2.4.1.1 PANSA shall have a designated representative who holds overall responsibility for the PANSA Facebook account. This person should be aware of everything happening within PANSA, and have contact information for any staff and project managers.

2.4.1.2 Facebook should be updated a minimum of 4 times a week, and a maximum of 3 times a day

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2.4.1.3 Facebook should be checked for responses on a daily basis, and any and all questions asked should be answered on Facebook itself, so that the replies are as visible as the questions
2.4.1.4 Criticism and negative comments should be responded to publically and not deleted
2.4.1.5 Events should be created and monitored with discretion, as the creation of excessive events is one of the most common causes of Facebook fans leaving a site

2.4.2 Twitter
2.4.2.1 PANSA shall have a designated representative who holds overall responsibility for the PANSA Twitter account. This person should be aware of everything happening within PANSA, and have contact information for any staff and project managers.
2.4.2.2 Twitter should be updated a minimum of 4 times a week and a maximum of 3 times daily
2.4.2.3 @ replies and DMs should be responded to on a daily basis
2.4.2.4 An active effort should be made to follow all PANSA members and those relevant to the Performing Arts industry both in South Africa and internationally

2.4.3 Other Social Media Channels
2.4.3.1 Should PANSA begin to interact via any other social media channels, guidelines along the same principle as those above should be drawn up by the National Director or their designated authority
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2.5 WEBSITE

The website is PANSA's primary marketing channel, and should be as user friendly and up to date as possible
2.5.1 While all staff should have the ability to add and edit content, one person should be designated by the National Director as the person who holds overall responsibility for content
2.5.2 Contact details and project information should be as up to date as possible
2.5.3 All content should be reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis
2.5.4 All projects and events must submit marketing material including text and photos where possible for the website
2.5.5 All sponsor/funder logos must be clearly displayed on the website
2.5.6 The home page should be updated at least once a week

3 TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS

As one of PANSA's primary functions is as a helpdesk, the availability and responsiveness of our telephone communications is critical.

3.1 PANSA's official phone lines will be answered during office hours, 9 – 5 unless explicitly stated otherwise, in a pleasant tone, identifying that PANSA has been reached
3.2 Answering machines advising that PANSA has been reached and offering alternate emergency contact information will be operating should a phone line go unanswered
3.3 Should the person who answers not be able to provide the answer, they will take responsibility for ensuring the call is responded to. When taking a message they will note the name and phone number and reason of call of the person calling.

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3.4 All phone calls, answering machine messages and referred calls will be returned within one working day, and be fully responded to within five working days.

4 MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

PANSA should always be seeking ways to promote the organisation, and the industry as a whole

4.1 All Marketing and publicity material should be approved by the National Director or their designated authority
4.2 PANSA should always have business cards and flyers available at their offices and in the hands of staff and committee members
4.3 Generic marketing materials should be reviewed and updated a minimum of every two years
4.4 Project specific marketing and publicity material should be in line with PANSA's overall brand image, and be approved by the National Director or their designated authority
4.5 PANSA should make an effort to issue public press releases every two months, either project related or regarding PANSA general information
4.6 PANSA's National Director or their designated authority should be aware of any and all marketing and communications going out to media so as to avoid conflicts or overloading of information
4.7 Unless a particular person is deemed to have a better relationship with the media, all press releases should go out from the National Director's designated authority
4.8 All marketing and publicity material should include PANSA's logo and url

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