

Policy Title: External Communications Policy	Category: Comms-1
Applies To: Employees	Approved: July 30, 2025
Review Frequency: Annually	Revised:

Western Development Museum (WDM) External Communications Policy

Purpose

This policy establishes clear guidelines for external communications at the Western Development Museum (WDM) to ensure consistency in brand usage, messaging, and legal compliance across all platforms. This policy applies to all external communications, including but not limited to social media, website updates, printed and e-newsletters, advertising, and third-party platforms. The policy outlines the responsibilities of Museum Managers and the marketing function within the Community Engagement Departments.

Scope

This policy applies to all WDM employees, volunteers, and representatives authorized, in writing, to engage in external communications on behalf of the WDM, including but not limited to:

- Social media (Meta, X, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.)
- Website content and updates
- Printed communications and e-newsletters (e.g. Constant Contact, *Sparks*, Blogs, Articles)
- Third-party review sites (TripAdvisor, Google Reviews, etc.)
- Digital and print advertising
- Media engagement
- Public relations activities
- Any external-facing communications, including targeted emails covered under Canada’s Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)

Roles and Responsibilities

Museum Managers

Museum Managers are responsible for ensuring that all promotional materials meet WDM editorial and brand standards before publication. Museum Managers may initiate marketing, promotions, and public relations activities within their specific location under the following parameters:

- Make independent communication decisions **within their scope, job description, and budget allocation** wfor their specific location only.
- Utilize **location specific social media (e.g. Meta, X) accounts** to promote site-specific events, programs, and activities using **preapproved templates and graphics** that adhere to WDM brand standards and language guidelines.
- Respond to local media inquiries about site specific activities, but must consult with the **Community Engagement Department** for high-profile or sensitive issues as per WDM Media Procedures.

- Must adhere to [CASL](#) when sending promotional emails, notifications or announcements to volunteers, program participants, or the general public and obtain the necessary approvals for audience lists and messaging from the Community Engagement Department.

Museum Managers are encouraged to collaborate with marketing staff for guidance on promotions and public relations efforts beyond their immediate scope.

Community Engagement Department

The **marketing function in the Community Engagement Department** oversees brand standards and compliance, messaging, and system-wide initiatives to maintain a cohesive and professional public presence for WDM. Responsibilities include:

- Managing **system-wide communications** such as WDM newsletters, the website, and corporate level social media accounts.
- Overseeing **all brand standards** to ensure visual and editorial consistency across all WDM locations and platforms.
- Developing and delivering all province-wide **marketing initiatives, campaigns, and materials**.
- Reviewing and approving **all sponsorship-related promotions** that involve external branding, asks over \$2,500 and/or listed deliverables related to provincewide recognition.
- Setting **paid advertising** through approved budgeting to maximize effectiveness and maintain consistency across locations.
- Providing Museum Managers with **templated and preapproved graphics** for location-specific promotions.
- Ensuring that **all external communications meet legal, ethical, and professional standards**.

The **Community Engagement Department** is responsible for:

- Managing WDM's **media relations strategy and major press releases**.
- Coordinating **public relations efforts and crisis communications**.
- Providing training and guidelines for Museum Managers in **engaging with media and community partners**.
- Supporting Museum Managers in public relations efforts
- Reporting on campaigns and marketing metrics.

Brand Standards and Editorial Guidelines

To maintain consistency in messaging and brand integrity, all external communications must adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Brand Voice & Tone:** WDM communications should be professional, engaging, inclusive, and aligned with the Museum's Guiding Statements, all current policies and published standards.

- **Graphic Standards:** All visuals, including digital and print materials, must follow WDM's brand guidelines, including logos, colors, fonts, and approved templates.
- **Language Requirements:** All communications must be clear, accurate, and respectful, avoiding jargon or language that could be misinterpreted or viewed as offensive. See current Editorial Guidelines for more information.
- **CASL Compliance:** All email communications must comply with Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation, ensuring appropriate consent, opt-out options and fundraising related promotions.
- **Third-Party Platform Use:** Any content posted on external review sites, ticketing platforms, or third-party marketing tools (e.g., TripAdvisor, Google Review, Checkfront, Eventbrite, etc) must align with WDM's brand and messaging policies.

Social Media Guidelines

Museum Managers are permitted to use WDM location-specific social media accounts **for location-specific promotions only** under the following conditions:

- Must use **preapproved templates and graphics** provided by the marketing function.
- May **not** create independent branding or visual materials outside of established brand standards.
- Must **follow editorial guidelines** for language, tone, and professionalism.
- May respond to **local visitor inquiries** on social media but must escalate complaints or sensitive issues to the Community Engagement Department.
- System-wide initiatives are **the responsibility of the Community Engagement Department marketing function.**
- May approve subject matter experts to post online if following the guidelines outlined in the **WDM Media Process** previously published.

Media Engagement Procedures

Museum Managers may handle **local media inquiries** related to their location but must:

- Refer any **controversial or high-profile media requests** to the Community Engagement Department.
- Use preapproved messaging and talking points where applicable.
- Coordinate with the Community Engagement Department for interviews, press releases, and media events.
- Adhere to procedural documents outlining WDM Media Engagement Processes

Website Updates

Museum Managers may submit requests for website updates related to location-specific events or promotions. All changes must be approved and implemented by the Community Engagement Department to maintain consistency and brand integrity.

*Policy note change for after launch of new website events listing portion will change to this wording:

Website Updates (Effective April 2025)

With the launch of the new website, each Museum location will be responsible for submitting its own program and event information via an online web form. This form will automatically update the website with current local event details. The responsibility for ensuring that all program and event information is accurate and up to date will fall to the Museum Manager.

To maintain consistency and avoid delays, the following guidelines will apply:

- *Event details should be submitted a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the event date.*
- *Submissions must include essential information such as the event date, time, location, cost, description, and any other relevant details.*

This change will replace the previous centralized system where the Community Engagement Department was responsible for implementing event updates.

Compliance and Best Practices

All WDM employees involved in external communications must:

- Follow ethical best practices, ensuring transparency, accuracy, and integrity in all public messaging.
- Avoid making unauthorized commitments on behalf of WDM.
- Refrain from engaging in personal opinions or discussions on controversial topics when representing WDM.
- Avoid participating in public forums, chat groups, or comment sections in a way that could negatively affect the reputation of the Museum, the provincial government, or any of the Museum's suppliers, contractors, sponsors, donors, or affiliates.
- Ensure all materials are free from copyright infringement and properly sourced.
- Ensure that absolutely no inappropriate language is used in audio overlays or musical accompaniments at any time.

Monitoring and Enforcement

- The Community Engagement Department will **regularly review** external communications to ensure compliance.
- Any content that does not adhere to brand standards will be removed or revised at the discretion of the Community Engagement Department.

- Violations of this policy may result in immediate restricted access to communication platforms, mandatory additional training, and, depending on the severity, disciplinary action as per the WDM's Egregious or Disciplinary Performance Measures Policy.

Policy Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains aligned with best practices, legal requirements, and WDM's strategic goals.