



A SHORT GUIDE TO USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Arts Council: A Short Guide to using Social Media

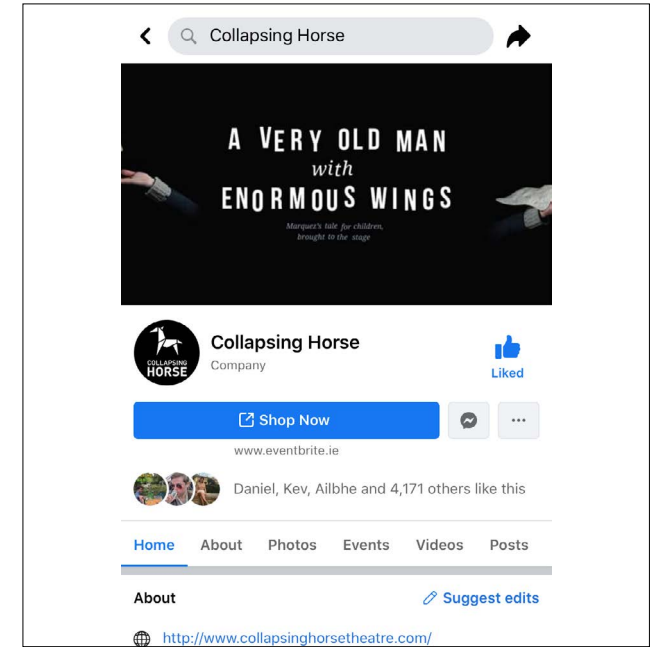
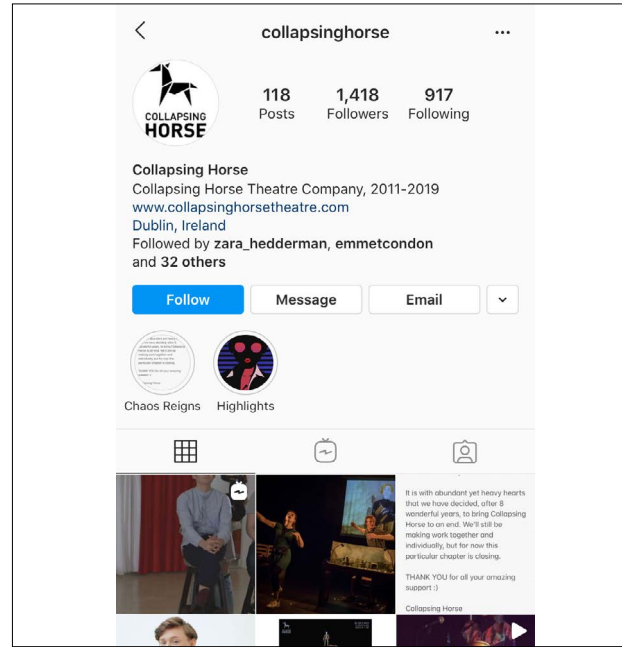
Social media are platforms for interactions with other users, whether you are using the platforms as an individual, a group, or a brand.

It's a place where you can establish a community of fans and followers, develop a distinct voice or identity for you or your brand, and is very valuable marketing tool for promoting your work.

Here are some simple steps to get you started.

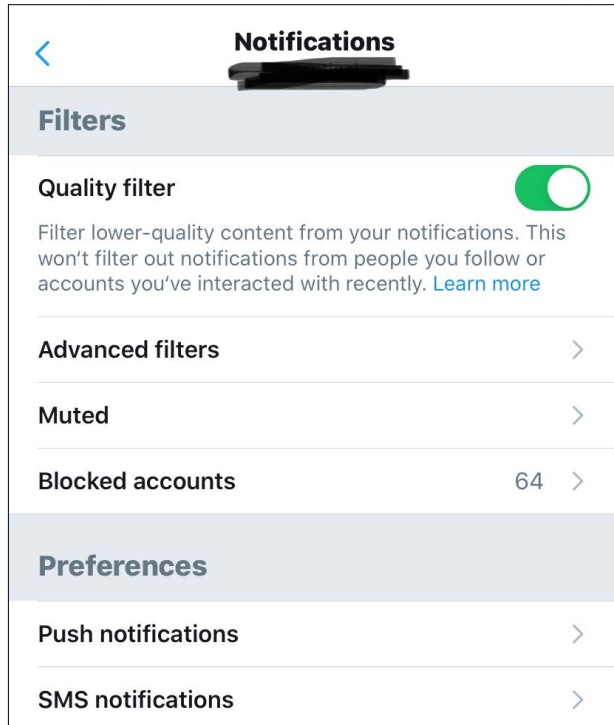


- Choose the platforms which you want to post your content on. There are multiple platforms operating. The most popular are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, but the list is ever growing. You can use each one via desktop or via an app on your phone or tablet. Each platform has its own audience and are suitable for different kinds of content, and there are large areas of overlap. More on this below.
- Use only the platforms that make sense for you or your brand. Start with one and work from there. (You may only want to use one, do not feel pressured into using ever platform if you do not feel it will be helpful.)



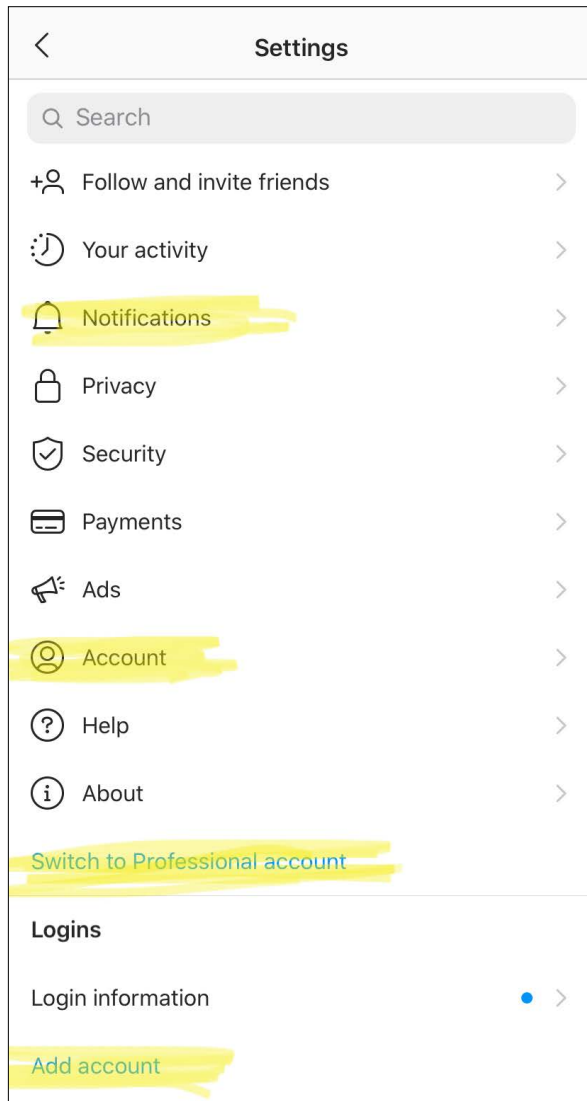
Collapsing Horse using @collapsinghorse handle on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook respectively.

- When setting up accounts, make sure to use the username that is applicable to you or your collective. If possible, try to make this username consistent across all the platforms you use. This may not be possible, as a username you want may already be in use on one platform, and some platforms have character limits — but if you cannot be consistent, at least avoid being confusing.
- Make sure to brand your channels. Whether you use a portrait photo, or a brand logo as your avatar (i.e.the image that identifies your profile), it's important to be readily identifiable, and to be consistent across all channels. People do not trust social channels that don't have branding or profile pictures. Using multiple different images may confuse other users as to your identity.
- Use an email address that you use often in order to receive alerts or notifications from your accounts so that you do not miss when people are trying to communicate with you.



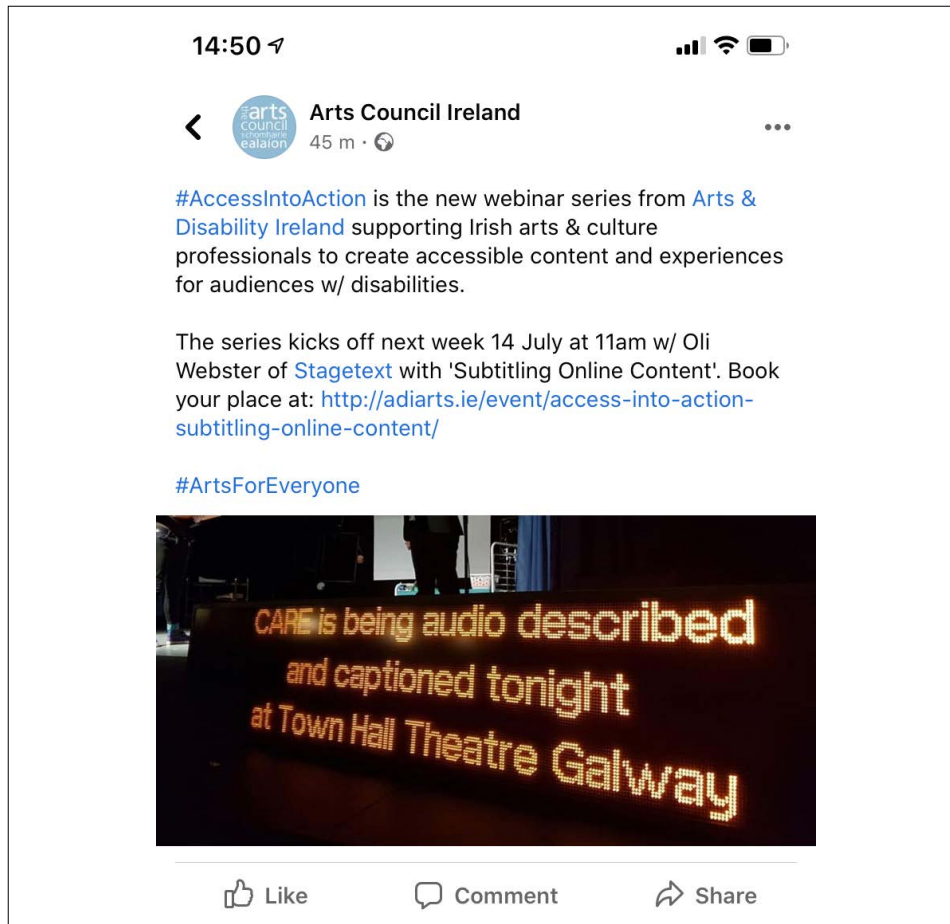
Twitter notification settings

- Familiarise yourself with the options available on each platform regarding notifications. Each platform will allow you to customise what notifications you wish to receive. You may want updates about all interactions you have or popular trends on the platform, or you may wish to filter some of these out. (This is applicable whether you are using an app on your smartphone or tablet, or using a desktop.)
- Make sure to fill out as much information about yourself or your group that you can on the platforms. Give your name, website addresses that link correctly to your website and a short bio about who you are and what you do.



Instagram account settings

- Follow other accounts that are meaningful to your accounts — this will likely mean other artists, arts organisations and groups. Your hope is that they will follow you back and interact with your content. You need to build a community. Comment on their content or share if it makes sense to your account (e.g. retweeting The National Campaign for the Arts' latest post, or a relevant announcement from the Arts Council).
- Make sure to only pick the channels you will post on consistently. Consistency is key when it comes to social media. If you do not plan to use a platform it is best not to have an account on it that will look out of date or uncared for.
- When posting to the different platforms it's important to play each one to their strengths.



Examples of a Facebook post (L) and a Tweet (R)

Facebook can take longer form posts so you can write more when posting your pictures, videos or links to new work on your website. Facebook will take bigger file sizes and length when it comes to videos. We recommend you post once a day on this platform if you can.

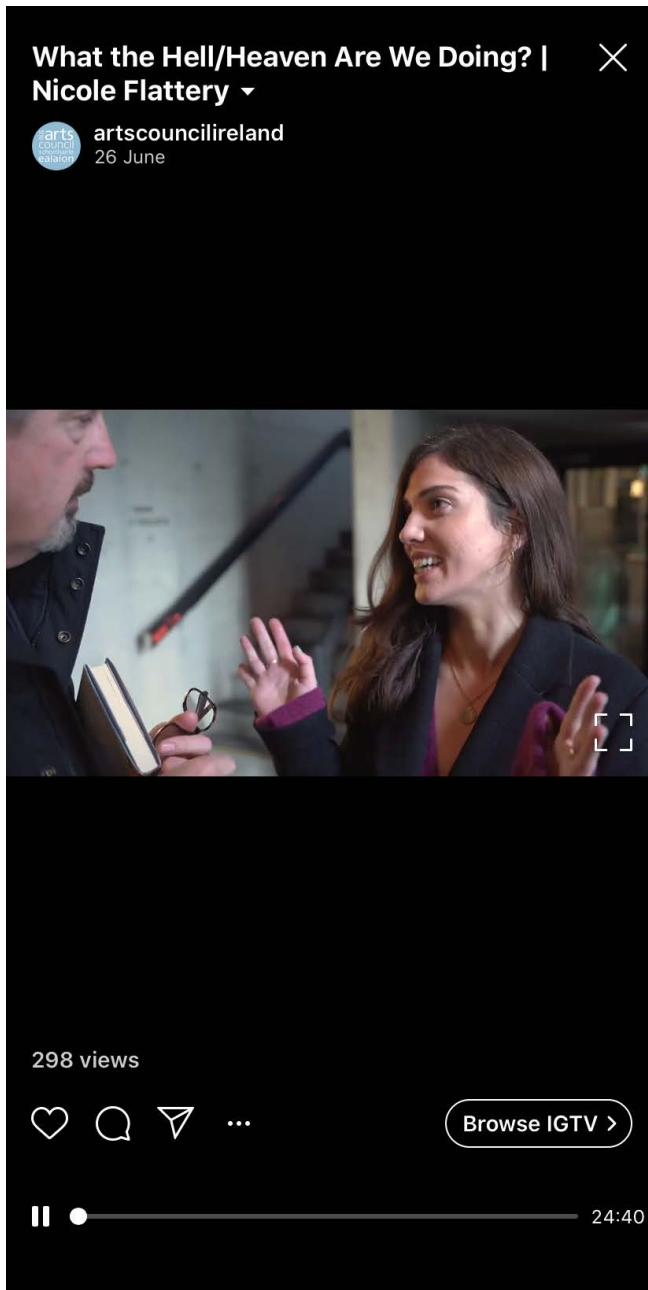
Twitter has the character maximum of 280 so make sure you keep your posts shorter. Twitter has limits on the file sizes when posting videos and you won't be able to go over 2.20 in length on there. The Twitter feed is in real time so posting as much as you can on here is not an issue. Twitter also is a place where conversations and dialogue can take place — as well as arguments.



Instagram favours posts great images (or videos), short captions and hashtags. While you can add large amounts of text, it does not format well, is not easy to read and will be skipped over by users. (Think of 70 words as an upper limit here). This is an image-led platform so always remember that and only post good quality videos or images!

A feature of Instagram is their Stories which allows you to post images/share other peoples posts or 15 second videos. Like Twitter, you can post on here as much as you want without it affecting the algorithms. We would recommend you post your best of images or videos to your page and then all other content lives on Stories.

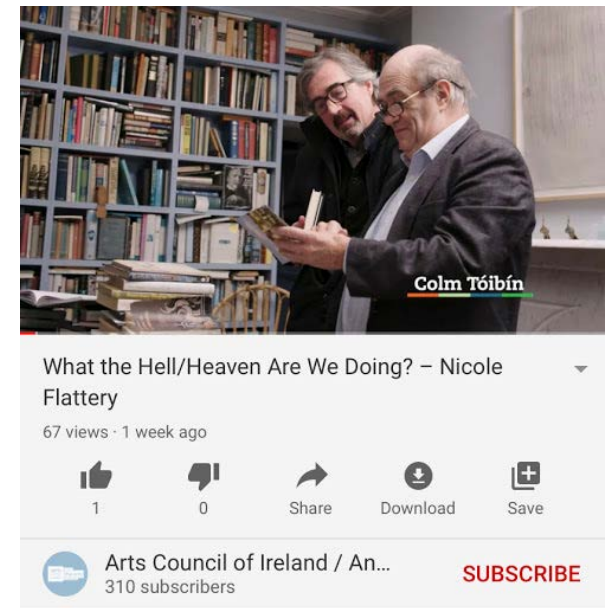
Example of an Instagram post



A feature length video viewed on IGTV (Instagram Television)

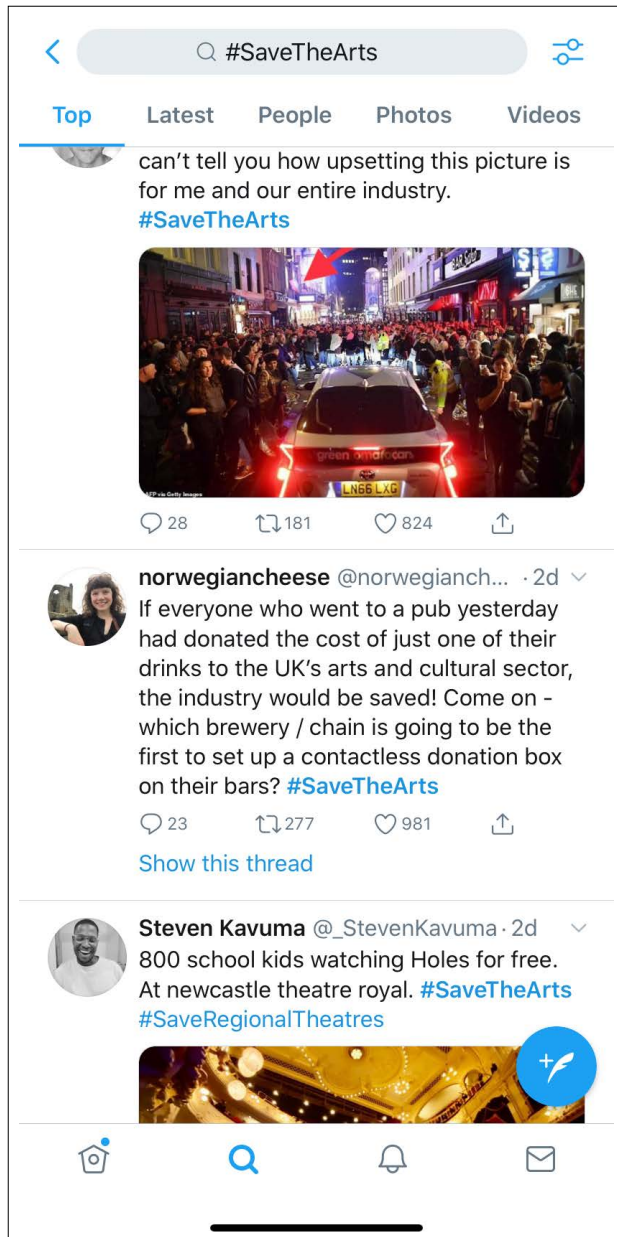
You can either post directly to your page on Instagram which will remain permanently or to their Instagram Stories which will disappear after 24 hours. If you are posting to the feed you can have videos up to 1-minute in length but if you want to post longer videos you can do this through IGTV which also lives on your page.

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YouTube is a video platform and owned by Google. Only post quality videos to your channel once you have created one. You can link to YouTube via your other channels to increase traffic or visits to your channel. Try and fill out as much information when posting the video. Name, brief description of what your video is about and links to your other social channels.

TikTok and Snapchat are used more by the Gen-Z demographic (younger users in their teens or early 20s) for super short content so if your content doesn't speak to them it may be best to stick to the other platforms at the beginning.



An example of a hashtag search on Twitter using the hashtag #SaveTheArts

- Make sure to get back to your community if they ask your questions or give them a like if they share your content. People like to be seen and interacted with on social media. It is important to remember all interactions are public when responding to people unless they contact you via Direct Message on the social channels.
- Make sure to keep your tone as human and genuine as possible and share content that will excite your followers. No one can easily relate to a bland personality.
- Hashtags are used to make it easy to search for all posts related to a certain topic regardless of whether you follow that user or not. You can use these to add to a conversation on a certain topic (e.g. #wakingthefeminists), which may then give your posts greater exposure than simply your own followers, allowing you to grow your brand. Hashtags are most effective on Twitter and Instagram.
- Tweet at other people, groups, artists or organisations that will likely share your content or follow you to amplify your content. You can also tag other accounts in your posts on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. This makes them more likely to share the content as they will get a notification when you do this.
- Be aware of current events. Avoid being tone-deaf during disasters or tragedies when audiences are not in the mood for a sales pitch.
- Beware of trolls — internet provocateurs who delight in upsetting users or causing trouble. Ignore them, report them as being inappropriate when necessary and do not dedicate any of your mental energy to these kind of people. They are not worth your time.

Social media has an enormous and diverse audience, and it's free and accessible. It's an excellent opportunity to build an online community and spread awareness. Just remember that for social media to benefit you, it must be carefully maintained and monitored. Start slow and small, be genuine, and scale from there.