

ADHO Communications Policy

Prepared for the Executive Board 17 December 2020 by Mariana Zorkina, Nabeel Siddiqui, and Hannah Jacobs. Approved by the Constituent Organizations Board 04 March 2021. This document supersedes previous ADHO communications documents.

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1. Introduction

This document introduces policies and guidelines governing the ADHO Communications Team's (hereafter "Communications Team") activities as they relate to maintaining ADHO's public online presence (website and social media) and creating and advising on the creation of official ADHO communications (press releases, announcements, position statements, etc.).

The Communications Team is composed of 2 Communications Fellows and 1 Communications Officer. The Communications Officer, a member of ADHO's Executive Board, is a volunteer role with a three-year term. Communications Fellows are sought via international search annually, hold one-year positions, and are compensated with a modest stipend. See Section 3 (Roles & Responsibilities) below.

2. Purpose and Scope of ADHO's Online Presence

2.1. Types of Information and Topics Posted about

The primary goals of maintaining ADHO's public online presence are

- to share ADHO announcements;

- to amplify messages from Constituent Organizations (COs), Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and Journals;
- and to disseminate information and provide online support surrounding the annual Digital Humanities conference.

Content related to these goals is published to ADHO's website and to ADHO's social media accounts. Select announcements, such as conference calls for papers, are posted to community email lists and discussion fora. A list of these venues is maintained by the Communications Officer.

As a secondary goal, the Communications Team also strives to engage with the DH community broadly through ADHO's social media presence by sharing information about publications, projects, job opportunities, and conferences that are relevant to the field. In this regard, our goal is to create opportunities for connection across the global DH community.

2.2. Communications Principles

In ADHO's online presences, the Communications Team follows these principles when creating, sharing, and responding to published content.¹

- **Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:** ADHO represents organizations and researchers from around the world. Accordingly, ADHO's Communications Team strives for cultural, linguistic, and other forms of diversity and inclusivity in the content we share and the ways that we communicate. We look to resources created by our constituent organizations (COs), affiliate organizations (AOs), and special interest groups (SIGs), such as [ACH's "Toward anti-racist technical terminology"](#) and [GO::DH's Translation Board](#), for guidance when relevant. Read Section 4 (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) for more information.
- **Accessibility:** We aim to make our communications as **accessible** as possible, [following guidance aggregated by the Digital Humanities Summer Institute \(DHSI\)](#). We will also release all web content under a [Creative Commons International Attribution License](#).
- **Respect:** As ADHO's [conference code of content](#) recommends, the Communications Team seeks to promote a safe, collegial environment, both in face-to-face and online communication. In our activities, we always aim to treat people with respect, to not use harmful language, and to respect the privacy of individuals and organizations.
- **Authenticity:** We aim to be human, not robotic or bureaucratic. We engage with people and use lively language appropriate to the audience. As representatives of ADHO leadership, however, we aim to remain professional and to avoid making inflammatory statements or statements that represent our personal views.
- **Transparency:** We aim to be clear, precise, and open in sharing information.

¹ These principles and practices build on a social media policy created by Lisa Spiro for ADHO in 2014.

2.3. Communications Practices

To carry out the principles above, the Communications Team uses the following practices:

- **Content Creation, Selection, and Review:** There are at least 2 members of the Communications Team responsible for each piece of information ADHO shares. One person creates and/or selects content, and the other reviews the proposed content and makes adjustments if necessary. This responsibility rotates within the Communications Team on a schedule set by the Communications Team at the beginning of each fellowship cycle. When reviewing content, the Communications Team uses the following criteria:
 - **Information Relevance:** Who created the content (if not the Communications Team or ADHO COs,² SIGs,³ or Journals)? For which audience(s) is this information most relevant? Has this information already been broadly shared? What kinds of engagement have other members of the DH community had with this information?
 - **Appropriateness of platform:** The Communications Team selects which platforms to share each piece of information and how to shape information to fit each platform. For ADHO announcements, work may be done in consultation with the Executive Board.
 - **Information Format & Structure:** The Communications Team considers both language and accessibility when selecting, creating, and reviewing public content.
 - **Language:** When possible, the Communications Team posts content in its original language, drawing on the Communications Team's expertise as well as that of the Multilingualism & Multiculturalism Committee (MLMC). Content generated by ADHO's Communications Team is communicated in English and may be communicated in additional languages.
 - **Access:** The Communications Team relies on resources such as [WebAIM](#) and DHSI's [Accessibility and Social Media Guidelines](#) to ensure that our content is as accessible as possible to all in the DH community.
- **Communications Network & Support:**
 - **ADHO Leadership:** The Communications Team works with ADHO's EB,⁴ as well as committee chairs and/or the COB⁵ when appropriate, to formulate official announcements and advise on wording and formatting best suited for the purpose and platform of these announcements.
 - **COs, SIGs, Journals:** The Communications Team also maintains contact with representatives from each ADHO CO via an email list and optional quarterly or

² Constituent Organizations

³ Special Interest Groups

⁴ Executive Board

⁵ Constituent Organizations Board

biannual meetings to discuss CO communications needs and ADHO communications activities. The Communications Team may also reach out to these representatives collectively or individually about specific communications concerns. The Communications Team also reaches out to ADHO's SIG Liaison and journal editors as needed about specific communications activities.

- **Multilingualism & Multiculturalism Committee (MLMC):** In order to ensure that ADHO is able to better represent smaller communities and multilingual DH, ADHO's Communications Team works closely with the [Multilingualism & Multiculturalism Committee](#): The MLMC assists with website translation and other questions of translation.
- **Evaluation of Practices:**
 - The Communications Team continually evaluates the relevance of social media platforms in the global DH community and may work with the COBWEB⁶ to create or delete social media accounts as needed.
 - To conduct evaluations of all platforms, the Communications Team will use both qualitative methods (narratives gathered from the community) and quantitative methods (social media and web analytics).
 - ADHO's Communications Team produces an annual report for ADHO leadership on its activities, needs, and priorities.
 - At the middle and end of each Communications Fellowship, fellows will provide the Communications Officer with feedback that ADHO leadership may use to continue improving the Communications Fellowship program.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

Unless otherwise decided by the COB, the Communications Team is composed of 2 Communications Fellows and 1 Communications Officer. The Communications Officer, working with the COBWEB, aims to sustain a diverse Communications Team that creates opportunities to curate a broad range of content and to continue building the Communications Team's resources to critically assess information shared. The Fellows' and Officer's roles are described as follows.

3.1. ADHO Communications Fellows

ADHO selects 2 Communications Fellows annually through an open application process. Fellows are compensated with a small honorarium for their commitment to an average of 2-3 hours per week of work with an increase in workload leading up to and during the annual conference. Responsibilities include

- Collaborating with ADHO's Communications Officer and other members of the Executive Board to draft and edit official ADHO communications to be published to the ADHO

⁶ Constituent Organizations Board with the Executive Board

website and to be shared via ADHO social media accounts, relevant email lists, and in other online venues;

- With the Communications Officer, identifying and amplifying on ADHO's website and/or social media accounts announcements from COs, SIGs, and Journals;
- With the Communications Officer, identifying information that may be of interest to the global DH community (see Section 2 above for further guidance);
- With the Communications Officer, monitoring ADHO's social media presence daily and weekly;
- With the Communications Officer and members of the MLMC, maintaining up-to-date information on ADHO's website;
- Working with the Communications Officer and Executive Board to respond to feedback or criticism as needed.

3.2. ADHO Communications Officer

The ADHO Communications Officer is a member of the Executive Board and is responsible for facilitating the organization's public communications and guiding communications strategies. The Officer's workload is typically 3-5 hours per week with an increase in workload leading up to and during the annual conference. Responsibilities include

- Supervising and collaborating with ADHO's Communications Fellows, including maintaining a work schedule and due dates for deliverables;
- Managing communications activities on ADHO's website, social media accounts, and any other public-facing platforms in collaboration with the Communications Fellows;
- Developing communications strategies that support ADHO's and ADHO affiliates' activities in collaboration with the Communications Fellows;
- Working closely with the Executive Board to draft, edit, and approve official ADHO communications for website, email list, and social media dissemination;
- Working closely with the Executive Board and Communications Fellows to respond to public feedback or criticism as it arises;
- Working with Conference Coordinating and Program Committee Chairs to publicize all conference-related activities;
- Working with the Infrastructure Committee Chair and Systems Administrator on all website-related activities;
- Working with the MLMC Chair to support translation of website and social media content and to carry out other inclusivity and diversity initiatives;
- Liaising with other ADHO Committee Chairs as well as representatives from COs, SIGs, and Journals to coordinate dissemination of news related to ADHO and its affiliates;

- Sustaining a network of those engaged in CO, SIG, and Journal communications activities to ensure ADHO's communications strategy meets CO, SIG, and Journal needs.

4. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

ADHO consists of organizations from around the world and is not a political organization. As a result, ADHO in principle does not publish content about social and political events, unless they

- are a part of a project in Digital Humanities;
- or have direct connection to the functioning of ADHO, ADHO's media presence, and/or the functioning or media presence of ADHO's COs, SIGs, and/or Journals.

Content that meets the second criteria above will only appear after receiving approval from the COB. Please see our [governance structure](#) and read [previous position statements](#) for more information.

4.1. Ensuring Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity in Communications

ADHO's Communications Team is committed to creating and sustaining a diverse, inclusive, and just community of researchers. In July 2020, ADHO issued a [Statement on Black Lives Matter, Structural Racism, and Establishment Violence](#). The statement outlines the next steps ADHO will take to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in the organization. The Communications Team is participating in the following measures:

- ADHO's Communications Team is actively engaged in all communications activities needed to support the commitments described in the statement.
- Following commitment item 6, in fall 2020 ADHO's Communications Team proposed this communications policy to clarify the Communications Team's roles and responsibilities with regard to ADHO's public communications. Included in this policy is a revision and expansion of principles and practices designed to represent the diversity of ADHO's communities.
- Following commitment item 1, the Communications Team will work with ADHO leadership and any consultant(s) identified by ADHO leadership to evaluate its communications policies and practices and their impacts, to implement changes as recommended by consultant(s) and leadership, and to regularly review the impact of existing and new policies.
- Following commitment item 9, The Communications Officer, with the COB and EB, will continue to ensure that Communications Fellows and the Communications Officer represent a variety of cultural backgrounds and research fields, have access to underrepresented research communities, and offer varying and multiple language skills.

4.2. Conflicts, Online Criticism, and Offensive Content

The principles and practices described in this policy are designed to prevent harmful and offensive materials from being published by the Communications Team. However, given the Communications Team's mission to share content from across the global DH community, ADHO's leadership recognizes that its communications activities may receive occasional criticism. The EB supports the Communication Team's decisions in how it handles these matters unless it determines the Communications Team's actions have fallen outside of [ADHO's Conference Code of Conduct](#). ADHO welcomes substantive, thoughtful, and robust critique on any matter that follows the code of conduct but strongly denounces personal attacks on social media; these only impede our ability to foster a diverse, equal, and global community.

ADHO's leadership follows these principles and practices when addressing criticism and conflict related to ADHO's public communications activities:

- When situations pertaining to online conflict, criticism, or offensive content arise, ADHO's Communications Team may respond or post an acknowledgment as soon as possible. In the case of personal attacks, including but not limited to trolling and mobbing, the Communications Team reserves the right not to respond directly or immediately, especially considering that ADHO spans across multiple timezones and includes many participants. (Please read our [governance structure document](#) for further details.)
- In situations such as those described above, the Communications Team will decide whether to notify the EB. If the issue is escalated to the EB, the EB is then responsible for coordinating an internal discussion via email and/or remote meeting. This discussion will include the Communications Fellows and, when appropriate, the COB and other relevant ADHO representatives. Part of this discussion will assess whether any violation of ADHO's [Conference Code of Conduct](#) has occurred.
 - The EB, in consultation with the Communications Team, will propose a plan of action. Each action plan will be developed on a case-by-case basis. If the EB deems necessary, the proposal will be elevated to the COB for discussion and approval. Where code of conduct violations have occurred, the action plan will include steps laid out in [that policy](#).
 - The COB will suggest revisions and/or approve the EB's action plan.
 - The Communications Team, in consultation with the EB, will carry out the approved action plan as relates to public communications. Additional actions may be taken by the COBwEB.
 - This process will be carried out always with the aim of finding a peaceful resolution that does no further harm nor contributes to systemic oppression.
- ADHO's Communications Team maintains contact with people responsible for communications in COs, SIGs, and Journals. However, the Communications Team is not responsible for these organizations' public content. Criticism of an individual CO, SIG, or Journal should be directed to that organization. ADHO's leadership reserves the right to decide whether and how to comment on conflicts relating to individual affiliated organizations.

- Content shared by individual members of ADHO's leadership, including the Communications Team, via personal accounts does not represent ADHO's official position on any matter. Official statements will only be published via ADHO's website and organizational social media accounts.