



### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles, criteria and processes that govern how Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall ('the Sabha') promotes, markets and communicates news, events, services, and information.

All social media and communications marketing, requested by partners, affiliates and/or the Executive Committee, must be pre-approved and created by the Sabha's marketing team governed by the Office of the General Secretary, to ensure uniformity and consistency in marketing materials.

Marketing materials include (but are not limited to) the use of the Sabha's social media pages (i.e., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) and physical space (i.e., posters, banners, etc.).

### 2. Marketing Objectives

The Sabha can help promote the institution, foster community engagement, and raise awareness about its services and activities. Its marketing objectives include:

- *Increase Awareness:* Raise awareness about the Sabha's presence and its role within the local community.
- *Community Engagement:* Foster a sense of community by encouraging regular attendance and participation in Sabha activities.
- *Interfaith Outreach:* Promote interfaith dialogue and understanding by engaging with individuals and organisations from diverse religious backgrounds.
- *Educational Initiatives:* Promote Sikh culture, history, and values through educational programs and workshops, both within the Sikh community and to the broader public.
- *Membership Growth:* Attract and retain new members to the Sabha community, including individuals from various age groups and backgrounds.
- *Promote Seva:* Encourage active participation in seva (selfless service) within the Sabha and the broader community.
- *Increase Donations:* Develop strategies to increase donations and financial support to sustain the Sabha's operations and charitable initiatives.
- *Social Media Presence:* Establish and maintain an active and engaging presence on social media platforms to connect with the community and share information about events and services.
- *Faith and Cultural Celebrations:* Promote and celebrate important Sikh festivals and cultural events, both within the Sikh community and with the local community at large.
- *Inter-generational Activities:* Create programs and events that engage people of all ages, including youth and senior members of the Sikh community.
- *Accessibility and Inclusivity:* Ensure that the Sabha is accessible to individuals with disabilities and that its programs are inclusive of all community members.

- *Health and Wellness Initiatives:* Offer health and wellness programs, such as yoga and meditation classes, to promote physical and mental well-being within the community.
- *Multilingual Communication:* Communicate with the community in multiple languages to cater to a diverse Sangat.
- *Collaborations:* Collaborate with other religious organisations, community groups, and local institutions on projects that promote peace, harmony, and community welfare.
- *Feedback and Improvement:* Collect feedback from the community to continually improve the Sabha's services and offerings.
- *Promote Sikh Values:* Emphasise and promote Sikh values such as humility, equality, and service to humanity in all marketing and communication efforts.

These objectives should be aligned with the Sabha's mission and core values, and they should be periodically reviewed and adjusted as needed to ensure they remain relevant and achievable. Additionally, the marketing strategies and tactics used to achieve these objectives may include community events, social media campaigns, educational workshops, and outreach initiatives.

### 3. Definition of Terms

*Partners:* Organisations that supply specialist services essential to the Sabha's operations and requirements.

*Affiliates:* Organisations endorsed and promoted by the Sabha for activities conducted in collaboration with or utilising the Sabha's resources.

### 4. Eligibility

The Sabha will offer marketing opportunities to individuals/ groups/ clubs ("affiliates") who offer to preserve the ideology of the Guru, promote Sikhi, its cultural and spiritual heritage, and the principles of the Dharam (e.g., event promotions). Please refer to the "**Affiliates Policy**" for further detail.

Collaborations with affiliates are subject to specific terms and conditions, please refer to section 6 and Appendix 1 for further details.

It is at the Sabha's discretion whether they offer the marketing opportunity.

### 5. Process

The marketing process for partners and affiliates seeking promotion for their activities is as follows:

1. *Submission of Marketing Request:* The representative from the partner or affiliate organisation or Sabha is required to complete the 'Marketing Request' form available at: [www.sgsss.org/promo](http://www.sgsss.org/promo) and for organisations and Sangat to upload content: [www.sgsss.org/upload](http://www.sgsss.org/upload). The form should capture all necessary details, including the nature of the activity, desired outcomes, target audience, and any specific requests for the promotion.

2. *Review by the Social Media Team:* Upon submission, the request is forwarded to the Social Media team for a thorough review. This step ensures alignment with overall marketing strategies and objectives. The team assesses the request for content alignment, audience relevance, and scheduling feasibility.
3. *Approval and Scheduling:* Once the request is approved, it is integrated into the existing pipeline of marketing activities. Approval is based on the strategic fit and the potential impact of the promotion. The submitting party is notified of the approval and provided with an estimated timeline for the promotion.
4. *Implementation of Promotion:* The Social Media team then executes the promotion as per the planned schedule. This includes creating and distributing content across selected social media platforms, ensuring the activity reaches the intended audience effectively.
5. *Feedback and Reporting:* After the promotion, feedback is solicited from the affiliate organisation or Sabha representative to gauge the effectiveness of the marketing effort. Key performance indicators (KPIs) and analytics are shared to provide insights into the campaign's reach, engagement, and overall impact.

This process aims to streamline submissions, enhance communication between the Social Media team and partners and affiliates, and to ensure a more effective and measurable social media promotion for their activities.

## **6. Terms and Conditions of Engagement**

By requesting to use the Sabha's social media platforms for marketing purposes, you agree to the following terms and conditions:

- *Respectful Conduct:* You shall not harass or engage in any disrespectful behaviour towards the staff involved in the promotion process. Any form of harassment will not be tolerated.
- *Patience and Understanding:* You acknowledge the importance of patience and understanding during the promotion process. Events are reviewed and scheduled as per the Sabha's marketing calendar and available resources.
- *Communication Response:* You understand that not receiving a response within a specific timeframe is equivalent to not being rejected. The Marketing team will review all requests regularly.
- *Promotion Approval:* Approval for event promotions is subject to meeting the Sabha's guidelines and criteria, as outlined in the constitution.
- *Brand Kit Compliance:* Promotions must adhere to the Sabha's brand kit guidelines, including the use of official branding and templates.
- *Logo, QR Code, and URL Usage:* No organisation is allowed to use the Sabha's logo on their own posters. Organisations should not use their own QR code on Sabha posters. The Sabha's official QR code for the WhatsApp group should be included on all printed posters. The Sabha URLs should not be used by external organisations.
- *Contact Information:* Only the official contact number of the Sabha and official @sgsss.org email addresses should be used for communication.
- *Collaboration Criteria:* Collaborations with external organisations are subject to specific criteria, including providing access to new audiences or offering functions not available within the Sabha.
- *Forms Platform:* Sign-up forms must be created within Microsoft 365 and not personal or organisation-affiliated Google Forms to maintain consistency.

## 7. Additional Guidelines

### 7.1 Respectful Use of Religious Elements in Marketing Materials

In alignment with our respect for Sikh traditions and values, it is imperative that all marketing materials, especially poster prints, adhere to the following guidelines:

- *Avoidance of Gurbani and Images of Gurus:* Materials should not feature Gurbani (in Gurmukhi script) or images of the Sikh Gurus unless there is a commitment by the organisation to dispose of these materials in a respectful and proper manner, following the process of 'Sanskar'. This ensures that the sanctity of these religious elements is maintained throughout their use and eventual disposal.

### 7.2 Handling Online Negativity and Hate Speech

The Sabha acknowledges the possibility of encountering negative or hateful online interactions. Our approach to managing such situations is outlined as follows:

- *Response Strategy for Negative Comments:* A clear process will be in place for dealing with online negativity or hate speech. This may include measures such as removing offensive comments, banning users who repeatedly engage in such behaviour, and reporting them to the respective social media platform if necessary. The primary goal is to maintain a positive and respectful online environment while upholding the principles of free speech and constructive dialogue.

### 7.3 Enhancing Digital Accessibility in Video Content

As part of our ongoing commitment to digital accessibility:

- *Use of Subtitles in Promotional Videos:* It is highly recommended to include subtitles in all video reels. This practice not only enhances accessibility for individuals with hearing impairments but also serves the wider audience who may view videos without sound. Subtitles should be clear, well-timed, and accurately reflect the spoken content.

### 7.4 Cultivating a Collaborative Policy Environment with Active Volunteer Participation

The Sabha is dedicated to adopting a ground-up approach in the development and execution of its Social Media and Communications Marketing Policy. This strategy is rooted in the ethos of collaborative effort and empowerment, particularly emphasising the vital role of volunteers:

- *Empowering Volunteers and Employees:* By engaging volunteers and employees in active roles within our marketing and communication strategies, we leverage their unique insights, skills, and creativity. We aim to cultivate a sense of ownership and commitment towards the Sabha's mission, encouraging personal investment in the initiatives' success.
- *Participatory Policy Formation and Review:* The policy's lifecycle, its creation, ongoing review, and updates, is envisioned as a participatory process. This includes harnessing feedback and input from volunteers and employees across all levels, ensuring the policy is reflective of diverse viewpoints and effectively meets our community's broad spectrum of needs.

### 7.5 Implementing Collaborative Marketing Sessions

To bring this vision to life, the Sabha will implement the following measures:

- *Training Programs on Social Media Best Practices:* Regular, structured training sessions will be organised for both employees and volunteers. These sessions are designed to impart comprehensive knowledge on efficient social media use, strict adherence to Sabha guidelines, and the principles of ethical communication. The

goal is to empower the Sabha's representatives with the necessary skills for engaging with our community in a meaningful and impactful manner.

- *Feedback-Driven Improvement:* A crucial component of these training sessions is the systematic collection of participant feedback. This feedback will cover various aspects, from the training's delivery to the practical applicability and effectiveness of our social media policies. This iterative feedback process is vital for ensuring our approaches and guidelines continuously evolve to align with the community's needs and the dynamic digital landscape.
- *Recognition and Incentivisation:* The Sabha acknowledges the indispensable contributions of volunteers and employees through a formal recognition framework. This not only shows appreciation for their dedication and hard work but also serves as an incentive for ongoing participation and innovation in our social media and marketing endeavours.

## 7.6 Creating a Supportive and Engaged Community Culture

Through this integrated approach of collaboration, training, and empowerment, the Sabha aspires to foster a supportive ecosystem. This environment will not only value and motivate volunteers and employees but also reinforce the communal bonds, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of our social media efforts and enriching our community engagement and outreach activities.

## 8. Data Handling

### 8.1 GDPR Compliance and Data Collection in Collaborative Projects

The Sabha is committed to upholding the highest standards of data protection and privacy in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This commitment extends to all facets of our operations, including collaborations with external entities.

### 8.2 Guidelines for Data Sharing and Collection

In instances where data from the Sangat is collected, whether for research purposes such as studies or other activities, strict adherence to GDPR is mandatory. The Sabha ensures:

- *Consent and Transparency:* Clear consent is obtained from individuals whose data is being collected, with transparency about how it will be used.
- *Confidentiality and Security:* All data must be handled confidentially and securely, ensuring that personal information is protected against unauthorised access or disclosure.
- *Data Usage Limitation:* Data collected is to be used strictly for the purposes stated and not for any undisclosed or unauthorised activities.

### 8.3 Collaboration with Partners and External Organisations

In collaborative projects and with partnerships the following data handling considerations should apply:

- *Distinct Data Handling Protocols:* While such entities might operate under their own data collection protocols, it is crucial that these protocols align with the Sabha's GDPR compliance standards.
- *Use of Sabha's Resources:* If these collaborations involve using the Sabha's resources (like forms platforms or contact information), it is essential that these tools also comply with GDPR. This means that any online forms, databases, or communication channels used in the project must meet the Sabha's data protection and privacy standards.

- *Separation of Data Collection Processes:* In cases where the partner's data collection methods are distinct from those of the Sabha, clear demarcation and communication of these differences to the Sangat are necessary to maintain transparency and trust.

#### 8.4 Data Collection for Specific Projects

Specific projects may require tailored data collection and handling approaches. These should be carefully designed to comply with GDPR while meeting the project's unique needs. This includes the possibility of setting up dedicated forms and communication channels that adhere to both the Sabha's and the project's data protection requirements.

### 9. Timelines and Scheduling

#### 9.1 Establishment of Submission Deadlines

To ensure the effective and timely promotion of events and activities, Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall introduces specific submission timelines:

- *Minimum Timeframe for Submissions:* All marketing requests, including social media posts, banners, and other promotional materials, must be submitted at least **one week prior** to the desired date of publication or event promotion.
- *Handling Last-Minute Requests:* While we strive to accommodate all requests, submissions made less than one week before the intended promotion date will be subject to a disclaimer stating that timely processing is not guaranteed. These requests will be addressed as per the availability of the marketing team.

#### 9.2 Efficiency in Promotion Process

Adherence to timeframes aims to:

- *Prevent Bottlenecks:* By setting clear deadlines, we can avoid administrative bottlenecks and ensure a smoother workflow for the marketing team.
- *Improve Planning and Organisation:* This policy will encourage affiliates and organisers to plan their marketing strategies well in advance, leading to more organised and effective promotions.

#### 9.3 Guidance for Partners and Affiliates

To assist in the the process:

- Clear instructions and guidelines will be provided to all affiliates, partners, and event organisers regarding the submission process and deadlines.
- Continuous feedback and support will be offered to ensure a smooth adaptation to these new guidelines, enhancing the overall marketing and promotion process for the Sabha's activities and events.

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*The Sabha will implement these guidelines in phases, allowing partners and affiliates and the Social Media team to adapt to the new process. As the process becomes more established, the additional requirements being introduced will allow for a well-organised backlog and will facilitate easier planning and scheduling of future events, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Sabha's marketing efforts.*

## APPENDIX 1

### Instagram Promotion

Promoting partners and affiliates' events on Instagram requires a strategic approach that leverages the platform's various features, Posts, Stories, and Reels, to maximise engagement and reach. The following should be taken into account for effective promotion:

#### 1. *Defining Objectives and Audience:*

- Objectives: Clearly define what you aim to achieve with the promotion (e.g., awareness, attendance, engagement).
- Audience: Understand the target audience for each event to tailor content and messaging appropriately.

#### 2. *Content Creation and Curation:*

- Visual Identity: Ensure content aligns with your organisation's branding guidelines to maintain consistency across all promotions.
- Content Mix: Use a mix of images, videos, and text to keep the content engaging and informative. Highlight the uniqueness of each event and its value to the audience.

#### 3. *Utilising Instagram's Features:*

##### a. Posts:

- Use for: Detailed announcements, event posters, and highlights.
- Strategy: Create visually appealing posts with concise and compelling captions. Include necessary details like date, time, and how to participate or attend. Use relevant hashtags to increase visibility. For partner events, emphasise the partnership and how it extends to the Sabha's mission.

##### b. Stories:

- Use for: Real-time updates, behind-the-scenes, countdowns, and reminders.
- Strategy: Stories are perfect for creating urgency and keeping the audience engaged leading up to the event. Use interactive features like polls, questions, and swipe-up links (for accounts eligible) to direct viewers to the event page or registration site. Highlight stories from partners and affiliates to show direct support and engagement.

##### c. Reels:

- Use for: Capturing attention with short, engaging clips related to the event.
- Strategy: Create dynamic, engaging Reels to highlight exciting aspects of the events, testimonials from previous attendees, or sneak peeks. Reels have a wider reach and can significantly increase engagement and interest. Use trending music where appropriate to boost visibility.

#### 4. *Collaboration and Cross-Promotion:*

- Encourage partners and affiliates to create their own content that can be shared across your organisation's Instagram channels. This collaborative approach extends reach to their followers as well.
- Use Instagram's collaboration feature for joint posts, allowing the content to appear on both your and your partner's or affiliate's profiles. One collaboration per year, per affiliate. Collaboration with network hubs with more followers than the Sabha's Instagram are exempt.

#### *5. Engagement and Interaction:*

- Engage with your audience by responding to comments, mentions, and direct messages. This interaction fosters a community around your organisation's activities.
- After the event, share highlights and user-generated content to showcase the success and encourage participation in future events.

#### *6. Analytics and Adjustments:*

- Monitor the performance of your Instagram promotions through insights and analytics. Pay attention to what types of content (posts, stories, reels) perform best and adjust your strategy accordingly for future events.
- By strategically using Instagram's Posts, Stories, and Reels, you can effectively promote partners and affiliates' events, ensuring each event receives the attention it deserves while aligning with your organisation's goals and extending its reach.