Facebook Groups

Contents

Introduction

Why do I need an online presence for my Volunteer Group?

Building online communities to increase volunteer group presence has always been beneficial however since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic the online/virtual world has become a place to not only connect, but to take on and be inspired by a huge increase in socially distanced virtual challenges and events.

Why create a Facebook Group specifically?

Facebook is a social networking website where users can post comments, share photographs, and post links to news or other interesting bits of content.

Why create a Facebook Group? To establish a presence on the most widely used social media platform. Facebook groups are an excellent place to build and nurture a community - both existing and prospective members and the wider community. This is especially true when you have a target campaign or fundraising activity you want people to rally behind.

What is a Facebook Group?

Facebook Groups are spaces on Facebook to nurture conversations and relationships. It's a place for members to hold discussions, be a support hub and connect over a common interest.

How do I get started?

You need to have a Facebook account before you can set up a Facebook Group. We'd recommend setting up a separate 'Guide Dogs' Facebook profile to help safeguard your personal online space (To note, group members would not be able to view your personal Facebook profile unless your account settings specify otherwise)

How do I set up a Facebook account?

1. Go to www.facebook.com and click on create new account.

2. Enter your name, email or mobile phone number, password and other mandatory details required.

3. Click sign up.

4. To finish creating your account, you need to confirm your email or mobile phone number.

How do I set up a Facebook Group?

Once you have a Facebook profile set up, please follow the steps below:

1. Click the menu sign on your Facebook profile and select Groups.

2. Click the plus sign at the top right of the screen and select create group.

3. Enter your group name. Please use the naming convention Guide Dogs [Location of group and subservice] e.g., Guide Dogs Reading Volunteer Group or Guide Dogs Reading Volunteers.

4. Select the privacy option. We recommend making these groups open so they are searchable, and content can be shared wider than the group, but they will need regular moderation. Please note if you choose to make your group private you will not be able to change it back to open.

5. Add Facebook users to your group.

6. Click create.

7. Set the group rules. These are found in the menu on the left-hand side under admin tools. Please find Guide Dogs example rules in the Facebook FAQ's section below.

8. Once you create your group, you personalise it by adding a profile image, uploading a cover photo and adding a description. It is important that we use the correct logos and wording on social media, so the audience is clear about who is arranging the activity so you must use the banners and profile image provided by Guide Dogs. These can be found on VIP.

9. Please let your Guide Dogs contact know who the group admin (s) are and the group URL.

What happens if I have problems setting up a Facebook account or Group?

Facebook have a useful online help centre which will take you through the step-by-step processes to set up dependent on what device you are using. Please follow link: https://www.facebook.com/help

If you are still experiencing problems, please do get in touch with your Guide Dogs contact as you would for any other enquiry.

Facebook FAQ'S

How do I turn on Facebook Group notifications?

1. Navigate to your group.

2. Click the three dots at the top right-hand side of the screen and select manage notifications to select appropriate notifications.

How do I share my Facebook Group details with my Facebook friends/contacts?

1. Navigate to your group.

2. Click on the top right blue button which says invite.

3. Select any or all your contacts.

4. Press invites at the bottom right.

How I post content in my Facebook Group?

1. Navigate to the discussion tab.

2. Click into the say something box.

3. Write post and/or upload an image/video.

4. Press post.

How do I share my content outside of my Facebook Group?

1. Create post as above.

2. Dependent on security and privacy settings -click the share button at the bottom right of the post/content to share content outside of the group.

How do I share outside content with my Facebook Group?

1. Dependent on security and privacy settings - click the share button at the bottom right of the post/content.

2. Click share to group.

3. Select relevant group.

What rules do I need to create for my Facebook Group?

Example guidelines:

Be Kind and Courteous.

Treat people with respect. People will disagree on topics however this must be conducted in a healthy, constructive, and respectful way.

Sensitive and confidential information.

Please avoid posting comments about sensitive Guide Dogs' related topics, such as an individual grievance concerning Guide Dogs as an organisation. Please don't name staff or other volunteers without permission.

Accessibility.

Please describe all photos in as much detail as possible and consider the accessibility of all content in your posts.

Spam.

Spam and irrelevant links are not allowed. Please try and keep content/conversations related to Guide Dogs and related topics

Hate speech and bullying.

There is zero tolerance for any kind of hate speech – If you have nothing nice to say, stay quiet.

Make sure everyone feels safe. Bullying of any kind isn't allowed, and degrading comments about race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity will not be tolerated.

If you break any of the above rules you can be subjected to the following depending on the severity (Admin reserves the right to make this decision):

Your posts/comments can be deleted, or/and
your posts can be put in approval status, or/and
you can be "muted" for some time, or/and
you can be removed from the Group(s), or/and
you can be banned from that group.

If a member encounters any of the behaviours above, they must report this to the admin.

If you are concerned for someone's wellbeing, please contact your Volunteer Manager or our Safeguarding Team who are available on 0345 143 0199. Alternatively contact the emergency services if appropriate.

How do I add a Facebook donate button to my Facebook posts?

1. Create a post within your group.

2. Select add to your post.

3. Select raise money.

4. Select Guide Dogs.

5. Post

Guide Dogs guidelines

How will creating a Facebook Group for my fundraising group help me achieve my goals as a volunteer?

Community engagement and volunteer growth:

How do you keep your group active and engaged with Guide Dogs? The whole point of a Facebook Group is to interact, share, and talk about a common interest e.g., Guide Dogs.

- Post a welcome post (and pin to top of content feed) - ask new members to introduce themselves.
- Ask new members to turn on Facebook Group notifications, so they are alerted to group activity.
- This is the ideal place to keep volunteers up to date with group communications, events and Guide Dogs news.
- Post consistently - showcase and celebrate group activities, particularly with photo and videos content. To plan you can set up content calendar.
- Use the group to engage with potential warm existing volunteers (In different roles) and cold volunteer interest audiences.
- Ask questions, ask your audience to comment on specific posts - E.g. We'd love your opinion on this. We'd love you to share your experiences.
- Like, comment and respond to others – create a two-way dialogue.
- Set clear rules and boundaries to guide conversations and behaviour. Pin rules to the top of your group homepage and ensure they are enforced.
- Have more than one admin to help interact with members.
- The ideal frequency of posted content should be 1-2 posts per day but follow the quality over quantity rule.

Group growth:

There are several ways you can increase membership of your Facebook Group both in and outside of Facebook.

- Invite your Facebook contacts to join your Group.
- Put your Facebook group link in your email signature.
- You can promote your Facebook Group on your other social media platforms such as Instagram or Twitter.
- Promote your group in other Facebook groups (where allowed)
- Use your Facebook group insights to identify top quality content to steer future content. The higher the engagement with a post, the further it's pushed out to people's Facebook newsfeeds. Facebook Group content is prioritised in the news feed over business pages as per recent algorithm changes.
- Join other Guide Dogs Community Fundraising groups to share and learn.

Income growth:

- Networking - As mentioned above you can use the group to network externally and build relationships with local businesses and events.
- Promote upcoming fundraising event/collections/social group activates to increase awareness and attendance. This can be done internally in the group as well as externally.
- Share links to your own online fundraising campaigns and donating platforms such as Just Giving. Pin to the top of the group if you have a specific action/campaign.
- Use Facebook donation functionality to encourage donations via a group post. You can set these up when you post a status update, select add to your post, raise money, and select Guide Dogs. The post can then be shared to your wider Facebook contacts.
- Encourage members to create Facebook Fundraisers for Guide Dogs and share to wider Facebook contacts
- Always thank people for any support.

Mistakes to avoid:

- Spending too much time on getting people to join your group instead of engaging with the members you already have.
- Letting the wrong people join the group. Growing your group fast is less important than growing it with the right people. Quality v quantity.
- Making members wait for their posts to go live in the group. Facebook gives you the option to require all member posts to be approved by an admin but that can waste time. Members want their questions answered immediately so don't take that option away from them.

Facebook Group moderation

Why is having an admin of the group so important?

- Your group will be open and visible so it will need careful daily monitoring in case of bots/spammers. We advise you to have two admins that are trusted to the Community Fundraising groups.

- Refer to the Volunteer Social media policy prior to set up to check Guide Dogs policy or if in doubt about anything related to Guide Dogs and what is published.
- Intervene on any inflammatory discussions early. Whether that is drawing the conversation to a close by posting that you are closing comments or whether the post is deleted for breaking rules. Always ensure you post your reason for group transparency.
- Please be extra vigilant for any safeguarding breaches e.g., Naming of staff/people that are not in the group and/or any personal details that can identify somebody.
- If a group member repeatedly breaks group rules, despite several warnings, you have the right to remove the group member. If you do remove or block someone from the group, please explain it in a post afterwards to let other members know what happened for group transparency.
- If you are concerned for someone's wellbeing, please contact your Volunteer Manager or our Safeguarding Team who are available on 0345 143 0199. Alternatively contact the emergency services if appropriate.

Guide Dogs FAQs

What details do I need to give Guide Dogs about my Group?

Please let your Guide Dogs contact know who the group admin (s) are and the group URL. Guide Dogs has a national Facebook profile and will ask to join the group as a member (It will appear as Susie Thompson - https://www.facebook.com/susie.thompson.7777/) Please make this profile an admin so we can link group to the regional Facebook Page (e.g., Guide Dogs Midlands) and let your Guide Dogs contact.

Please note that this is just so we have a centralised register of groups and contacts for compliance.

What supporting Guide Dogs information is there?

- Volunteer Social Media policy
- Logo guidelines for community fundraising volunteers
- How to set up Facebook Fundraisers
- FR regulator guidelines - https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code
- Accessibility guidelines: social media
- Facebook Group community rules

All can be found on the VIP.

Can Guide Dogs help me with imagery?

Yes, please refer to the document mentioned above for logos and "in support of" branding guidelines. If you need other branded imagery, please get in touch with your normal Guide Dogs contact or the Creative Services Team.

You can refer to Facebook help centre for image dimensions.

Can I share content about a named puppy? (Name a Puppy scheme)

- The name of the puppy may have a very special meaning to the donor or have been named in memory of a much loved one who they lost tragically. If you want to post to any social media platform, please check in with your local Community Fundraising Relationship Manager for guidance.

- Please remember that many Guide Dogs volunteers are also Name a Puppy donors so if you do post anything about a puppy it might be their puppy that you are talking about.

- When in doubt please do just ask.

Need more help?

If you have any further FAQs that are not answered within this document, please contact Susie.thompson@guidedogs.org.uk who will be able to provide an update to this document to cover the areas required.