



# Social Media & Art

Social change relies on stories that alter how we view our current reality, and where we could be. Art and social media are powerful tools to create and share these stories. While you may have experience running your own social media account, this guide will give you all of the tools you need to get a social media presence for your team started and flourishing.

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# 1. Designing a Brand or Style

The way something is represented, through images, designs, a logo, or even a social media feed offers hints to audiences about how they should perceive it. This guide will help you figure out how you want others to perceive you and your project, and which artistic and digital tools can best help you achieve this!

## 1.1 The Basics

1. Fill out the [Style Design Worksheet](#)
2. Once you've identified your main colours, styles, and general vibes or aesthetics, use a [colour palette tool](#) to choose a colour palette, and a [font generator tool](#) to choose any typography
  - a. For more information about choosing typography, check out [this resource](#) and a Canva-specific [font generator tool](#)
3. If you'll be compiling or sharing lots of written information related to your project, consider outlining the basics for your project's "voice"
  - a. Basics include editing for the correct grammar and spelling and using simple words, or words that appeal to your audiences
4. If design will be a big part of your project, consider compiling your style inspiration, colour palette, typography, and any other design-related information into a style guide, like [Sunrise's](#) or the [Sustainabiliteens'](#)
  - a. For more information about compiling a style guide, see [here](#)

## 2. Creating Team Social Media Account(s)

### 2.1 The Basics

1. **Assign one person on your team to run your social media accounts.** If you expect to rely on them or use many different platforms, consider assigning more than one person, or dividing who creates content, posts/reposts content, and responds to messages. Make sure these multiple people have a good system for communicating.
2. **During recruitment, post reminders about your team meetings to bring new people in.** Make several points well in advance and closer to the date. Make sure to include where and when the meeting will be, and a sneak peak about what you'll be talking about or doing. Frequent meeting reminders are important to help retain new members.
3. **Post before/after working on parts of your project:** Give your audiences sneak peeks on what is to come, or recaps about what you've done.
4. **Post about events:** Upload lots of posts in the build up to any events your group is running!
5. **Post after events:** Whenever you do an exciting activity, make sure you post pictures letting people know the impact you created and how great a time you had!
6. **Post educational content:** Curate posts from creators and accounts that inspire you, and information about climate action and justice. Always double check to the best of your abilities that the content is accurate and credit is given.

### 2.2 Pros and Cons of Each Platform

#### Instagram

| PROS                                                                                                                                                                          | CONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Currently a major social media platform for high schools</li> <li>❖ Slides are a good format to share educational content</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Need to have images/graphics (photos of people reach the largest audiences)</li> <li>❖ Slides can go unread if they are text-heavy or their design is less engaging</li> </ul> |

**Outreach Tips:**

- **Follow/follow back your target audience**, especially if it's high schoolers. Many students will follow back as a result and your account following will grow, helping you spread the message even more and allowing you to reach more people in future posts. Even if some don't follow back, they will be aware of your group simply by seeing the name of your account in their notifications.
- Encourage those who follow you and your team to repost your posts on their stories.

**Facebook**

| PROS                                                                                                                                                                 | CONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Adults tend to use Facebook</li> <li>❖ Audiences are more likely to click links and read longer captions/content</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Teenagers tend to not use Facebook</li> <li>❖ Content from non-personal or educational pages can get lost</li> <li>❖ Usually more commitment required from students to familiarize themselves with the platform</li> </ul> |

**Twitter**

| PROS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | CONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ High profile people &amp; celebrities are most reachable here</li> <li>❖ Engagement can lead to conversations</li> <li>❖ Journalists are reachable and forming a Twitter relationship can often lead to campaign exposure in the news</li> <li>❖ Content you want feedback on, such as surveys, reach farther than your community, sometimes globally</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Images are less common</li> <li>❖ Limited characters makes it hard to go into depth about educational content</li> <li>❖ Not usually used to promote events</li> <li>❖ Posts appear chronologically so content is missed by audiences more easily</li> </ul> |

**TikTok**

| PROS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | CONS                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Currently a major social media platform for high schools</li> <li>❖ If you have someone on your team/within your friend group(s) who has many followers, then this could be very valuable</li> <li>❖ Engaging way to share educational content</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Will not reach adults, or certain demographics of younger people</li> <li>❖ Takes time to master if you've never used TikTok</li> </ul> |

**Snapchat**

| PROS                                                                                                                                                        | CONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Big announcements &amp; story chains often do well</li> <li>❖ Snapchat filters for events can be useful</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Advertising/building a feed for longer than 24 hours isn't possible</li> <li>❖ Not great for sharing educational content</li> <li>❖ Not as popular now that Instagram has stories as well</li> </ul> |

## 3. How to Make Social Media Posts

### 3.1 Posting Considerations

#### **Is it from a reputable source?**

- Look for reputable sources like the Washington Post, Tri-Cities News, Burnaby Now, National Post, Globe & Mail, etc.
- For reconciliation or social justice news, take them directly from the source, for example the Squamish bands website or a racial justice / non-profits blog
  - It is better to get the source from a community directly involved in the issue then a secondary source.
- If you find something good but it's from a questionable source, try to find the same information in a reliable source
- [Here's a helpful resource for determining whether a source should be considered reputable](#)

#### **Do you have permission to share people's photos or names?**

- If you took a photo of your team, make sure you got permission from everyone in the photo to share it.
- If you want to include names, ask for permission to share those as well
- If you're writing about an event, a meeting, or a campaign that you ran or are running, double check that the information you're sharing is public

#### **Are you sure this post won't have unintended negative consequences?**

- Could this post be interpreted as support for or opposition to a specific politician? Check with your team first!
- Could this post be interpreted as offensive or hurtful to a specific group, or harmful in any way?

### 3.2 Posting Frequency

**Instagram:** 2-3 posts/week, stories - every day

**Facebook:** 2-3 posts/week

**Twitter:** Once a day

- You can also do live updates by replying to your own tweet or using 1/? or 1/10 at the start of a tweet so your followers know that it's a thread

**TikTok:** 1-3 posts/day

**Snapchat:** 2-10 stories/day

### 3.3 Written Content (primarily use for educational content)

1. In general, messaging depends on what you will be writing about, but consider returning to [Style Design Worksheet](#) or your style guide for reminders on audience and voice
2. Have a bold statement or “hook” title as the first slide
  - a. Polarizing statements (e.g. If you're staying silent, you're not paying attention)
  - b. Calls to action (e.g. Are you in?)
  - c. “FOMO” (e.g. Don't miss out!)
  - d. Quotations (e.g. “Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world”)
    - i. Make sure to properly cite who the quote is from
  - e. Or a combination of any of these things
  - f. Remember that users can share your posts on their stories - try to design a slide that you could see being shared widely
3. Section off your research, information, or announcement based on topics
4. Make each topic as concise as possible (maximum 7 sentences a slide) and save extra information for the caption!
  - a. Social media and news outlets often stick to Fourth Grade levels of speech to be inclusive of all audiences
5. Organize and order these sections in a fluid and/or chronological manner
6. Try to give each slide a title, unless it is a continuation of another
7. Whenever possible, include images, graphics, or photos to complement written information

### 3.4 Captions

1. Consider the above in the posts section, particularly about bold statements
2. Make a bold, catchy statement summarizing your post (maybe even in all caps) as the caption title
  - a. Include action items here too.
  - b. Use emojis to separate sentences if you have more than 1 bold statement.
  - c. e.g. THIS FIRST STATEMENT IS ESSENTIAL 🚨 CAPTION TITLES ARE HOOKS 🌟 USE THEM !! JOIN OUR CALL TODAY
3. Write up the main idea(s) of your post in a catchy statement, and use this as the first sentence of your caption (not to be confused with the title)
  - a. More people read the caption than the post itself (especially if the post is multiple slides) so save the best information for the caption!
4. Add additional details/prompts while articulating a solid statement/thesis (e.g. join the movement).
5. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the algorithm feeds used to make your post reach a larger audience. Try using phrases, words, definitions or names that are more common for people to search for
6. Add some hashtags at the end of your caption which are relevant to your post's topic
  - a. Using uncommon hashtags are a way to create a niche for a campaign. If you want to create a specific hashtag for a project, make sure it hasn't already been used by looking it up online first
  - b. Aim for hashtags with over 100 posts and under 10k posts

## 3.5 Design

### Visualizing

- Use text to explain ideas and use imagery (graphics, charts and/or photos) to visually expand on them
  - Helps audiences better understand the information
  - Makes a design more interesting
  - Avoids text-heavy designs
- Imagery should be used to help audiences visualize and translate written information into another medium of expression, *not* to take up space. Use graphics that build on or relate to the information already in the post

### Less is more

- **Simplicity is key:** Keep visual stimuli such as graphics, colours, alignments, fonts and images to a minimum
- Too much can result in a “busy” or “disorganized” design
- Too much can distract audiences or lose their attention

### Understanding the psychology of shapes

- **Round shapes:** Circles, ovals and ellipses have connotations of unity, community, positivity, and emotion
- **Blocky shapes:** Squares and triangles, or any shape with vertical, diagonal and horizontal lines have connotations of stability, balance, strength, professionalism, efficiency, power, and masculinity
- **Vertical lines, alone:** When disconnected from other lines, parallel, or isolated, they have connotations of masculinity, strength, and aggression
- **Horizontal lines, alone:** When disconnected from other lines, parallel, or isolated, they have connotations of community, tranquility, and calm

## Negative space

- Make sure that there is a fair amount of **negative space** (the space around and between elements such as text, photos, graphics)
- Avoids overwhelming the audience and disorganization
- Helps audience to better digest information

## Proximity

- To indicate a relationship between information, photos or graphics, use **proximity** (grouping together similar elements)
- Proximity helps to structure designs and guide audiences towards specific cues and information

## Repetition

- To create a cohesive feel to your design, use **repetition** of a consistent colour scheme, typography, alignment, graphics, and overall style
- Creates a clean, professional, cohesive look

## Contrast

- **Contrasting** (the arrangement of opposite elements such as colours, typeface, shapes, and size) can be used to create a **focal point** and gives objects greater visual weight by balancing the image
- Can make something stand out/pop and catches audiences' attention

## Alignment

- **Aligning** (placing text and other design elements on a page so they line up with an invisible border or length/width) elements such as text, imagery, or graphics is important when making a professional design
- Stick with one alignment as much as possible: centre, right or left
- Creates order and visual connections
- Easier for audiences to process

## “F” alignment

- Audiences generally follow an “F” shape when reading: They’ll start with the header (reading left to right), then read the subheading or first line, and go down from there
- Using this can help guide audiences along the design (especially if it has a lot of text)

## Focal point(s)

- **Focal point(s)** (areas of interest, emphasis, or differences within a composition) can also grab audiences’ attention
- They can be a shape, image or even specific typography
- They can also be used to pinpoint and direct audiences about where to start reading or looking

## Hierarchy

- **Hierarchy** in design directs audiences’ attention to specific text elements based on some indication of importance
- You can use these or combine them to indicate importance in your designs:
  - Size differences (biggest is seen first),
  - Colour **contrast** (highest contrast is seen first),
  - Contrasting positions in terms of layout (the one that stands out amongst the rest is seen first)
  - Movement (moving objects catch the viewer’s eye and are seen first)

## Accessibility

- It is important that your posts are accessible to all audiences and easily readable for those with impaired vision
- Ensure your text is **big enough** to be read easily
- Ensure **colours don’t conflict with the visibility** (e.g. don’t combine a black background with grey text)
- Check that your post is accessible by answering the following questions:

1. Are you able to see the design in both a bright and dark room? Dark rooms can affect the true tone of the colours
  2. Can you zoom out your design and still easily read the text? If not, consider enlarging it
- These [accessible colour palettes](#), and this [contrast checker tool](#) may also be helpful
  - If you are struggling to read or see something, ask for a second opinion and make changes to increase accessibility

### **Breaking the rules**

- These are guidelines, and being rebellious is important too. Breaking them can help you be more creative, or make something stand out
- Ensure that you have a reason and that your choices will improve the look, effectiveness or flow of the design
- Accessibility is the one rule you should never break

## 4. Publicizing & Documenting an Event on Social Media

### 4.1 Before the Event: Graphics & Posters

1. Refer to [Style Design Worksheet](#) (consider re-answering these questions specifically for your event) and/or to your style guide
2. Ensure that the basic information about your event is clear and present on any graphics or posters you create
  - a. **Refer to the [Event Overview](#) section of the Event Planning Worksheet**
3. **Refer to the [Publicizing](#) section of the Event Planning Guide** for additional ways to publicize an event. Create a publicizing timeline using the [Publicizing Timeline](#) section of the Event Planning Worksheet

### 4.2 During and After the Event: Photography and Videography

Any images on your social media are part of your visual strategy. Read through [these slides](#) to learn more about how to communicate your message and vision through images. (Note: The slides are from the Sunrise Movement in the United States, and specifically talk about the Green New Deal, but the ideas they cover may be applicable to your project.)

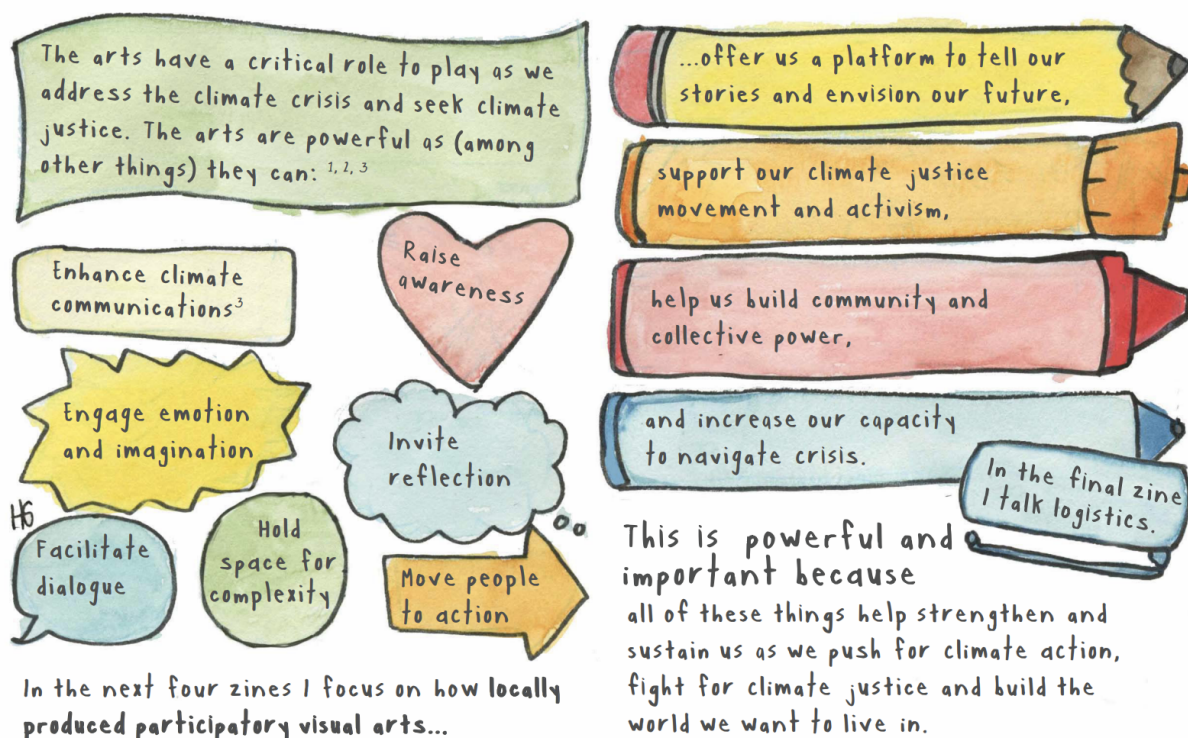
Here are the steps for making a plan to capture photos or videos of your project or event!

1. Does anyone on your team have photography or videography experience? Do you know of any photography or videography clubs, groups, family members, or friends who might want experience? If so, this is the easiest way to get photographers or videographers on a budget or for free
2. Specify to your photographers or videographers (and consult your social media team members) about any particular photos or footage you are looking for:
  - a. Do you want posed or candid photos? Do you want photos or footage to be portrait or landscape? Do you want photos or footage of speakers or attendees? Do you want specific moments to be unfilmed?

3. Create a plan to upload all photos or footage taken during your event in one place, as soon as possible (Google Photos albums are great since they're collaborative)
4. Designate one team member or photographer to select the best photos and edit them if needed
5. Follow up with videographers about creative control if you're working towards a final video product

## 5. Using Art to Create Change

Based in unceded Lekwungen territories (Victoria, BC), Hannah Gelderman is an artist, educator, and arts-based community organizer whose final thesis for her Masters of Arts centred around using collective art for climate justice. An excerpt from one of her six zines shows the variety of ways in which art can create change, often starting on a person-to-person (micro) level, which leads to bigger changes on a societal (macro) level:



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[You can view the following six zines here](#): introductory guide, storytelling & imagination, visuals in activism, power in collaboration, responding to crisis, logistics and resources. You can also read all of those components, as well as her research notes as one document [here](#).

The following resources can be used as jumping off points for any art-based/art-related projects:

- ★ [The Center for Artistic Activism](#) helps activists, artists, organizations, and foundations be more effective and affective in bringing about social change.

- ★ [Actipedia](#) is an open-access, user-generated database of creative activism, run by The Centre for Artistic Activism.
- ★ [Aeffect](#) is an app and toolset that guides users through planning and strengthening artistic activism projects, created by The Centre for Artistic Activism.
- ★ [Aesthetic Perspectives](#) is a framework to enhance understanding and evaluation of creative work at the intersection of arts and civic engagement, community development, and justice.
- ★ [A Restless Art](#) is a book and website about the practices of community and participatory art.
- ★ [Framing Community: A Community Engaged Art Workbook](#) is an introduction to community-engaged art, providing hands-on tools, advice, frameworks and techniques to help artists, community members and organizers plan, begin, complete and evaluate a community-engaged art project.
- ★ [Art for Social Change \(ASC Web\)](#) provides informative videos of exchanges that touch on key frames: facilitation skills, games and exercises, teaching and learning, working between cultures, questions about arts-based practices and workshops.
- ★ [International Centre of Art for Social Change](#)