

BTS & Twitter

What is Twitter and why the BTS use it

Twitter is a social networking site that allows you to send and receive short posts called 'tweets'. Its primary purpose is to connect people and allow thoughts to be shared with a big audience; companies/organisations use Twitter to increase brand awareness. Twitter has become increasingly popular with academics, students, policymakers, politicians and the general public. Twitter is free to join. Tweets are short messages, which can include links, images and videos.

Twitter users choose to 'follow' other users (people/organisations). If you follow someone you see their tweets in your 'timeline'. You can tweet or retweet information tweeted by others. Retweeting allows information to be shared quickly/efficiently with many people.

BTS Communications Policy

The current policy can be accessed [here](#). The key points to note here are:

Goals: In line with its charitable purpose to 'Promote and Advance Education in the Science of Toxicology for Public Benefit', the BTS will use a variety of means to keep its membership updated with the latest advances in the field of toxicology and to provide a platform to discuss and share good practices in the discipline of toxicology. It will also strive to inform and educate the general public on toxicological issues with import for public and environmental health and, where possible, contribute opinion when public policy documents of relevance to the discipline of toxicology are open for consultation.

The BTS also makes appropriate use of social media as a route for rapid communication to all of its activities, dissemination of key aspects and advances in the toxicology field, and provision of an internal discussion forum. The CSC are responsible for managing and maintaining the society twitter account and the BTS LinkedIn Group.

A Brief SOP

Step 1: Set up your profile

- Visit <https://twitttter.herokuapp.com/signup> to sign up for Twitter.
- Choose your profile name (aka handle), this is how you'll be seen on Twitter. Keep it short, relevant and memorable eg @BritToxSoc. You can use capital letters for visual emphasis; don't worry, if people search for you using lower case letters, they'll still be able to find you.
- Upload images. Twitter gives you two – your cover and profile photo.
- Complete your Bio in 160 characters.

Step 2: Follow people/companies/organisations

- Search for @BritToxSoc, click on our profile, click on 'Follow' (top left)
- Following accounts is an easy way to curate your Twitter feed and know what's happening with the topics or people you're interested in

Step 3: Understanding the Twitter lingo:

- # Hashtags: A way start or to tap into conversations happening on Twitter eg we used #BTS_UKEMS19 to start a conversation about the 2019 Annual Congress.
- Retweets: If you want to share a Tweet you've seen simply click on the button below the text (eg below). By doing this the Tweet is re-posted to a wider audience.
- @ Mentions: To bring your Tweet to the attention of a person/organisation (a message appears in recipient's Notifications tab) use their Twitter handle eg @BritToxSoc. This will encourage them to re-tweet/like/comment on your Tweet.
- Likes: Likes are represented by a small heart and are used to show appreciation for a Tweet.

Step 4: Please promote/engage with the BTS Twitter account by:

- Tweeting mentioning @BritToxSoc
- Re-tweet, like and/or commenting on our Tweets

This increases the presence of the BTS and is the best way for every member to contribute in building/maintaining our presence on Twitter.

Examples of tweets

- Details of new publications or resources you've produced
 - News items that feature your research
 - Thoughts on conferences you attend
 - Questions to invite feedback
 - Interesting news items
 - Replies/retweets to other people's tweets
- The key is to create/curate engaging content (eg use visuals)

Caveat:

As an open platform you may encounter uncivilised Tweets or direct messages. You might have heard about cyber abuse and 'trolls' (a person who posts controversial Tweets to provoke an emotional response) in extreme cases. These can be reported to Twitter.

Social media ethics are no different from workplace ethics. Twitter is a good way to get your message out but get yourself into trouble. Everything you do on Twitter is in the public eye and is a permanent record. Even if you set your account to private, tweets sent from a public profile will remain public. Tweets can be deleted, but not all re-tweets can.



Figure 1: Left - eg of a Tweet, using a mention @BritToxSoc and a link to a website. This tweet was 'liked' once. Images draw interest to your Tweets. Right – eg of a re-tweet, note the mention of @BritToxSoc and use of hashtags.