

## University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture Procedure UTIA GE0006P1 – Digital Presence: Website Hosting and Content

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### Objective

This campus procedure defines the appropriate use of UT Institute of Agriculture’s web presence.

The institute’s web presence is our most visible and valuable digital communication and marketing platform. Its primary purpose is to communicate information from and about the institute to external audiences in order to advance the institute’s mission. This procedure is intended to ensure the web presence infrastructure is secure, its content is accurate and accessible, and that it enhances the institute’s reputation.

Everything hosted on the institute’s web presence is an institute-owned asset and should be utilized to support and enhance the brand of the institute.

### Scope

This procedure applies to UT Institute of Agriculture’s entities such as units, departments, centers, and programs and anyone who creates, manages, edits, or develops content for or otherwise contributes to a page or website on the institute’s web presence.

The institute’s web presence is reserved for presenting information about the institute’s entities. Organizations such as registered student organizations, non-institute organizations, businesses, or individuals may request an institute website through the exception process. Employees or students may not host personal content on the institute’s web presence.

Use of the institute’s web presence is subject to university policies, institute procedures, and guidelines, including the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources \(Policy IT0002\)](#), and [UTIA IT0110 - Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources Security Policy \(AUP\)](#) as well as state and federal laws, including, but not limited to accessibility, privacy, copyright, and intellectual property.

As defined in the Acceptable Use of IT Resources policy, the .edu domain has rules restricting or prohibiting commercial use. Commercial activities not appropriate for the .edu domain but otherwise permissible using university resources must use other domain designations (ie: .com). All websites and pages officially representing the institute at alternate domain designations are considered part of the institute’s web presence, and requirements within this procedure are applied unless an exemption has been requested and approved.

Any institute website created after the publication of this procedure will be governed by it. All pre-existing websites including those not in the institute’s web hosting environment must meet certain requirements to fulfill the intent of this procedure, as determined by the institute’s Web Oversight

Committee (WOC).

## Roles

UTIA Information Technology Services (ITS) and Office of Marketing and Communications (M&C) manage the institute's web presence and associated systems. ITS is responsible for infrastructure, security, technical maintenance, content management system, and hosting. This includes but is not limited to managing the institute-level web hosting environment, granting site administrator and editor permissions, providing technical support, facilitating training, and managing subdomains and URLs. M&C is responsible for content strategy, user experiences, user interface, global analytics, and brand identity. This includes but is not limited to proposed artwork reviews, analytics reporting, user experience testing, and facilitating training.

Together, staff from M&C and ITS make up the institute's WOC. The WOC is responsible for development, implementation, and strategic management of the institute's web presence including design, custom blocks and functionality, review of exception requests, and conducting periodic audits of the institute's web presence content and brand usage.

The WOC is charged with making decisions about the institute's web presence in accordance with this procedure. Any circumstances that require executive review or consideration will be escalated by that committee to the vice chancellor for marketing and communications and the chief information officer for a final decision. Because everything hosted on the institute's web presence is an institute-owned asset, the vice chancellor for marketing and communications retains final control and approval authority, as necessary, over all content on the institute's web presence.

Site sponsors are individuals within the institute's *deans, directors, and department heads (DDDH)* group who are responsible for a unit, center, department, or program and the content owners for websites for those. Site sponsors are required to review and approve project scopes for requested websites for units, centers, departments, and programs for which they are responsible.

Content owners are individuals who acknowledge responsibility for the content on a website within the institute's web presence and work with the website's content manager(s) to ensure its compliance with this procedure. This person is assigned as the primary point of contact with the WOC for everything related to a website.

Content managers are responsible for maintaining content on the websites within the institute's web presence assigned to them. Managers are responsible for the content on a website within the institute's web presence and working with the content owner to ensure its compliance with this procedure. Managers are approved by the appropriate content owner, who also ensures compliance with this procedure.

## Definitions

### *Institute's web presence*

The "institute's web presence" consists of all pages, websites, and subdomains within the institute's web hosting environment. It also includes all other websites and pages officially representing the institute at other domain designations (ie: .com) due to restrictions on the .edu domain.

### *Website*

A “website” is a collection of web pages within the institute’s web presence. Websites are typically created and managed by the institute’s entities such as units, departments, centers, and programs and hosted at a *tennessee.edu* subdomain (ie: *utia.tennessee.edu*)

### *User*

For the purposes of this procedure, “user” refers to someone who visits the institute’s web presence. A group of similar users is commonly referred to as an “audience.”

### *Site Sponsor*

For the purposes of this procedure, “site sponsor” refers to the individual within the institute’s *deans, directors, and department heads (DDDH)* group who is responsible for the unit, center, department, or program and the content owner(s) of a website within the institute’s web presence.

### *Content Owner*

For the purposes of this procedure, “content owner” refers to the designated representative of an entity responsible for the content of a website within the institute’s web presence.

### *Content Manager*

For the purposes of this procedure, “content manager” refers to anyone who is granted administrative or editing access to a website within the institute’s web presence.

## Procedure

### I. Technical Requirements

To ensure compliance with security, privacy, and other requirements, and to maximize the reach and potential of our content, all pages and websites within the institute’s web presence must adhere to the following technical requirements. Any exceptions to these requirements must be reviewed and considered by the WOC.

#### A. Hosting

The institute maintains a primary, enterprise web hosting environment, managed by ITS. All content within the institute’s web presence must be hosted, centrally, within the enterprise environment.

Alternatively, with very few exceptions, secondary hosting environments are managed by ITS or other university approved vendors to service custom web applications and some websites on the *tennessee.edu* domain. Use of a secondary hosting environment is uncommon and will be determined by the WOC on a case-by-case basis.

#### B. Content Management System

The institute maintains a single, enterprise content management system (CMS) managed by ITS. All content within the institute’s web presence must be hosted, centrally, within the enterprise system. Exceptions to the CMS usage requirement may be made for websites

that are hosted within a secondary environment.

### C. Official Institute Theme

The institute maintains an enterprise visual theme for the institute's web presence, managed by ITS. The theme, which is maintained and updated regularly, includes standardized, brand-aligned user interface and user experience elements, which must be used. Exceptions to the theme usage requirement may be made for websites that are hosted within the UTIA environment or a secondary environment.

The institute's theme includes certain safeguards to ensure content presented on institute websites is accessible for all users. While these safeguards help minimize the risk of content not being accessible by all users of the institute's web presence, it is still the responsibility of content owners and managers to verify all content on their website meets accessibility standards per [UTIA Accessibility Plan](#).

### D. Customizations

The official institute theme is intended to service almost all content needs within the institute's web presence. Requests for customization, plugins, or extended functionality will be considered by the WOC on a case-by-case basis. Approved customizations, plugins, or extended functionality are subject to ongoing review by the WOC.

## II. Contributor Requirements

The institute's web presence is a platform to communicate with all the institute's audiences. All content managers are required to participate in training and maintain accurate content that both advances the institute's reputation and goals.

### A. Contributor Access & Permissions

Every website within the institute's web presence must have a content owner who is deemed responsible for the content within their website. Only institute employees may be content owners. Exceptions will be considered by the WOC on a case-by-case basis. Notification of change of content owner should be made by completing the [Content Owner Change form](#).

Content managers may be granted access to websites within the institute's web presence. Only institute employees may receive website access. Changes in content managers must be requested through the [Content Manager Change Notification form](#) managed by ITS.

ITS will remove access for content managers who have left UTIA based on either notification through the Content Manager Change Notification form or report from the university's enterprise resource planning system.

Access to websites within the institute's web presence is granted by ITS, in consultation with content owners.

### B. Mandatory Training

All content managers of the institute's web presence, regardless of access level must

complete mandatory training and onboarding before being granted access to a website. Training includes basic technical instruction, as well as information to familiarize users with relevant laws and policies.

Managers will be required to complete annual accessibility training and may be required to complete additional periodic retraining to maintain website access.

### C. Content Reviews

Content owners working with content managers must complete at least an annual review of all content, including accessibility of that content, and assigned access permissions on their website(s).

ITS employs automated tools to review content on all websites within the institute's web presence for compliance with applicable accessibility standards. Designated content managers are provided with reports of non-compliant content on their assigned website(s). Content managers are responsible for remediating identified non-compliant content within a timely manner.

## III. Content Requirements

We strengthen our brand when we are thoughtful and responsible with our website content. Content managers must ensure the content on their pages and websites is accurate, relevant, accessible, and legally compliant by adhering to the following content requirements. Because everything hosted on the institute's web presence is an institute-owned asset, the vice chancellor for UTIA marketing and communications retains final control and approval authority, as necessary, over all content on the institute's web presence.

### A. Relevancy & Accuracy

All websites within the institute's web presence must contain accurate information that is relevant to all intended audiences. Content managers are responsible for posting and maintaining appropriate content that advances the institute's reputation. Content owners and content managers are responsible for ensuring all website content—including, but not limited to words, images, videos, audio, and documents—is appropriate and properly maintained.

In addition to the annual content review referenced in *Procedures, Section II*, the WOC will conduct periodic content checks and alert content owners and/or content managers if any content is outdated or needs to be corrected. If necessary, the WOC may make content updates on the content owners and content managers' behalf.

### B. Content Compliance

All content on the institute's web presence must comply with local, state, and federal laws and statutes, as well as all relevant university policies, institute procedures, and guidelines. Mandatory website training will cover areas of compliance. Content owners and managers are required to know and understand how to maintain content compliance within their website.

Relevant policy and legal compliance information includes, but is not limited to IT security, acceptable use of IT resources, visual brand standards, editorial guidelines, processing university data, handling sensitive information, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), copyright, and licensing.

All forms included on the institute's web presence that collect data must include an approved privacy notice and must use secure protocols (HTTPS).

Accessibility of all content including but not limited to text, images, video, audio, and files (PDF, Excel, etc.) on the institute's web presence is required to meet standards as set forth by local, state, and federal laws and statutes, as well as all relevant university policies, institute procedures, and guidelines. Compliance with these standards is the responsibility of the content owners and content managers of a website.

When including third-party content on a website within the institute's web presence, reasonable effort must be made to ensure that content is compliant with accessibility standards.

## IV. Website Initialization & Support

ITS is responsible for the creation and technical support of websites and domains within the institute's web presence. ITS consults with content owners and managers across the institute to ensure technical approaches enable entities to meet their objectives.

### A. Requesting a New Website

All pages and websites within the institute's web presence are extensions of our brand and have both inherent value and risk.

Requests for a new website are considered by members of the WOC taking into account risks and benefits to the institute. Purpose, audience, and intended usage will be reviewed. Other factors, such as the impact on the overall user experience, as well as redundancy of existing, related websites will also be considered.

Requests for new websites must be made by the content owner or their designee. When considering requests for a new website, members of ITS and M&C will conduct an intake meeting with the content owner. Once the request is approved, a project scope will be created to document the requirements and timeline for the website build. The project scope must be signed by the site sponsor and content owner, and the UTIA chief information officer.

Content managers will be required to complete mandatory training before being granted access to their website (see *Procedures, Section II*).

### B. Subdomains & URLs

All websites within the institute's web presence are required to use the *tennessee.edu* domain unless an exception has been submitted and approved by the WOC. Most websites are represented by a subdomain URL (ie: *site.tennessee.edu*).

Every subdomain within the *tennessee.edu* domain is an extension of our brand, therefore every request for a new subdomain will be carefully considered by the WOC.

Typically, a new subdomain is created as part of establishing a new website (see above). Requests for a new subdomain outside a new website request are considered by the WOC on a case-by-case basis.

At their discretion, the WOC and UT Knoxville's Web Support Team may restrict the use of certain subdomains, especially those that include institute or university trademarks or have brand implications.

Requests for subdomains for the purposes of removing them from circulation or reserving them for potential future use (ie: "squatting") is not allowed.

### C. Technical Support

ITS provides technical support for the enterprise-level infrastructure of the institute's web presence. This includes regular maintenance of the hosting environment including plugins, CMS, and theme, as well as managing access permissions in coordination with content owners and managers.

Content owners and managers can request support or make technical requests through the ITS Project and Support Request form.

### V. Exception Request

Requests for exceptions to the requirements set forth in this procedure may be submitted to the WOC using the [Exception Request form](#). The WOC will review each request on a case-by-case basis.

## Compliance

Content owners and managers who do not meet the requirements within this procedure, or who manage content on pages or websites that do not meet these requirements, may have their institute website access permissions revoked, temporarily or permanently.

Websites and/or webpages within the institute's web presence that do not meet these requirements may be disabled temporarily or permanently. Websites and/or webpages will only be reactivated after update of non-compliant content and approval by the WOC.

Any violation of university policies relevant to this procedure may result in discipline as a violation of one or more provisions of the general standard of conduct in the student handbook or to discipline under the Code of Conduct (HR0580 – Code of Conduct) in the Human Resources Policy and Procedures.

The WOC along with UTIA Marketing and Communications and Information Technology Services reserves the right to request changes be made to content or branding that does not meet these requirements.

## Campus Responsible Official & Additional Contacts

Subject Matter	Office Name	Telephone Number (xxx) xxx-xxxx	Email/Web Address
Procedure Clarification and Interpretation	Lisa Stearns, Vice Chancellor, Marketing and Communications	865-974-7141	lstearns@utk.edu
Technical Information	Angela Gibson, CIO, Information Technology Services	865-974-8630	gibsonaa@utk.edu

## Related Policies/Guidance Documents

### UT System Policies

[GE0006 - The University's Digital Presence - UT System Policies](#)

[IT0002 - Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources - UT System Policies](#)

[IT0006 - Accessibility - UT System Policies](#)

### UTIA Policies, Standards, and Procedures

[UTIA IT0110 - Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources Security Standard \(AUP\)](#)

[UTIA Accessibility Plan](#)

[UTIA Web Accessibility Procedures](#)