

National Space Society Blogging Guidelines

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Created by the
NSS Management Information Systems (MIS) Team

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Admonition

“NSS Blog contributors are admonished to avoid presenting the publication of their posts on the NSS blog as an endorsement by NSS of the content of their posts, or of themselves in a fashion that extends beyond the publication of the blog post itself. ‘NSS Blog Writer’ is not an official title used by NSS. Instead, NSS Blog contributor should be used. Writing a blog post for the NSS blog does not create a contractual or employment relationship between the writer and NSS.” – NSS Executive Committee

Introduction

The National Space Society blog highlights and promotes:

1. Technological and political developments that will lead to human beings living and working beyond the Earth.
2. Projects and activities of the National Space Society and its chapters
3. Seminars, programs, conferences, and web resources that would be beneficial for individuals seeking a better understanding of space development and settlement.

To achieve these goals NSS will grant NSS leaders and other trusted individuals, hereafter referred to as "NSS Blog contributors," access to the NSS Blog for the purpose of writing and/or posting original commentary, depending on the individual blogger's authority level. Given that (a) the National Space Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization, and (b) some NSS Blog contributors will post new content without going through a formal approval process prior to publication, prudence must be exercised with respect to the nature of postings made by NSS Blog contributors to the National Space Society Blog. NSS reserves the right to either withdraw or downgrade the access that has been granted to individual NSS Blog contributors at its sole discretion. The body responsible for the execution of such decisions will be the NSS MIS (Management Information Systems) Team.

To minimize any questions or doubts as to the nature of what is appropriate for NSS Blog contributors to post and how that material should be represented, NSS has adopted a set of guidelines for all NSS Blog contributors when either (a) publishing posts on the blog or (b) responding to comments posted on the blog by the general public.

These guidelines have been produced and are maintained by the NSS MIS Team. Suggestions and comments on these policies should be directed to the contact-nss-mis-team@nss.org.

Violations of these guidelines should be reported to contact-nss-mis-team@nss.org. The NSS MIS blog editorial team reserves the right to remove any posting at any time, and to restrict or retract blog posting privileges.

Ideas for Blog Posts

As an educational space advocacy organization, posts should focus on subjects that are most immediately relevant to NSS goals. Blog contributors should strive to emphasize the positive whenever possible. Recognizing that there will be occasions when negative news stories must be addressed, it is useful to keep in mind while writing that positive alternatives should be offered.

Some ideas for blog posts include:

- Elaborate and expand on an NSS Position Paper.
- Identify a resource on the NSS web site and expand or comment on its meaning and/or importance.
- Write about NSS outreach activities (educational, chapter-related, project-related)
- Write about new technologies that are relevant to space development.
- Write about space issues that are currently in the news.
- Write about your relevant first hand experiences at a space conference.
- Write a review of a relevant YouTube video included in the NSS YouTube channel.
- Write about current ways in which space is used to benefit life on Earth.
- Write about policy or technological developments which may lead to space settlement.
- Tell your own story about a recent personal experience as a space activist.
- Write about planetary science discoveries that are in the news, especially if they can be tied to space resource utilization.

Wordpress and NSS Blog Contributor's Accounts

Each NSS Blog contributor will receive instructions on their account details and how to login and navigate to the Wordpress posts editor. Tutorials on how to use Wordpress are outside the scope of this document.

Questions about any problems you may encounter when creating a blog post should be sent to the email addressed specified in the user account instructions email. When reporting problems, the inclusion of relevant screenshots is advised.

Guideline of Posting Do's

1. Create posts that are relevant to NSS or a related space topic.
2. Every blog post must have an associated Featured Image. The Featured Image is the image that will appear at the top of the blog post. This image should have an aspect ratio of 16:9 and be a final size of 890 by 500 pixels (an image of 1080 by 608 pixels is also acceptable). Portrait images can be used for a featured image if an appropriate background is added so that the final image is the standard 16:9 landscape image (the MIS Team can assist you with this). Text should not appear near the edge of a featured image because of automatic cropping that occurs on pages where the blog item is displayed in multiple columns.
3. If you need help with images you can submit them to the NSS MIS Team for processing. In this case you should submit the original uncropped and unaltered image (do not alter image size or file type). Do not embed the image in a Word document except as an example of how you would like it cropped or altered.
4. All images being used must be in either the public domain or permission to use the image must have been obtained from the copyright author, or use must fall within copyright fair use policies. Complete image credits should be supplied at the time of submission.
5. Care must be exercised whenever expressing a personal opinion – be it on an issue of policy, technology, or personalities. Where possible, indicate in the body of your posts or comments that the posting is your personal opinion or belief. For example: (1) "It is my own belief that" or (2) "I personally feel that."
6. Blog posts are of three types:
 - a. Official NSS posts such as press releases, position papers, ISDC reports, etc.
 - b. Informational or space news items.
 - c. Individual opinion pieces that appear as being from the author.
7. Some individuals will be granted the right to publish posts without review. Other individuals, including all new Blog contributors, will have their posts reviewed by the MIS Blog editorial team before publication. After a number of approved posts Blog contributors may, with the approval of the MIS Blog editorial team, be promoted to being allowed to publish without formal review.
8. When discussing space politics and policies and/or politicians associated with specific space policy positions, bear in mind that NSS is a 501(c)(3) and that commentary must be educational/informative in nature. No post may endorse a politician or party, nor seek funds for a candidate.

9. Whenever possible, please call attention to pertinent resources on the NSS website or to past NSS activities in order to enhance value for your reader.
10. Triple check your spelling, grammar, and formatting before publishing your post.
11. Keep your post focused and informative, providing references whenever possible. Shorter is often better than longer.
12. When using copyrighted material, make sure that your use falls within the “fair use” category and that it is properly cited and credited.
13. Be sure that you have used reliable sources of information for your research, whether those sources be institutional or peer-reviewed journals. Journals and websites that either publish or promote “fringe science” are to be avoided.
14. Before quoting NSS officers, directors, or committee/chapter members speaking on behalf of NSS for a blog post, first obtain that person's permission to use the quote, unless you are quoting an official NSS document.
15. Double check your sources with respect to statements of fact, quotations, etc. to ensure that you have accurately represented their information.
16. Only link to non-NSS web sites that are directly relevant to your blog post and only after verifying that the site is reputable and is not an attack site, distributor of malware, or contains material that can be considered offensive.
17. All links to pages or files that do not include the NSS website’s navigation menu must open in a new tab/window. Examples include non-nss web pages, any PDF files, individual images, etc.
18. Carefully review your post with a focus on how others may interpret or misinterpret your post’s message and rewrite to improve clarity while minimizing the potential for misinterpretation.
19. Be sure to indicate all appropriate blog categories when writing your post. If an appropriate blog category is not present, contact the MIS team, identify the name of the category you want added and why. After selecting one or more blog categories for your post, be sure that the “Uncategorized” blog category is not selected.
20. To maintain the reputation of NSS as being a reliable source of information, every effort must be made to ensure that posts adhere to a high standard of technical accuracy that can withstand challenges.
21. It is the policy of the National Space Society, in all its publications and communications, to capitalize the word “Earth” when referring to the planet and the word “Moon” when referring to Earth’s natural satellite.

Guideline of Posting Do Not's

1. Do not make slanderous or incendiary comments.
2. Do not use offensive words or language or any sexist, racist, or homophobic comments.
3. Do not engage in inflammatory dialog with individuals who comment on blog posts.
4. Do not rush to post without carefully considering your words and their impact.
5. Do not advocate for or against any political party or candidate.
6. Do not post about internal NSS business, policies, or decision making.
7. Do not make product endorsements unless endorsement of that product has been officially approved by NSS.
8. Do not post on matters of pseudo-science or conspiracy theories.

Handling Comments

In the case of comments from the public, all comments must be previewed and approved for posting to the NSS Blog by an NSS MIS Team member, as blogger accounts do not have the authority to approve comments. Blog contributors are encouraged to respond to comments in order to expedite ongoing conversations.

Comments that are approved (allowed to appear) should meet the following general guidelines:

1. Have an associated working email address.
2. Contain no foul language, threats, racist/sexist/homophobic language, or personal attacks.
3. Must relate to the associated post or a previously approved comment.
4. Should make a positive contribution to the subject under discussion. Comments must make sense and have some point to them.
5. Must not be commercial (spam) in nature (this should not be interpreted to mean that a comment cannot contain a statement of endorsement for a “product” associated with the subject of the blog post. No commercial messages.

For comments that do not meet the above guidelines, the comment moderator reserves the right to either not approve the comment or to give the comment’s author a chance to edit their comment so that it follows NSS guidelines.