

TWITTER GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCHERS

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a social medium where you can write max. 140 characters and interact with other users. You can present your opinion, your research results and participate in discussions with others and share knowledge. You can use Twitter to find and communicate with specialists e.g. within your field. In Denmark, it is primarily intellectuals, journalists and celebrities who use Twitter. There are approx. 570,000 Danes on Twitter (in 2014). Internationally, Twitter is significantly more used and has 284 million users (in 2014) which makes it an excellent opportunity to find others within a specific field.

It is important to contribute and participate in the conversations to benefit from using Twitter. We therefore recommend personal profiles as opposed to profiles which are set up to represent large units. Personal contributions and 'a voice with a face' stand a much better chance of creating dialogue and network.

Twitter cannot be compared with other networks such as Facebook. Twitter does not use 'friends', but you can 'follow' people and you can get 'followers', but you do not have to follow people who follow you and vice versa.

AU has a Twitter profile which covers specific events, sets up conversations about subjects and knowledge which researchers and students can use when networking. The profile is called @AarhusUni and is run by the Rector's Office. The target group is students, AU researchers and other stakeholders within the field of knowledge and education. If you have content for this profile, please contact your department's communication partner.

Getting started

Use a PC or Twitter's apps for smartphones and tablets to create a profile. When you access Twitter, you will see content which the people you follow have written, shared or commented on. Twitter content is divided into topics through hashtags (#).

- Write a so-called bio which is the text other people can see about you. This is 160 characters describing who you are, what you are doing on Twitter and what people get when they follow you. Include any important keywords so you can be found through search and upload a picture. Users do not want to interact with an impersonal profile.
- Build a network – requires an effort and takes time.
 - Follow others
 - Find out if key persons in your network are on Twitter
 - Look through other people's lists
 - Search for hashtags
 - Be active – follow back, respond, retweet

- Tweet on a regular basis, but good content is more important than activity level.
- Be ready to contribute to a conversation when you tweet, check regularly.
- Learn from people who are Twitter experts
- Give priority to content that attracts attention and activity. Do not spam your followers
- Use your auto signature, Facebook or LinkedIn to make people aware of your Twitter profile.

This is how you tweet

Tweets: A tweet has max. 140 characters (including spaces, hashtags and links).

Hashtags: All tweets must contain one or more hashtags (#) so that others can find your tweet. Hashtags are used to index content based on topic. Spend time on finding the hashtags that are used for your topic by searching Twitter and choose the ones which are used the most. A hashtag can only be one word. You can find relevant and current hashtags here Topsy.com.

Links: Use Bitly.com to keep links short as they are included in the 140 characters. Copy links, e.g. to your research result or a press release, into the program and the program will shorten the link. You can then use the new short link in your tweet. You do not have to register as a user to use Bitly.

Images and videos: Use them where it makes sense. Images and videos can be used to create variation in your tweets and attract attention in a flow of text. You add images inside the tweet box.

Language: Write in a language that is appropriate for your target group. Be aware that there might be other hashtags which are relevant in an international context.

When to tweet: You can tweet when you want as content will often be found through hashtag search or depending on when your target group is available.

When you tweet: Keep an eye on your tweet for the first hour, be ready to answer questions or offer additional information. After that, check regularly for response.

Number of tweets: There are no activity requirements. Give priority to content that attracts attention and do not spam your followers. It is OK to be less active for periods of time.

Favourites: To like tweets, save tweets so you can find them later

Retweets: To share other people's tweets on your own page

Mentions: Participate in conversations by writing @name-of-recipient e.g. @aarhusuni. When you mention others on Twitter, the proper Twitter behaviour is to use mentions.

Build groups of followers: Follow others, be active and comment on/retweet other people's tweets. This will make it more likely that others will decide to follow you.

Lists: Create relevant lists of the people you follow which others can then subscribe to

Statistics: Log on to analytics.twitter.com and activate Twitter Analytics. Here you can see how many people look at your tweets, click the links etc. Use this tool to measure which hashtags and users that have been best for you to use.

[Read more about how to use Twitter](#)