

# Engaging the next generation with Instagram

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## WHY INSTAGRAM?

- Visual storytelling: “a picture is worth 1000 words”
  - Instagram utilizes photos and videos. Consider if your nonprofit has enough opportunities for content before you sign on.
  - Visuals put a face to the name and literally illustrates the work you do.
  - Connect to your audience through emotion.
- Engaging millennials and Generation Z
  - 59% of users are in the 18-29 age range in the U.S.
  - Instagram is heavily used by millennials and Generation Z, more so than Facebook and Twitter.
- High user engagement: Engagement is higher on Instagram than any other social media site, with users opening the app several times a day.

### CONTACT

Sarah Shimazaki  
sarah@resource-media.org  
www.resource-media.org

## FIRST STEPS ON INSTAGRAM

1. Set up your Instagram profile! (name, profile picture, bio).
2. Use the business account, which gives you access to insights and analytics.
3. Find your voice/Instagram personality.
4. Introduce yourself! Start posting (at least three posts) before following other accounts.
5. Build your Instagram community: follow friends, partners, community members, relevant hashtags, thought leaders, similar organizations, etc.

## YOUR INSTAGRAM BIO

- 150-character limit
- Can include emojis, hashtags and handles
- Space for only one link
  - Instagram posts cannot contain hyperlinks, so you must always reference the “link in your bio.”
  - Now there’s a new app called “link tree” which allows you to create a menu of various links in your Instagram bio.

## WHAT ARE INSTAGRAM STORIES?

- Photos and videos that last for only 24 hours.
- You can take photos and videos in the moment, go Live, upload photos and videos from your camera roll and create text-only images as well.
- You can choose to “highlight” your stories and keep them visible on your Instagram profile for as long as you like.

## INSTAGRAM BEST PRACTICES

- **Include small, engaging stories in your captions:** personal storytelling is huge on Instagram right now. To set your posts apart from other visually stunning Instagram posts, consider adding short, personal stories to hook your audience.
- **If you don't have photos, you can still create graphics to communicate powerful, shareable messages:** Use tools like Canva and/or PicMonkey to create graphics sized for Instagram.
- **Take advantage of existing hashtags within your field**
  - You can use up to 30 hashtags in a post caption or comment.
  - Best practice is to add hashtags in a comment, so they don't overcrowd your post captions.
  - Now, Instagram gives the option for people to follow hashtags in addition to users.
- **Engage your community, especially influencers, with a campaign**
  - Reach out to relevant influencers in your community and ask for their consent to be featured on your Instagram campaign.
- **Use Instagram stories to provide a "behind-the-scenes" look into your organization**
  - Instagram stories are less formal, so you can include photos and videos of: staff lunches and retreats, meeting snapshots, staff working "in the field", etc.
- **Best practices for the public lands sector that can be used everywhere:**
  - **Acknowledge the land:** Use indigenous names when describing the location at which a photo was taken. If you're not sure, check on <https://native-land.ca>
  - **Use pronouns:** If you're featuring someone's photo, be sure to include their pronouns (and ask them what pronouns they use!). It's important to use the pronouns someone identifies with (she/her, he/him, they/them, etc.), rather than the pronouns we assume they use.
  - **Include alternative text:** for folks with visual impairments, it's best practice to include an image description at the end of your caption. Now, Instagram also includes the option to add alternative text when posting a photo or video (go to Advanced Settings at the bottom of the same window where you create your Instagram caption).