# South Side Weekly
Slack Guide

1 / 13 / 2017

Why Slack?

Slack is a useful tool that allows for searchable, real-time group communication between our staff. Many news organizations and companies use Slack as their primary means of team communication. For the Weekly, it provides a central digital space anyone regularly involved in the organization can access. Reaching out via Slack is more professional than sending a Facebook message or text, but doesn't require the same time or formality as writing an email. This document will go over some basic Slack functionalities, as well as explain some guidelines specific to the Weekly's team.

How it works

Channels:

The app allows you to access, browse, and participate in several channels. Each channel is dedicated to a specific topic or includes a specific group of people. You can find out what a channel is about first by checking the name, and then--if that isn't specific enough--looking at its description. This information is available on the top bar of every channel:
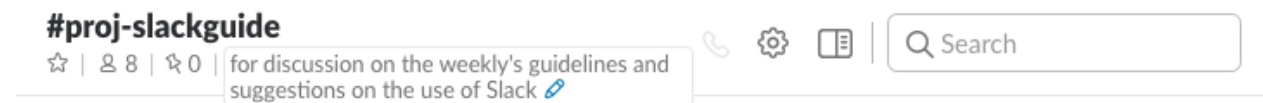
The Weekly's channel structure mostly follows our staff structure. Some channels are open to all staff, others only include members of certain teams or sections, some are devoted to specific projects. Here's a list of currently active channels on Slack:

General:
#announcements: *Calls to action - go to the public newsroom, leftover pitches, meeting announcements*
#general: *SSW-related talk, e.g. Mari asking for ideas for Stylebook Sunday, someone needs immediate help with something, someone wants to make social media aware of an event, etc.*
#random: *Non-work banter and water cooler conversation*
#minutes: *Editorial meeting minutes posted here for transparency and access*

#weekly: *RSS feed bot of everything posted to the Weekly's website*
#links: *Articles, events, and anything tweetable from the SSW's account*

#pitches: *A casual space to propose and workshop pitches and pitch ideas*
#dataviz-mapping: *Anything related to data visualization or map visuals*

#website: *Discussion of website changes, proposals, and issues (e.g. broken links)*
#feedback: *Suggestions for the editorial team on running and organizing the publication*

#proj-slackguide[1]: *For discussion of the Weekly's guidelines and suggestions on the use of Slack*
#proj-harassmentpolicy: *For discussion and planning of the Weekly's policies on sexual assault and harassment*

Sections (for the discussion of ideas, news, and pitches relating to each section):
#sec-visualarts
#sec-stagescreen
#sec-music
#sec-lit
#sec-politics
#sec-education

Teams:
#editors-corner: *private channel for the editorial team to discuss the Weekly's structure and organizational changes, to plan events, to go over logistics, etc*
#production-night: *private channel to post when pieces need edits or are ready to be placed*
#visuals: *Discussion of illustration and photography*
#social_media: *Discussion of social media analytics, strategy, etc. Also a place for other editors/staffers to make requests of the social media team*
**#video**
#radio
#factchecking *Discuss fact-checking tips, policies. A place to get second opinions on your FCs.*

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[1] Once a project is completed, please make sure to archive the corresponding channel

Messaging:

Slack also supports private group chats and private direct messages. Notifications occur when someone's name is mentioned, or they received a direct message. To tag someone in a channel, ping their username. If you want to make sure everyone on the channel sees your message, you can also ping the entire channel by typing "@channel" anywhere in your message:
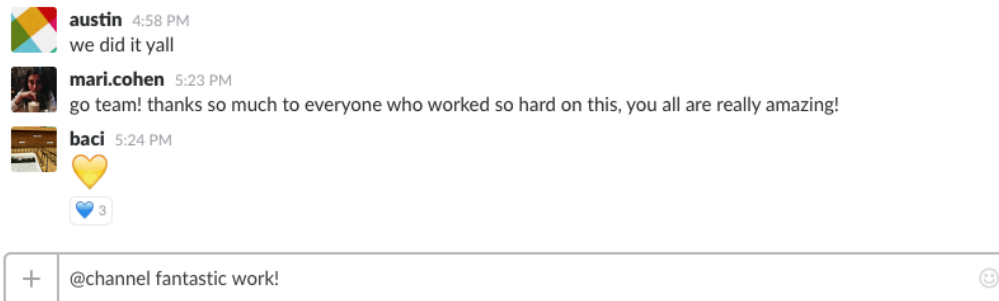
To start a private chat with someone, look them up by clicking the plus sign next to "Direct Messages" on the left of the screen.
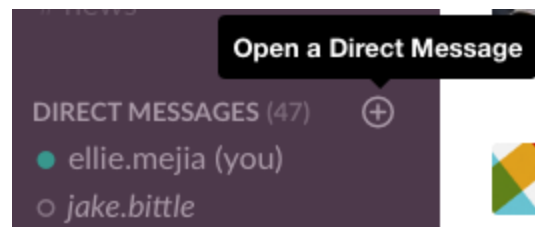

What not to put on Slack:

We do ask that you keep some communication to email. Because we depend on Word's track changes function to edit pieces, articles should be sent over email as .doc or .docx files. You can attach documents to private messages or channels, but Slack will not save documents the way email will. If you are working on an illustration, photograph, data visualization, podcast, or video for the Weekly please make sure you send those image, audio, video, etc files over email as well. Pitches and visuals will continue to be assigned over email.

Please also refrain from using Slack's private message functionality as a substitute for texting, Facebook, WhatsApp, or other social messaging services. Remember that although often

informal, interactions at the Weekly should remain professional and respectful. Additionally, anything that is obscene, hurtful, bigoted, or gossip is not tolerated.

Setting up your profile
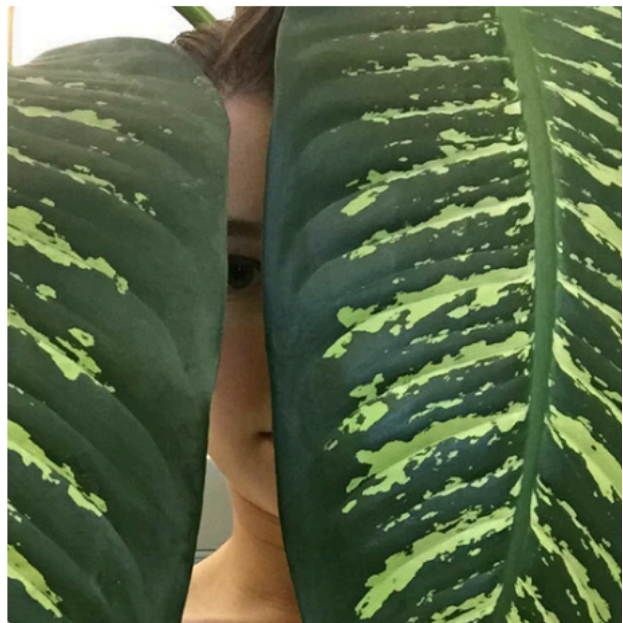
Emily Lipstein ○
social media editor

[Call] [Message] [∨]

Username	@emily.lipstein
Timezone	9:48 AM local time
Email	emily2184@gmail.com

Setting up a profile is fairly straightforward, but we ask you to adhere to certain formalities:

- Make sure your username follows the format **firstname.lastname** (i.e. jane.doe). This way, if you know the first and last names of a staff member, you already know their username.
- Also make sure your profile details include your **email address**, so that team members can send you files or documents or get in touch with you via email if necessary.
- Your picture can be anything that isn't lewd or offensive, but you should change it from Slack's default abstracted colorful squares. A channel with icons that are all the same is not as legible as a channel with distinct icons for each user.
- Please make sure to fill out the section "What I Do." If you don't have a formal title at the Weekly, feel free to write "contributor."

Lastly, although this isn't a profile requirement, we do recommend you download Slack's desktop and/or mobile app. You can always visit the Weekly's team on southsideweekly.slack.com, but having the app ensures you get notifications as they come in, which makes communication quicker and more efficient.