



DOS MATERIALS CONTENT BEST PRACTICES

Rationale:

DOS content is created for, and used by, a global audience, and should be sensitive to a wide variety of cultural and religious customs. At the same time, content should promote and depict U.S. values and customs. By depicting a democratic and inclusive society, it recognizes the contributions of all members of society and provides positive role models.

What should not be included in images or videos?

- Depictions of activities or images that are unacceptable in certain cultures. Examples include, but are not limited to, alcohol, drugs, weapons, intimate contact, and sex.
- Revealing clothing. Both men and women should be modestly covered. Avoid images or videos of people in revealing clothing, such as swimwear, tank tops, low-cut tops, midriffs, very short pants, etc.
- Stereotypes. Stock photos can be a good source of high-quality images. However, be careful to avoid stereotypes, which do not reflect U.S. values of a democratic and inclusive society.
- Depictions of violence.
- Negative depictions of individuals or groups (ethnic, religious, political, etc.).
- Controversial or provocative events, activities, or images. Be conscious of your own religious, political, and personal viewpoints and biases when selecting photos, especially those that include religion and politics.

What should be included in images or videos?

- Depictions of the full spectrum of U.S. society. Women and girls, men and boys, and people with disabilities, of different religions and backgrounds, should be equally represented performing all occupations and activities.



Examples include depicting women of different backgrounds as scientists and engineers, girls playing baseball, and people with disabilities teaching, etc.

- High-quality images. Vector files (.eps, .ai, .svg, etc.) are preferable. Raster files (.jpg, .png, .gif, etc.) should be a minimum of 300 dpi.
- Participants who have signed the consent and release form. Any participants who are visibly identifiable in images or videos must sign the [consent and release form](#).

Best practices for taking images and videos

- Location. As long as you feel safe, take the viewer into your world. Each location has a story. Choose to take photos in diverse places that will visually help the viewer see the culture you are highlighting.
- Action. What are your participants *doing*? Who are they with? What are their daily routines? Capturing moments that feel like you are discovering something new about yourself, your culture, or other people's cultures (such as food or dancing), are some of the best visual content you can take.
- Light source. For premium quality, remember to place the light source in front of the object or subject you are capturing. If the light is behind the subject or object, the subject or object may be dark or turn into a silhouette.
- Style and Composition. There are some simple tricks you can do to make your photos more appealing, watch this useful tutorial to learn them: <http://tinyurl.com/videophoto-tips>
- Video. All of the above rules also apply to video, but now you have to consider movement and audio. For video, think about capturing different angles of a place and remember to keep the camera steady. If you don't have a tripod, try and stabilize the video recorder on a flat surface and hit record. If you are trying to record a person talking, take note of your surrounding noises. It is easy to overlook the sounds that may make it difficult to hear. Move closer to the subject you are recording, if you can. If you are too close to secondary audio, like an open window, try to move away from it.