

PATREON

April 29, 2024

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
Chair, Women and Equalities Committee
House of Commons,
Palace of Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

Re: Tackling Non-Consensual Intimate Image Abuse

Dear Madame Chairwoman,

My name is Laurent Crenshaw, Senior Director of Policy and External Affairs at Patreon, Inc. ("Patreon"). This letter responds to your office's correspondence to Patreon regarding abusive, non-consensual intimate imagery (or "NCII").

Patreon recognizes the dangerous and destructive nature of NCII, and has taken action to identify and remove NCII from our platform. Our efforts in this regard are described below, along with answers to your specific questions.

Background on Patreon

Patreon provides an online platform that allows artists (known on the site as "Creators") to connect with their most dedicated fans (known as "Members"). Patreon provides tools that allow Creators to monetize their work through paid memberships. To incentivize paid membership, Creators can offer exclusive, Members-only content, accessible to Members through the Creator's unique Patreon page.

In order to create an account, all users – both Creators and Members – must first accept Patreon's [Terms of Use](#) and [Community Guidelines](#), among other policies. Patreon's zero-tolerance NCII policy, found in our Community Guidelines, is as follows:

Patreon has zero tolerance for works featuring non-consensual intimate imagery, which is defined as sexual or pornographic imagery of an individual or individuals made and/or distributed without their consent. Works which relate to non-consensual intimate imagery in the form of survival stories, educational resources, and/or advocacy, however, are permitted. If you are a victim of this behavior and feel your wellbeing is at risk, we recommend you contract local law enforcement

PATREON

as well. If you are addressing a situation involving non-consensual intimate imagery in which you hold copyright rights, we strongly advise that you report that to us here instead of submitting a notification of claimed copyright infringement. Notifications of claims of copyright infringement may be forwarded to the person responsible for contributing the accused material and may be posted publicly.

To enforce our policies and uphold safety standards, Patreon employs a highly trained Trust & Safety team, which scales and grows alongside the company to meet our ever-evolving needs. In addition, Patreon works with multiple outside vendors to supplement our content moderation capabilities and prevent abusive conduct and material, including NCII. For example, one such vendor screens all Creators identified as providing Adult/18+ content to flag any abusive, illegal, or otherwise concerning works – including but not limited to NCII – for further review by our in-house Trust & Safety team.

Hashes and Image Detection

Patreon is proactively prioritizing hash and image detection systems to enable us to track non-consensual intimate imagery as well as broader safety risks. We use both Microsoft's [PhotoDNA](#) and Google's Content Safety API, which are established industry standard tools to support our moderation work and automate the removal of known abusive content.

Potential Partnership with StopNCII

Patreon is exploring a possible partnership and integration with StopNCII and recently sent a team to attend an in-person StopNCII event, held March 13, 2024. We are working directly with StopNCII to conduct legal and technical due diligence to ensure a successful partnership. For example, our technical due diligence has revealed the need for StopNCII to augment its system to add: (1) high-quality signals to its database to enable accurate content moderation; (2) hashes with detailed content moderation decisions from partner organizations; and (3) hashes from StopNCII's NGO partners.

Both Patreon and StopNCII are actively participating in this process and hopeful that a partnership is possible this year.

Discussions with Ofcom

Over the past few years, Patreon has engaged with Ofcom regarding internet safety issues, including NCII, and measures Ofcom may implement to mitigate high-risk internet content.

PATREON

For example, in September 2021, Patreon submitted evidence in response to Ofcom's call for input on draft language that ultimately became the Online Safety Act. In November 2022, Patreon and Ofcom representatives met as part of a coalition of similarly situated technology platforms. Most recently, in March 2023, Patreon submitted evidence to Ofcom in support of the Online Safety Act.

Conclusion

We are proud of the work that our Trust & Safety team engages in every day to keep Patreon a platform that is safe and welcoming to a global community of Creators and their fans. We look forward to collaborating with stakeholders from other companies, industries, and sectors who share our commitment to this cause.

Sincerely,

Laurent Crenshaw
Senior Director, Policy and External Affairs Patreon,
Inc.