

Our Wave Partner FAQ

Partner Name

General Questions

What is Our Wave?

Our Wave started as an idea in October, 2018 and was officially founded as a 501(c)(3) non-profit in July, 2019. Ourwave.org is an online platform for survivors of sexual violence to safely and anonymously share their stories and access resources to support their healing. Through our efforts we have partnered with other Sexual Violence prevention organizations such as It's On Us, End Rape on Campus, and Unapologetically Surviving to create a safe and anonymous branded communities for varying survivor groups.

What is the mission of Our Wave?

Our mission is to empower all survivors of sexual assault, abuse, and harassment to safely share their stories. By helping facilitate the process of healing through storytelling, we aim to establish a clear path for survivors to find clarity, support, and resources. We have created an online platform to make this process easier and to collect an aggregated storybase from survivors across the globe to raise awareness and catalyze systemic change.

Is Our Wave a non-profit organization?

Yes, Our Wave is a certified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

What is Our Wave's EIN number?

84-2131836



Who is on the Our Wave team?

Kyle Linton and Brendan Michaelsen are the founders of Our Wave. Our extended team can be found on our website here. We are constantly adding new members to our team and are always open to pro-bono collaborations with external agencies, corporations, and partners.

Where is Our Wave headquartered?

Our Wave is headquartered in Raleigh, NC but we have staff and board members located across the United States. More broadly, we are supported by an incredible group of volunteers that are located across the globe.

How is Our Wave funded?

Our Wave is funded entirely by individual donations, grants, and sale of goods. We aim to become a more sustainable non-profit through these channels and are actively seeking new donors, product sales, and grant opportunities. Please [reach out to us](#) if you are interested in supporting our work.



Story Submission and Review Process

How are stories on Our Wave screened?

After stories are submitted, survivors are told that they will be reviewed and posted by the Our Wave team within 5-7 days as long as the story abides by our community guidelines. Story reviewers are Our Wave team members who have undergone rigorous review training, which includes how to appropriately de-identify stories, recognize when to apply trigger warnings, identify stories that are inappropriate for the site, and how to recognize potential safety concerns. Any story that needs additional action taken beyond de-identification is “flagged” by story reviewers to be reviewed by the Chief Technology Officer, in consultation with our resident mental health/ trauma expert, to determine the appropriate course of action.

Who is reviewing stories on Our Wave or partner sites?

The Our Wave story review team handles the story review for both Our Wave and our partner sites. No additional oversight is required on the partner’s end, however, partners can ask to have individual staff members trained in the review process if they would like to have their staff take a more active role.

How do you prepare reviewers to evaluate stories?



Reviewers undergo story review training which consists of 1) understanding the impact of trauma and violence and pathways for healing, 2) exploring the Our Wave platform--mission, values, dos and don'ts, 3) learning the de-identification process, 4) learning what constitutes a trigger warning, 5) recognizing potentially dangerous situations (e.g. active suicidal/ homicidal ideation, abuse of a minor) and how to “flag” stories for additional review.

Do you have a review protocol for reviewing stories?

Yes we do and a copy of it can be given to partner organizations upon request.

Do you put trigger and sensitive content warnings on stories?

Yes, we place trigger warning on any story that mentions self-harm, suicide, homicide, or substance abuse disorder. These stories are still posted, but survivors receive a more personalized email response afterwards, explaining why content warning was put on their story along with a list of additional resources.



Legal, Security, and Privacy

How does Our Wave ensure survivor privacy and confidentiality?

We ensure privacy and confidentiality for survivors by:

1. Creating technology that incorporates best practice security protections such as multi-factor authentication, encryption, specified user permissioning, regular software upgrades, infrastructure backups, etc.
2. Creating clear documented protocols for data access and review processes. We have established guidance on what information will be accessible by specified users, redaction policies to protect survivors anonymity and an escalation policy to forward stories to a sexual violence prevention specialist.

What security measures does Our Wave have in place to safeguard survivor stories and other data?

At Our Wave, privacy and data security are important to us, and both are paramount to the safety and security of our users and visitors. So is transparency. This promise aims to serve as a clear, transparent and easily digestible summary of Our Wave's long-standing policies with respect to data privacy, security, and protection.



Below are a few examples of our active security policies and precautions at Our Wave. These measures, along with many others, serve to create a secure, reliable, and safe system for our users and community.

1. Strong Login Details

We generate passwords using a strong password generator and avoid predictable usernames and credentials. This approach makes it much harder for “brute force” attacks to successfully gain access to our platform. We don’t just apply this principle to website logins; the same level of security is applied to databases and account logins as well.

2. Regular Software Upgrades

We strive to ensure that the software that powers our platform is kept up to date, minimizing the risk of security vulnerabilities and reducing the chance of exploitation. Updates are often made in response to new security fixes and overall improvements.

3. Encrypted Infrastructure

Our databases and data storage volumes are designed to encrypt data at rest. We endeavor to encrypt all data submitted to Our Wave, including stories, emails, records, and feedback, and make it visible only to internal Our Wave administrators and third-party partners pursuant to our [Privacy Policy](#).

4. Infrastructure Backups

Our system is designed to capture and encrypt all databases and preferences on a daily basis and store backups for at least one week. This provides extra insurance in the unlikely event of serious infrastructure failure.

5. Secure Hosting Over TLS

All of our platform websites, APIs, and databases are hosted on secure servers designed to run an TSL/SSL certificate. This



essentially means that information is encrypted when transferred over the wire. This encryption makes it much more difficult for unscrupulous hackers to see those details.

We also run active monitoring tools to protect our users from things like malware, suspicious code and unexpected file changes, as well as logging platform activity to flag any unusual behavior.

Have you had any issues with law enforcement or civil litigants attempting to obtain survivor statements, including the unredacted versions? If not, have you studied the issue or have a plan in place for responding to subpoenas?

No, we have not had any issues with law enforcement or civil litigants attempting to obtain statements. We made very purposeful decisions with the platform to ensure anonymity and created a policy internally to redact identifiable information during the review process to help mitigate these potential issues. We have spoken extensively with prosecuting attorneys, defendants, and other legal professionals about this issue and feel prepared if we are subpoenaed to prepare a response in coordination with our legal team.

Do you make mandated reports if there is a reason to suspect a child was involved?

Based on our discussions with prosecuting attorneys, defendants, and other legal professionals, we are not required to make mandatory reports. Our platform is accessible online to a global audience thus broadening our reach beyond individual states or geographic regions.



We simply do not collect the information needed to submit these reports and abide by the state-by-state reporting standards considering we have chosen to store limited data for the purposes of anonymity. Despite this, we specify in our terms of service that users must be 18+ to submit so if we can determine that a user is underage we will not post their story to the platform and do what we can to support that survivor's healing.

Can reviewers at Our Wave select to not share an anonymous story publicly on the platform?

Our Wave withholds the right to not share specified survivor stories on the platform. We created this community to provide survivors with a safe and anonymous place to share their stories and if a story breaks our basic terms of service or we feel will not benefit survivors then we may actively select to not share this content with our broader community. We do not take these decisions lightly and have a protocol to evaluate situations where we will not share a story on the platform.

Partnership Questions

What are partnership opportunities Our Wave offers?

Our Wave offers many ways individuals and organizations can get involved:

- Volunteering
 - Individuals can volunteer with Our Wave in order to help with blog posts, social media campaigns, and



story review. We are also continuing to seek support from volunteers with specific expertise in Marketing, PR, Software Development, and other SaaS business functions.

- Fundraising and Sponsorships
 - Individuals or vendors can partner with Our Wave to help raise money for our cause. In the past this has occurred in a variety of ways such as selling merchandise or experiences with a portion of the proceeds going to the Our Wave organization, organizing Our Wave fundraisers, selling Our Wave shirts or jewelry in store or online with a portion of the proceeds going to the Our Wave organization, signing Our Wave up as an organization that could be donated to through corporate giving programs, or listing Our Wave as your donating organization through Amazon Smile.
- Social media partnerships
 - Our Wave is interested in doing collaborations with other relevant social media accounts that believe in this mission of ending sexual violence and promoting survivor healing. This could include collaborations related to survivor education, affirmation or healing artwork, or other creative endeavors. You can also help by reposting our content on your personal page and spreading awareness of our platform!
- Organizational partnerships and branded sites
 - Our Wave offers the possibility of branded sites for survivor-focused organizations who would like to collect stories from the communities that they serve. These sites would have the same features and functionalities as the Our Wave website and would be managed by the Our Wave team, but would have your organization's branding and can be embedded into your organization's official website. Survivors



submitting stories on branded sites have the option for their story to also be posted on the Our Wave page, building our story base while also contributing to your own. For examples of what this could look like, check out <https://stories.itsonus.org/>.

- If you are a survivor-facing organization that is not interested in a branded site, but would like to collaborate in a different way, please feel free to message us!
- Online art/ other media exhibitions
 - The Our Wave platform has an online exhibition space, where survivor artists or organizations can host events or showcase their work. To check out this space and see if it could be appropriate for your needs, check out <https://discover.ourwave.org>.
- If you are interested in any of these partnerships, or have ideas for other ways to get involved, please contact hello@ourwave.org.

What are the benefits of partnering with Our Wave?

Our Wave is an interdisciplinary team, specializing in trauma-informed online survivor engagement, data security, platform design, data analysis, and website programming. With our mission to promote survivor healing and support the survivor experience, Our Wave can: 1) provide valuable expertise to advance the technological abilities of relevant organization's host sites, 2) serve as a consultant on technology-focused grant applications, 3) create a way to aggregate stories from the survivors you serve which can be used for research, grant applications, advocacy, and a way to build community, 4) can provide survivor education and trainings about healing, the power of story telling, and how to appropriately respond to trauma disclosures.

What is the cost to partner with Our Wave?



Our Wave is free to partner with for 501c(3) non-profit organizations. If the request requires a substantial technological lift, Our Wave may need a small fee to cover staff effort, but this is negotiated on a case by case basis. Services for for profit organizations are done on a sliding scale to cover operating costs and staff effort.

What is required of Our Wave partners?

Requirements of Our Wave partners vary depending on services requested. For the most part, Our Wave handles platform management, and the most important role for our partners is to promote the Our Wave organization through their channels and promote subsequent products developed by the Our Wave team to ensure they are used by those you serve.

