



Tips for Communicating with the Media (Press Releases)

Your scientific paper was press released: now what? Journalists are likely to reach you by email or phone with follow-up questions. If you have not dealt with reporters before, the tips on this short guide may come in handy.

Before the interview: Prepare your message

- Have two or three key points about your research ready to communicate
- Prepare concise, simple quotes you would like to use to help communicate your message
- Prepare graphics (photographs, videos, etc.) or other supporting material to give to the journalist, if you think they will help make your research more appealing
- Promptly return any calls or emails journalists send you: they may give up on covering your research if you don't, as they are almost always on tight deadlines

During the interview: Keep it simple

- Be conversational and speak at a level a 15 year old would understand: assume your audience knows nothing about your research
- Avoid jargon and speak clearly and simply: everyday terms, examples and analogies will help get your message across
- Take your time to think about a clear answer and accurately explain your message, and don't be afraid to say "we simply don't know", if that's the case
- Focus on your message: if led outside your line of expertise during the interview, redirect the journalist back to the main points of your research
- Keep your answers brief and allow the journalist to interrupt you
- If being interviewed on TV, maintain good eye contact and voice projection
- Above all, be enthusiastic and passionate about your work and convey why your research is meaningful to you

After the interview: Follow up

- Offer to do an accuracy check, but don't be offended if the journalist says you can't see the article prior to publication: the rigid media deadlines often don't allow enough time for this
- Offer a polite correction to the journalist if the story contained a mistake
- A compliment never hurts: if you like the story, tell the report or their editor

Adapted from AGU's <http://sharingscience.agu.org/inform-news/> by EGU Media and Communications Manager Bárbara Ferreira. For more information, please contact Bárbara at media@egu.eu.