



Practical Tips for Working With Your Organization's Communications/Public Affairs Office

Purpose	This tool provides tips for working with your organization's communications and/or public affairs team to effectively engage with the media.
Format	This tool offers seven tips to consider when working with your organization's communications and/or public affairs office.
Audience	This tool is primarily designed for researchers from the Model Systems that are funded by the National Institutes on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). It can be adapted by other NIDILRR grantees and the general public.



Practical Tips for Working With Your Organization's Communications/Public Affairs Office

1. Introduce Yourself

Meet with your communications or public affairs team. Establish a working relationship and get to know them. Inform them about the things your program or research team is working on, so that they are knowledgeable about any research findings or program activities before they are published.

2. Be Understanding

Recognize that an organization's communication resources may be limited. You and your communications or public affairs liaison may need to establish media relations priorities as they pertain to your research or program.

3. Train for Engaging With the Media

Inquire with your communications or public affairs office about receiving media training to prepare you for interviews with members of the media.

4. Inquire With Your Communications or Public Affairs Office

Talk to your communications or public affairs liaison about what makes a good story and what kind of information they need to pitch a story idea to a particular type of media.

5. Collaborate With Your Communications or Public Affairs Office

Try to work collaboratively with your communications or public affairs team to reduce technical jargon when they are developing press releases, fact sheets, and other media materials about your research or program outcomes.

6. Inform Your Communications or Public Affairs Office of any Media Inquiries

Notify your communications or public affairs team when you receive an inquiry or interact with a reporter. The team will ensure proper attribution, request notification of publish/air date, and propose other story ideas.

7. Update Your Information

Keep your biography/profile updated, so reporters who check it are getting relevant, up-to-date information. Contact your communications or public affairs office for any assistance.

8. Become Familiar With Your Organization's Own Media Channels

Inquire with your communications or public affairs team about your organization's social media channels, websites, blogs, and newsletters.