

How to Write a Press Release

Here are the basic rules you should follow when preparing and sending out a press release:

- * Write it only when you have the news that you want to offer fast to a big number of media
- * Write it in the same format and structure as a news article. Often media will publish it as it is, without further editing.
- * Write in third person. Example: a release issued by the MISA would say: —MISA today announced a project to improve gender coverage in media.
- * Have a catchy headline. Do not be legalistic – try to be intriguing.
- * Use the pyramid form: the title and the first paragraph should tell the main news. Other important information is in the second, and a quote in the third paragraph.
- * End with a blurb about the organization issuing the release.
- * In the first paragraph, answer the five —W questions: Who, What, When, Where, and Why/How?
- * Add a quote by your organization's director, chief researcher, donor, or a respectable third party which validates the project
- * Use double spacing and do not write more than two pages
- * Enclose fact sheets and backgrounders for background, additional information
- * Your release should have dateline, strong headline, and your contacts (name, phone, email) for those who would like to get further information or an interview
- * Use simple, understandable language, not academic or bureaucratic jargon.
- * Write in short sentences, similar to these we have here.
- * After you send out the release, make a round of calls to the reporters. Ask if they got it, if they understand it, and if they need additional information. Do not ask if they will publish it.