

## Press Release Guidelines

A press release is a document sent to selected members of the media or posted on a press release distribution website to highlight something that an organization or publication believes may be newsworthy. Press releases will focus on summarizing the main findings of a journal article (mostly primary research, but occasionally other article formats such as reviews) in an engaging and accessible way that will appeal to a range of journalists. The release will include quotes from at least one author and often an additional expert or representative from the journal, as well as a link to the article. The main aim of producing such a release is to gain publicity for the journal and the authors of the article in question by achieving as broad a coverage as possible in the general and scientific press.

### How do I know if a paper is suitable for a press release?

There are a number of factors that contribute to whether a specific article is suitable for a press release. To be suitable, a journal article should do one or more of the following:

- Feature new or significant findings in the field of study
- Be of interest to a broad readership
- Include research that sheds a new or alternate outlook on research that has previously received news coverage
- Feature a topic that has recently been covered in the media, e.g. genome editing, synthetic biology or emerging diseases such as Zika
- Have a publication date that coincides with an anniversary or date of interest e.g. an article on gender medicine that coincides with International Women's Day
- Include research that is in the public interest, e.g. addressing issues such as pregnancy testing, IVF, or antimicrobial resistance
- Feature a call to action or a definitive statement of change

The most important thing to remember when considering whether a paper may be suitable for a press release is that the research should include some sort of 'hook' or key point of interest both for a potential news reader and the journalist who receives/views the release. It should be possible to summarise this 'hook' in a sentence.

### What stops a paper from being press released?

Certain factors will mean that a paper is unlikely to be press released.

These include:

- Previous publication in any form (e.g. a transcript) – only articles that have never been published before will be press released
- A press release has been prepared or sent out by another organization regarding the research (we would not issue a separate release, although given prior warning would be happy to consider collaboration on a joint release)
- The research does not fit one of the above suitability categories
- The paper discusses an interesting topic, but does not advance the field with novel findings, does not propose any definite 'call to action', or is not applicable to a broad enough audience
- A paper on a similar topic has recently been published and press released

### **What is the process?**

If you are an editor or a prospective author for one of the Portland Press journals and you feel an upcoming paper (either your own research or someone else's) is worthy of a press release, please do get in touch with the [editorial department](#). Our press team will then assess the paper and if satisfied will liaise with the author/s and the production team to agree a mutually convenient embargo date. The release will then be produced and circulated to all stakeholders (authors, author institutions/organizations, funders, etc) for comment. It will then be sent out under embargo to appropriate journalists and uploaded to the press release distribution website EurekaAlert (<https://www.eurekaalert.org/>). The author/s will be required to provide contact details and availability during the embargo period to ensure any interview requests that come in can be dealt with in a timely manner.

### **Embargo Policy**

Once an embargo relating to a paper that is being press released has been set, it should be noted that the content should not be discussed or publicized externally in any way prior to the official publication date. Selected journalists receive press releases under embargo with the strict understanding that any subsequent coverage can only be published/released after the official publication date.