

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AUSTRALIA'S SCIENCE MEETS PARLIAMENT Top Tips: Getting Science into the Media

So, you've made a ground-breaking discovery that may have far-reaching implications...but only if you can distil this information and reach the right audiences. This 'Top Tips' cheat sheet will help to get your story published.

What Will Help My Story Get Chosen?

- **It needs to be *new*.** Inherent in the word 'news' itself is the word 'new'. Your story needs to be fresh. Promoting a new angle, breakthrough, finding, statistic is key to meeting the media imperative for stories to break new ground.
- **Think about your audience.** Ask yourself: who do I want to share this information with and why is it relevant to them? Also consider, who is affected by this information? How could I reach them and what media are they most likely to consume?
- **Pitch to the right platform.** There are so many options for outlets outside the 7pm news. For example, you could try contacting podcasts, radio, newspaper and journal producers. Don't limit yourself!
- **Be aware of the news cycle.** Journalists will prioritise stories related to other big stories in the news cycle. Hitch your story to that wagon. Also be prepared to push back your pitch if the news cycle is too crowded with other huge stories.
- **Plan your media release.** You don't need to prepare a media release in 24 hours. Some stories take months of ongoing conversations with news outlets, especially for large events. This long-term interaction with the media will help build rapport as well as foster a more positive and productive relationship.
- **Reach out.** Are you still wondering how to first get in contact? Three easy options for you to consider are personally contacting the journalist or news network, asking your organisation's media team for help pitching, and getting yourself on the experts lists put out by the Australian Science Media Centre.

What Makes A Good Interviewee?

- **Preparation.** Not everyone is a great public speaker, but you are an authority in your field - but it's easy to talk about topics we are passionate about. Test your pitch on family and friends, outside the area of expertise, to ensure they understand your key messages.
- **Clarity and conciseness.** If you plan on broadcasting to an audience that has limited knowledge on the topic, you need to be prepared to lose specificity. This will mean dropping the jargon and technical terms, but more importantly, you may be tasked with discussing the broader context your story is related to, rather than the conceptual intricacies.
- **Make yourself available.** Give journalists your mobile number and be available rapidly for comment. Some of the biggest audiences are for weekend broadcast and papers - so be prepared to do weekend media on a big story. Be active on social media so journalists can follow your expert analysis. Have an up-to-date bio on the web highlighting your media experience, areas of expertise and contact details in clear, compelling, plain language.