



Guideline for research-related public relations work

March 2021

Dear Researchers,

The media-friendly and public presentation of research activities within the framework of funded projects is explicitly required by all funding sources at the federal, state, and EU levels. In addition, it is an important criterion in the approval of follow-up proposals. Public relations work increases the visibility and reputation of the institutes as well as the researchers; studies indicate a positive impact on the citation rate. The University of Stuttgart, too, aims to become ever more visible as a nationally and internationally outstanding research university.

In this guideline, you will learn how to effectively manage your public relations activities and how the University Communications Office (HKom) can support you in the process.

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What are the requirements on the part of the project sponsors? (Selection)

Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) / Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi)

1. A notification of funding approval usually includes the call for active
2. public relations work via the university's own channels (websites, press mailing list, social media) as well as notes on logo use (do not apply to press releases).
3. The socially relevant (planned) goals of the project as well as the effects on Germany as a business location are to be highlighted.

You should indicate the funding agency / grant authority, the funding program, and the project number!

German Research Foundation (DFG)

1. It is also possible to request funds for public relations, "if the measures go beyond the usual activities of a university press office"; new communication formats are also eligible.

2. The DFG does its own public relations work for decisions on Collaborative Research Centers (SFB, SFB/TR), Research Training Groups (GRK), Priority Programs (SPP), and large-scale equipment funding. Project-specific public relations work by the university should be carried out very promptly.
3. In all public relations activities, the funding provided by the DFG must be mentioned explicitly and in a prominent position.

ERC

1. The Plan for the Exploitation and Dissemination of Results (PEDR) should also include communication beyond the scientific community.
2. The following is mandatory:
 - a) Creation of a project homepage
 - b) A reference to EU funding in all public relations activities
 - c) Reports on a regular basis (project development and completion) - including a report for the general public

Which occasions are suitable for research-related public relations?

1. Project start / project completion
2. When interesting interim results are available, especially if these are in the context of topics that are currently being discussed in public
3. Inventions, patents
4. Acquisition of exceptional experimental equipment
5. Search for study participants
6. Outstanding symposia / conferences
7. Creation of videos / coverage in major science programs
8. Distinguished awards

What are the key channels provided by the University Communications Office?

1. Advice on how to create a project website
2. Press releases / research news
3. [The Science Information Service \(idw\)](#) (German web portal for science journalists, with good subject-specific selection options)
4. Its equivalent at the international level: [EurekAlert](#)
5. [Expert Service](#) of the University of Stuttgart
6. The [forschung leben](#) magazine of the University of Stuttgart (published twice a year, print and online)
7. Target group-specific news streams on the university's central website and on the website for employees
8. Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn)
9. Youtube channel for videos about popular-science events such as Science Day, Kids' University, and more

We will be happy to advise you on the appropriate measures

What are the steps to effective research reporting?

Step 1: Initial information from University Communications:

Please use the form [Announcement of a topic](#) or send an email to hkom@hkom.uni-stuttgart.de

(Brief description of the project or event with the main details / key data, summary of the project proposal if applicable, references to visuals / videos)

You can notify Hkom of long-term topics as part of the query about the topics of the year. We send this query to all institutes by email at the end of the year.

Step 2: Coordination and preparation of specific communication measures:

On the basis of the initial information, Hkom advises on the choice of appropriate communication measures and channels. Depending on the agreed format, the following additional information may be required:

1. An easy-to-comprehend German-language description of the research project as well as its objectives and approaches, using examples (e.g. typical problem, applications) if possible.
 - a) Word file
 - b) Text length: 2,500 - 4,000 characters
 - c) Main heading: approx. 40 characters
 - d) Subline: up to 100 characters
 - e) Lead text with the central message: up to 400 characters
2. 2-5 images including a short (!) caption and indication of source, jpg files, not included in the Word document (With a resolution of 300 dpi at a print width of 15 cm for landscape format or 10 cm for portrait format.)
3. Links to videos, podcasts, animations, etc. if available
4. Contact persons + contact information for technical queries (If there are several project partners, please agree on 1-2 "spokespersons".)
5. For publications, specify the publication data and link to URL
6. If necessary, an English translation of the finished text (this can also be commissioned by HKom)
7. For third-party images, the consent of the copyright holder

Characters including spaces, sample texts see <http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/hkom/presseservice/pressemitteilungen/index.html>

Step 3: Creation of texts and selection of images

1. Based on the information input, HKom creates a draft text that is designed for journalistic purposes. This text will be sent to you for review and, if necessary, coordination with partners. Hkom selects suitable images / photos and, if applicable, videos.

Step 4: Distribution to the different channels

1. Once approved, HKom will send the announcement to the appropriate distributors and university communication channels.
2. Texts and images are also available to the institutes for their own communication activities (e.g. the institute's homepage, specialist media).

Step 5: Documentation

In final reports, and especially in requests for an extension / additional funding, many project sponsors require an overview of the communication measures taken as well as their impact. The following resources are available for this purpose:

1. Daily press review of the University of Stuttgart, licenses are held by the offices of the dean (no long-term archiving)
2. Figures on page views and dwell time for selected information on the university's homepage (upon request, HKom)
3. Monitoring by the institutes, e.g. via Google Alert

What other support options are available?

At the University of Stuttgart:

1. [Continuing education and further training for employees](#) (such as website content creation)
2. [Coordination of Scientific Further Education \(KWW\)](#)
3. [Language Center](#) (such as writing workshops)

External institutions:

1. [National Institute for Science Communication \(NaWik\)](#):
Comprehensive range of seminars on science communication, free videos on blogs and social media
2. [Portal Wissenschaftskommunikation.de](#)
Tips and guidelines for communicating researchers, examples of best practice

Further information and contact:

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University Communications Office

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<https://www.beschaefigte.uni-stuttgart.de/uni-services/oeffentlichkeitsarbeit/>