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## Get media coverage for your event

**Make sure you utilise local media as much as possible as this is a great source of publicity for your events, and in raising the profile of Refugee Week.**

**In some cases this is easier said than done, so below are some guidelines on how to work with the media.**

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### **Aim for coverage of your event in your local newspapers and local radio and possibly regional television.**

- Prepare a list of media contacts and try and build a relationship with them in advance of your event, but always remember you need to have a story to offer them. Newspapers and magazines often list their contact details in the first few pages, or you could try looking at websites for details. Your local library should also be able to help you find out this information.
- If a journalist comes to your event, make sure somebody is assigned to look after them and help them speak to the right people.
- Write to the letters pages of local papers - see below for how to write letters to your local newspaper about your event.

[The Media Trust has some great tips on generating local media coverage](#)

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### **Tips on dealing with the media**

- Be prepared. Think about what you want to say in advance and be brief because journalists are often busy, and remember that when you are speaking to a journalist everything you say could be attributed to you and your organisation.
  - Be clear about what your event is going to involve and who it is aimed at. Think about what key messages you are trying to get across through your event.
  - If refugees or asylum seekers have agreed to talk to journalists about their experiences, ensure that they are properly briefed and know what to expect. Discuss the implications with them. They may want to remain anonymous rather than use their real name, as it is possible that identifying themselves may put them at risk
  - Keep a record of all media contact and copies of press cuttings of your event.
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### **How to write a press release**

- Ensure the news release has a local angle but don't forget to mention that it is part of the national Refugee Week. Include the Refugee Week logo where possible (available as a download on the website).
- Keep the release clear and simple. Use headed notepaper and the Refugee Week logo, and keep it to one or two sides of A4 at the most. Put a short headline at the top and date it. Remember to include all the important information about your event: the five 'W's - what, when, where, why and who. Include a quote in the release if you can, but keep it short and relevant.
- Put a contact name and telephone number at the bottom of the release and ensure someone is available to deal with journalists' inquiries.
- Check what the deadline is for submitting a press release or listings notice to your local newspaper, which will probably vary depending on whether it is daily or

- weekly. Make sure you send your information to the right person, even if this means phoning first to check the correct name and fax number/address.
- Send the news release in 7-10 days in advance to your press contacts and other local publications such as faith newsletters and school newspapers. Keep a note of who you have sent it to. Follow it up a couple of days later with a phone-call to see if they are interested in covering your event.
  - If you think your event will make a good photograph, include a note to picture editors, saying when, where and what photos can be taken of. You may want to organise your own photographer so you can send pictures to the local newspaper if they do not send a photographer.
  - Try and involve a celebrity in your event or your local MP. Write and tell them how you would like them to be involved and if they can attend, make sure you include this information in the press release. Try and get a quote from them about why they are supporting the event that you can also use in the press release. If they do attend, make sure somebody is assigned to look after them, and don't forget to thank them afterwards.

### [TEMPLATE REFUGEE WEEK PRESS RELEASE](#)

Use this template as a guide to writing a press release about your Refugee Week event, and email it to your local press.

[The Media Trust also has a great guide for writing a news release](#)

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#### **How to arrange radio and TV interviews**

- When a radio or TV journalist rings up and wants to do an interview, find out as much as possible about what they want before you agree to do it. Ask if the interview will be live or pre-recorded. Live interviews are broadcast as you do it and you have to get it right first time. They cannot be edited like pre-recorded interviews.
- Think about what you want to say before the interview and practice. Have about three or four key points to get across. If you are doing a radio interview you can write these on a card and have this with you.
- Ask what programme the interview is for, will it be used in a news programme, or are you being asked to take part in a discussion or phone-in? What questions do they want to ask you? Who else will be interviewed? How long is the interview?

[Check out this guide to giving an interview with the media](#)

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#### **Giving Interviews**

Whether preparing for an interview yourself, or briefing a spokesperson on the best way to handle them, here are some top tips for getting it right:

- Ask the journalist what they will be asking about in advance
  - Learn the questions, and learn your answers
  - Try and think of a "soundbite" – a short and snappy key message they will use if short on time.
  - Be prepared to be asked awkward or unexpected questions, and think of ways to deal with these, or how you can turn these questions around.
  - Practice, practice, practice
  - Always remember, you probably know more than they do!
  - Think about what you want to say and make sure you say it.
  - Remember to talk directly to the interviewer
  - Listeners probably like the presenter, so be nice to them. Never be aggressive!
  - A face to face interview is much better than the phone, so request this if possible.
  - Live interviews are generally better than recorded as it can't be edited down, so try to arrange this.
  - Try to avoid saying 'erm' – it is better to say nothing. Silence is thoughtful. Umming and erming doesn't sound good.
  - If you can't answer a question, explain why. Never say 'No comment' – it looks like you have something to hide.
  - Listen to your interviews again (really painful, but necessary) and learn from them
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#### **How to write letters to your local newspaper**

- Try writing a letter to your local newspaper about your event and what Refugee Week is all about. Remember to include all the relevant details about the event and include a telephone number for further information.
- Include your name, your organisation and your daytime telephone number on your letter and write 'For Publication' at the top. Send it to the letters editor.
- Keep it brief and to the point. If it is too long it will be edited down.

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