

How and Why to Promote Your Research

As researchers, you make huge strides in advancing essential knowledge. Your achievements can play a role in saving lives and improving the way we live. However, more than one million scientific articles are published each year, and that number is rising. So it's increasingly important for you to find ways to make your accomplishments stand out.

Sharing your research with a wider audience can make you more visible in your field. Greater visibility will enhance your reputation and the impact of your research, which is increasingly important in obtaining extramural funding.

One of the best ways to generate awareness of compelling research is through **media relations** — sharing your research with media to reach a broader, more diverse audience. This includes everything from medical and specialty trade publications to consumer media such as daily newspapers, local television and news radio.

If you're ready to share your research, here are some tips to help maximize reach and success.

Step 1: Alert the Keck Media Relations Team about Upcoming Research

- Alert the Keck Medicine of USC media relations team **as soon as your paper/study is accepted into a journal or conference program** (usually a few months in advance of presentation or publication).
- With sufficient time, the media relations team will consider the research and its likely media interest, and will approach media in advance (with stories held until presentation or publication date).
- Please note that not all research shared with the media relations team will warrant media relations. The following are some criteria that increase the potential for a media relations push from the Keck team:
 - *The paper or presentation is original research.*
 - *The first or corresponding author is from Keck.*
 - *The topic has consumer appeal and potential for consumer or specialized media pick-up.*
 - *The findings have significant impact to people in your field.*

Step 2: Once Your Research is Selected for a Media Relations Push

- The media relations team will work aggressively to secure media coverage on your behalf — this may include securing media interviews — and will provide a recap report of placements.
- The media relations team will contact the journal office or conference organizers to confirm embargo policies if the research is under embargo.
- We will ask you to be available for interviews, to provide the team with the best way to reach you during your media relations push and to respond to all media relations team requests in a timely manner.
- We will ask you to provide the award numbers for grants that supported the work and, if relevant, to provide us with supplemental materials related to your research (infographic, photos, etc.).
- Please inform us if the research involved contribution from LAC+USC so we can acknowledge appropriately.

Step 3: Conducting Media Interviews and General Interview Tips

- Please make sure the media relations team is aware of any interviews, as sometimes media will reach out to the researcher directly.
- Once an interview has been secured, make sure you know the reporter, publication/program, interview format and audience, so that you're fully prepared. Generally, the media team will provide this information, but please contact us if any additional information is needed.
- Know your goal for the interview. Based on your goal, draft a few brief message points in advance, detailing key points you want to get across during your interview.
- Review your key message points prior to the interview and be sure you get these points across at the very start. Repeat your key points throughout the interview, as appropriate.
- Speak in headlines — offer your conclusion first, briefly and directly, and later back it up with facts/proof points.
- As appropriate, include your department or home institution in your answers, e.g., “Keck School of Medicine of USC” or “Keck Medicine of USC.”
- When speaking with a consumer publication (non-medical/science newspaper, magazine, television, radio station), use everyday language — nothing overly technical — and keep in mind the average reader digests science information at an eighth-grade level.
- Don't oversell the promises of the research with any predictions.
- Never say anything you don't want to see in print or on camera; stay positive.
- If asked about a topic that's beyond your expertise or something you don't want to discuss, please deflect your answer back to a positive message. For example, you can use transition phrases such as:
 - What I can tell you is ...
 - I can comment about ...

If you have any questions regarding media relations, or would like to share news of upcoming research, please contact the appropriate communications colleague:

Keck Medicine of USC Media Relations handles clinical research and innovations, professional conference support, KSOM events/news and crisis communications:

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