



speaking

for

science



The **American Chemical Society** PR Guidebook ©

Communicating the relevance of chemistry to the general public

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Available online at www.acs.org/lsprr

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About the guide

The American Chemical Society tagline, **Chemistry for Life®**, reflects the importance of our science to all people. To help communicate to the public the significance and relevance of what we do, it's important that we speak with one voice. This guidebook is intended to help you and your section or division do that and in the process, to put a human face on chemistry.

What it is. This guide provides tips, templates, and tools designed to help you generate positive publicity about your section's or division's activities and involvement with the local community. It offers examples of publicity opportunities that your section or division can pursue, messages for target audiences, and insights on working with the media. Included are numerous templates that you can adapt for your publicity initiatives.

In addition to providing a broad overview of public relations and publicity, this guide also has templates and information specific to National Chemistry Week (NCW), Chemists Celebrate Earth Day (CCED), ACS Tour Speakers, and section/division awards.

PR or publicity? Often you will hear “public relations” and “publicity” used interchangeably. In actual fact, publicity is generally considered a part of a larger public relations effort. In addition to publicity, PR may include government relations, media relations, fundraising, image management, and anticipating and interpreting public opinion and attitudes, to mention but a few.

For the most part, when it comes to public relations, ACS local sections and divisions typically focus on getting the media to promote and cover their events; in short, generating publicity. However, being successful at getting publicity involves other aspects of public relations such as planning, establishing a dialogue with reporters and community leaders, identifying target audiences, and perhaps even seeking synergistic PR partnerships with other organizations.

This guide provides tips, templates, and tools designed to help you generate positive publicity about your section's or division's activities and involvement with the local community.

Why it's important. For many people, just the thought of having anything to do with public relations can be intimidating. But it doesn't need to be. By following the guidelines in this booklet, you will learn how to:

- Identify activities of your section/division that are of interest to the community
- Work with the media
- Focus your publicity efforts and limit your time commitment
- Speak with one voice by incorporating specific messages into your materials

Positive publicity for your section/division can produce pride among your members. It could be the incentive for them to get more involved with activities. Maybe it will encourage a chemist who isn't an ACS member to give us a try. It might be the catalyst for a youngster to study chemistry. On a larger scale, collectively, grassroots publicity by our nationwide network of ACS sections/divisions can help bring a much broader focus on the contributions of chemistry and chemists to society.

How to use this guide. Public Relations (PR) Chairs can use this booklet to help plan and carry out publicity and other public relations activities. If your section/division does not have a PR chair, it is highly recommended that one be appointed. The guide can be valuable in determining what activities to publicize. It should be a central resource for your PR efforts.

Resources. The ACS has several online resources to help with PR-related activities and community outreach. Additionally, there are offices at ACS headquarters that can provide guidance and answer questions. See the Resources for PR Chairs section at the end of this guide.

Roles and responsibilities for PR Chairs

What they are. An overarching goal of the PR Chair should be to showcase the significance of chemistry and the contributions of chemists by publicizing their section's/division's various activities.

This goal directly supports a key ACS strategy of demonstrating the value of chemistry to the public by enlisting member-volunteers to enhance the public's awareness of the contributions that chemistry makes to society and the quality of life.

While sections/divisions may have PR expectations and community activities that are unique, following are some core responsibilities for PR Chairs and Committees.

- Overall coordination of publicity initiatives (National Chemistry Week, Chemists Celebrate Earth Day, Science Cafes, new officer announcements, awards, etc.) to avoid duplication of efforts

Note: *Coordination is not meant to imply that all publicity should be done by one person or even one committee. Many sections/divisions have*

several different people and committees handling NCW, CCED, and other large outreach efforts. In many of these situations, the PR Chair's primary job may be to serve as the PR advisor and ensure the consistency of all the publicity materials and its distribution to the media.

- Maintain a media contact list
- Write and issue press releases, media advisories, fact sheets, etc.
- Coordinate placement of paid and nonpaid advertisements and announcements in the media
- Serve as the primary point of contact for reporters and respond to media inquiries as appropriate (*see section on media inquiries*)
- Develop PR plans
- Contact with other PR chairs to exchange information and ideas and coordinate efforts
- Report on the section's/division's PR activities
- Recruit volunteers to assist with PR

Why PR is important. “Perception is reality.” As scientists, we know this is not a totally accurate statement. Reality is based on observations and experiments—empirical data—not perception. But for many people, how they perceive others has a dramatic influence on what they believe is reality.

Public relations professionals understand this and use this knowledge to help shape opinions. That doesn't mean you have to be a “spin doctor” or be loose with the facts to create a positive impression of chemists and chemistry. We make many meaningful, positive contributions to society. All we need to do is create opportunities to tell people about these benefits in a way that's relevant to them.

How important is it to create a favorable image of our science? Among other things, it can help:

- Attract more students to study chemistry.
- Encourage lawmakers and their constituencies to support research funding.
- Make people aware of the contributions of chemists and chemistry and the necessity of chemistry research to our country's economic growth and national security.
- Instill a renewed sense of pride among members.

Who should handle PR. Given the importance of creating a favorable public image of chemistry and chemists, it's essential that the person handling a section's/division's public relations duties be enthusiastic and outgoing. Good interpersonal skills are a must. So is a willingness to learn how the media works and how to most effectively interact with reporters. It's also very useful to know how to be persistent without being argumentative.

PR planning. The best advice for publicizing a section/division event is to plan ahead. Having a PR plan for the event will help ensure that your public relations activities are focused and efficient. Otherwise, it can be easy to get off-message, forget critical steps and deadlines, and end up spending more time than you need trying to publicize the event. A PR plan can be as simple or as complex as you want to make it. Whichever approach you take, there are a few essential questions you need to answer when developing your PR Plan.

We make many meaningful, positive contributions to society. All we need to do is create opportunities to tell people about these benefits in a way that's relevant to them.

Similar to basic journalism writing (discussed later in this guidebook: “Know your media and what they want”), you should ask five basic questions. In journalism, they are known as the five W’s: What, Why, Who, Where, When.

- **What** – What will you publicize? [the event]
- **Why** – Why do you want to publicize it? [the PR goal]
- **Who** – Who do you want to reach with your publicity? [target audience(s)]
- **Where** – Where, or how best, can you reach your target audience(s)? [tactics]
- **When** – When do you need to do certain things? [PR timeline]

After the event is over, you should ask one more question:

- **How** – How did your publicity efforts turn out? [metrics]

By assessing what went well and what could use improvement, you can revise your PR planning for future events.

Setting up your PR team. The size of your Public Relations team depends on the number of outreach activities the section/division undertakes and the willingness of members to volunteer to help with publicity efforts.

Regardless of whether your section/division PR effort involves one or several members, one specific person should be appointed by the section/division as the PR chair.

How much time does it take? A survey of Local Section PR Chairs found that, on average, a PR Chair spends about 4 hours a month handling public relations. Certainly, this will vary from section to section and division to division, especially at certain times of the year, such as during National Chemistry Week. The fact that a section/division may have numerous public activities going on throughout the year usually means more time will need to be devoted to PR. Likewise, initially it will take more time to establish a PR program if your section/division does not have one in place.

What do I have to say, how do I say it, and who do I say it to?

Topics of interest to your community.

People are interested in knowing what is going on in their communities. Reporters and editors at local media outlets know this and welcome information about activities and events that involve and interest their readers, viewers, and listeners.

There are numerous outreach activities that ACS sections undertake that are designed for local community involvement:

- National Chemistry Week
- Chemists Celebrate Earth Day
- Chemistry Olympiad
- Section awards for members, teachers, and students
- Tour speakers
- Science Cafés

Likewise, ACS divisions may take part in some of these types of activities, as well as others specific to their areas of scientific interest.

Be relevant. Your outreach efforts need to be meaningful to members of the public. They need to know how chemistry is relevant to them, how it affects their well-being. Programs such as National Chemistry Week and Chemists Celebrate Earth Day are wonderful opportunities to reach kids, parents, teachers, and others in your community with positive messages about the contributions chemistry makes to their lives.

You can do that by demonstrating and explaining the many roles that chemistry and chemists have in improving people's lives:

- Developing new drugs to fight diseases
- Creating new types of materials to help prevent depletion of precious natural resources
- Finding ways to make alternative clean energy a reality

The list of ways that chemists help society is practically unlimited.

Your outreach efforts need to be meaningful to members of the public. They need to know how chemistry is relevant to them, how it affects their well-being.

Target audiences. Identifying who you want to reach with your publicity efforts is essential. Knowing your target audience(s) will help you decide the best way to reach them and also help you create materials that are relevant to the audience(s).

In many cases, the materials you issue will be published in local newspapers and carried on broadcast stations in your area. However, the media is not a specific target audience. The media is simply a “vehicle” you can use to reach your target audience(s).

Granted, you need to understand and be responsive to the needs and expectations of reporters and editors if you want them to carry your materials, but your goal should be to reach a specific audience(s) in your community.

Target audiences can range from the all-inclusive “general public” to more specific sub-sets, such as teachers, students, parents, legislators, etc. In some cases, your section/division members and potential members could be a target audience.

Branding and messages. One of the key elements to successful public relations, as well as marketing, is consistency and repetition of specific key message points. To have the best chance at enhancing the image of chemists and chemistry, it is imperative that all of us speak with a common voice and purpose.

Message points are short concise statements or thoughts that can be easily incorporated into

publicity products and other materials. For ACS, our messages are things we want the public to know about chemists, chemistry, and the American Chemical Society.

In general, a *brand* is what an organization wants people to think of when they hear its name (or product). Simply put, it’s the image you want to project to others.

Messages support the brand.

ACS brand: Chemistry for Life®. The American Chemical Society has adopted a brand that is reflected in the tagline: “Chemistry for Life®.” This tagline is how we would like people to think of us when they see or hear our name. Chemistry for Life® reflects the importance of our science to all people. We encourage you to support and embrace Chemistry for Life®. By using the tagline in our communications we can help build recognition in the wider public and communicate with a unanimous voice to spread positive news about chemistry and the benefits it brings to the world.

Examples of how to use the tagline are included in the *Templates, Timelines, and Examples* section.

You do not need to include the tagline after every mention of ACS in the body of your news releases, media advisories, etc., only where the American Chemical Society name, or ACS, is most conspicuous, such as in the letterhead.

ACS message points. The message points you should include in your publicity materials need to be short and not detract from the event you are trying to publicize. Lengthy messages can sound too much like “preaching” to audiences and can have a negative effect.

Following are some message points that you should include, whenever possible, for target audience(s) you are trying to reach. As you’ll see, a few of the messages could be appropriate for several audiences, not just the audience under which they are listed. You will need to decide

which message(s) are best suited for your target audience(s).

Also included are examples of one-sentence “follow-ons” that you might use or adapt to help support the message. You might also develop your own follow-on sentences.

Message points and follow-on explanations and examples are particularly useful to have on-hand and use if you are interviewed by a reporter about a section/division event or activity.

TARGET AUDIENCE**MESSAGE POINT****General Public****Chemists improve the world. Chemistry supports everyone.**

Chemists make vital contributions to the economy through innovation and improving existing technologies.

Chemistry is the basis for many new product developments, from cosmetics, food, and sports equipment to medicine, fuels, and computers.

Chemists developed and introduced green chemistry processes to help protect the environment. www.acs.org/greenchemistry

TARGET AUDIENCE

MESSAGE POINT

Teachers, Students,
Parents

**ACS supports chemistry education at all levels.
Chemists make a difference.
ACS can help inspire youngsters to become chemists.**

ACS provides numerous classroom resources for teachers.

ACS has programs for high school chemistry clubs, summer research opportunities for students, and college planning guides.

- ACS ChemClub www.acs.org/chemclub
- Project SEED (for economically disadvantaged high school students) www.acs.org/projectseed
- [Experience Opportunities in Chemistry](#)
- Learn about undergraduate research, internships, co-ops, study abroad, and service learning programs.
- [College Planning](#)

ACS offers teacher training programs, textbooks, and workshops.

- [Courses and Workshops](#)
Find courses and workshops on ACS high school and college chemistry textbooks, advanced high school chemistry, and inquiry-based scientific investigations for grades K-8.
- [Education Publications](#)

TARGET AUDIENCE

MESSAGE POINT

**Teachers, Students,
Parents**
(continued)

ACS community programs bring scientists and children together to do hands-on science activities. [Community Outreach](#)

Studying chemistry can lead to many exciting careers and opportunities to change the world, from developing new medicines to being an astronaut. www.acs.org/globalchallenges and [What Chemists Do](#)

ACS has resources so that parents and children can do hands-on science activities. [Science for Kids](#) and in Spanish [Ciencia para Chicos](#)

**Policy makers and
opinion leaders**

**ACS is a leading world authority on the chemical sciences.
ACS is a catalyst for global communication among scientists.**

The ACS Science and the Congress Project provides briefings for Members of Congress to improve mutual understanding between policy makers and chemists. www.acs.org/science_congress

The ACS vision—“Improving people’s lives through the transforming power of chemistry”—fully complements the ACS mission, which is “to advance the broader chemistry enterprise and its practitioners for the benefit of Earth and its people.”

TARGET AUDIENCE

MESSAGE POINT

ACS members and potential members

**ACS has an extensive world-class knowledge base.
ACS is the world's leading chemistry network.**

The ACS Leadership Development System has programs and training courses designed to help advance the careers of chemists. www.acs.org/leaderdevelopment

ACS maintains a huge international database of job openings in the chemical sciences. www.acs.org/careers

CAS (Chemical Abstracts Service), a major division of the ACS, provides the world's most comprehensive databases of research in chemistry and related sciences. www.cas.org

The ACS Legislative Action Network is an electronic grassroots program that provides background and position statements on issues of interest to chemists to help them voice their opinions to legislators. www.acs.org/olga

The more than 163,000 members of the ACS represent much of the world's expertise in the chemical sciences.

Know your media and what they want

There are numerous ways to communicate your section's/division's activities to the public. Some of the common tried-and-true staples that members of the media most often receive and expect from organizations include:

- Press releases
- Fact sheets
- Media advisories
- Public service announcements (PSAs)

No matter which you use, *always include a contact name(s) and telephone number(s)* so reporters know who to call if they have questions.

Press release. This is a short article written in a style similar to a news story you read in a newspaper. Press releases are intended to give a reporter or editor enough information about an event so they can decide whether to publish a story about it or perhaps even send someone to cover the event. Examples of press releases are included in the *Templates, Timelines, and Examples* section.

If you ask 10 people to write a press release about the same event, you will get 10 different versions. Everyone has a different way of writing and phrasing. Some will be engaging; some won't. Others will overload you with trivia; others will omit important facts.

Press releases can be pre- or post-event; that is, they can be about an upcoming activity or they can be an account of a recent event.

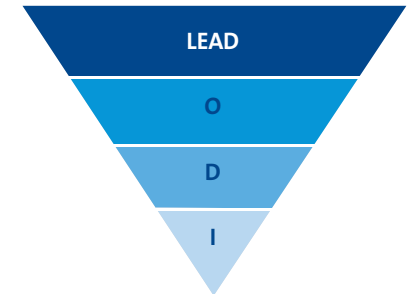
There is no one best way to write releases, but there are a few guidelines you should follow when writing them.

■ **Five W's: Who, What, Where, When, Why.**

These are key elements to include in all your publicity materials, whether it is a press release, fact sheet, media advisory, PSA, or if you are simply telling someone about an event. Occasionally, "How" is important to include. The 5 W's (and sometimes How) are the questions that reporters always ask when writing a story. So should you.

- **Lead (lede) paragraph.** The first paragraph of your release is your lead (lêd), sometimes spelled lede by writers. There are many types of leads that can be used to start off a release. One that includes the 5 W's, or most of them, is known as a summary lead—it concisely summarizes the story. Whether a summary or some other type of lead, it should be reasonably short and grab the reader's interest enough so they will read the rest of the story. This is sometimes called “hooking” the reader.
- **Order of Descending Importance (ODI).** After the lead comes the body of the release. This is where you give amplifying details about your event. Present them in order of descending importance—the most important near the top, the less important near the end.
- **Inverted Pyramid.** Putting the important 5 W's early in your release and then expanding on them in order of descending importance is called the inverted pyramid style of journalism writing. Newspaper reporters have used this method of writing for years. They understand that many of their readers skim or only read the first few paragraphs of a story. Reporters often read press releases the same way. Using the inverted pyramid approach puts the most important facts about your event right at the beginning where they expect to see them.

- **KISS.** Keep it short and simple! Media outlets receive hundreds of press releases from organizations like ours that want coverage and publicity for their events. Reporters and editors simply do not have time to read through lengthy submissions. Try to keep your releases to one side of a page, either 1 1/2- or double-spaced.
- **Personal profile.** In some cases, you can improve the appeal of your releases by featuring a person rather than an event. This often helps your release read more like a story than a report and brings a personal touch that draws in the reader. It's good to include quotes in this type of release. A personal profile approach sometimes requires a little more space to properly develop the story and profile and still include some information about the event; however, you should still try to keep the release as short as possible. Never exceed two pages. See the Personal Profile Press Release example in the Awards section of the *Templates, Timelines, and Examples*.



Present details about your event in order of descending importance—the most important near the top, the less important near the end.

- **Hometown release.** Another type of release to consider is the “hometown” release. Local media, especially in smaller markets, like to report on the accomplishments of people from their area. In some cases newspapers will carry these “hometowners,” as they are often called, even if the person has been gone from the area for several years. You also can modify the “hometown” release to target the university from which the person graduated. See the Hometown Press Release example in the Awards section of the *Templates, Timelines, and Examples*.

A final thought about press releases: Generally, reporters prefer to write their own stories rather than publish a press release verbatim. Although some community papers occasionally do use a release as is, don’t call a reporter and complain if they don’t print your release word-for-word. If they get the facts wrong, that’s a different matter; then you should call and tactfully request that they correct the error.

Fact sheet. There are many different formats for fact sheets. Nonetheless, they all have the same purpose: to present facts, background, and data in a brief easy-to-follow manner.

Unlike press releases, which present information in a style similar to a newspaper article, fact

sheets generally layout the information in more of a capsulated or bulleted manner. One capsule or bullet might be a short few sentences about the purpose of the outreach activity your section/division wants to publicize; another capsule could talk about the scope of the ACS program behind the activity; a third capsule may offer information about the ACS and your section/division.

Fact sheets can be single-spaced. Many fact sheets are designed as hand-outs for the public, as well as reporters. Examples of fact sheets are shown in the *Templates, Timelines, and Examples* section.

Media advisory. This is one of the simplest of publicity materials to prepare. Like a pre-event press release, it can be used to alert reporters to an upcoming activity of interest to the local community. Media advisories should not be used to report events that already have occurred.

Media advisories often are used to invite reporters to attend and cover an event. If there will be photo or interview opportunities at the event, mention that in the media advisory. Similar to releases, media advisories need to include the 5 W’s. In fact, as you will see in the *Template, Timelines, and Examples* section, the media advisory contains little other information. It is intended to be brief and to the point. Media Advisories should be 1 1/2- or double-spaced.

Public service announcement (PSA). Think of PSAs as free advertising, with a twist. Rather than commercials or ads that are designed to sell a product or service, PSAs are messages that help raise awareness on topics and activities that are in the public interest.

Broadcast stations are required to serve the public interest. One way they can do this is by offering free air time to organizations—typically non-profits—to run their PSAs.

Stations are not required by law to give free air time, but many of them do so as a way of demonstrating that they are serving the public interest.

PSAs are not restricted to broadcast stations. Print PSAs also are carried in newspapers and magazines, on billboards and public transit vehicles, and as banners on some websites. Camera-ready print PSAs for National Chemistry Week are available at www.acs.org/ncw.

Scripts for broadcast PSAs should be 1 1/2- or double-spaced. Often, PSA broadcast scripts are typed in all caps, but it is acceptable to do them in upper and lower case. Broadcast PSAs vary in length; the most common are 60, 30, 20, 15, and 10 seconds. Ask your local station contact if they have a preference for style and length.

It is not always possible to include all 5 W's or specific message points in PSAs, especially

shorter ones for broadcast. You will need to determine the most important information to include.

The *Templates, Timelines, and Examples* section has examples of broadcast PSAs designed for use by radio stations.

Media list. Once you have written your press releases, fact sheets, media advisories, and other publicity materials, you need to send them out. But where do you send them? Newspapers and radio and TV stations are obvious choices, but there's another question you need to ask: *Who* do you send them to at these media outlets? Send your material to the wrong person and you greatly diminish your chances of getting information about your event published or broadcast (see box).

In your media list, you might include brief comments about your contacts. Perhaps you want to note if a person always takes or returns your calls or routinely uses your materials. Another entry might describe if they prefer to receive your material via e-mail, postal mail, or fax. You may want to note if someone on your media list has not used any of the materials you have sent. However, you should not remove them from your list. If they don't use your materials, try to find out why they don't use them. It may be something simple that you can change so they will use them next time.

What should a media list include?

A media list is one of the most important documents that a PR Chair can develop. It should include the:

- News Outlet name
- Name of specific contact person(s) at the outlet
- Contact's business and fax telephone numbers
- Contact's e-mail address
- News beat of the contact person, e.g.—education, science, health, food, business, community affairs, etc.
- Deadline—when the person needs to have the information in order to publish or broadcast it

Most reporters will want to receive your press releases by email, but it is best to ask.

A media list does not necessarily need to be restricted to the media. It can be as inclusive as you want. Some media lists are very expansive and include contacts for public information officers at local businesses, schools, government agencies, etc. Such contacts can be extremely valuable in helping you spread the word about your outreach activities.

How do you go about developing a media list? There are several ways:

- Ask the public relations office at a local chemical company or university.
- Call your local newspaper, radio or television station and ask who you should contact with news about your section's/division's activities.
- Contact the PR Chair at another section/division and see how they developed their media list.
- Get advice from the ACS Office of Public Affairs (800-227-5558, ext. 4381 or 202-872-4381)

Media inquiries. Reporters might call a section's or division's PR Chair for a variety of reasons. They simply may want more information about a section/division activity. Perhaps they are looking for a chemist who can discuss some new research finding. Maybe a reporter is covering an accident involving chemicals and needs someone who can explain how the chemicals might react. Or the reporter might be writing a story about the local chemical industry and wants a chemist to comment.

Some of these types of questions are okay for you or your members to answer; some are not. Here are a few general guidelines.

- **Section/Division events.** *Highly desirable for designated spokespersons to answer on behalf of the section/division.* Media questions about outreach activities, such as NCW, Chemists Celebrate Earth Day, Science Cafes, ACS tour speakers, awards, etc., are inquiries that need to be handled promptly. In all the publicity materials you distribute to the media, be sure to include contact information for the person(s) designated to handle media inquiries about these activities.

- **Research findings.** *Okay for members to answer as individual chemists, but not as official spokespersons for ACS.* Often, reporters need a chemist who is willing to help explain the nuances or significance of a particular area of research. Some PR chairs survey their membership and identify those who are willing to discuss specific areas of research with reporters. It is important to remind members who agree to answer reporters' questions about research that they are speaking only for themselves, not for all other chemists, section or division members, or ACS.
- **Accidents.** *Okay for section members to answer as individual chemists, but not on behalf of the section/division, or ACS. **Caution advised.*** Similar to research findings, reporters often need someone who can explain the potential hazards associated with an accident involving chemicals. Often, media inquiries about accidents are best referred to the companies or organizations involved, local health authorities or first responders, or appropriate government agencies.
- **Local chemical industry. Not appropriate** *for sections/divisions to be involved in answering.* These types of questions are best left to the companies and their spokespeople.

Words of advice. If you or members of your section/division do respond to media inquiries, keep these points in mind:

- It is each member's responsibility to ensure that their employer does not have policies that prohibit them from talking to reporters.
- Reporters work under strict deadlines. Be prompt to respond, even if it is to say you don't have an answer to their question.
- Be sure your answer is accurate, concise, and specific to the question. Adding a lot of extraneous details can eat up time—time that could be better spent answering other questions the reporter might have.
- But do be prepared to say something you want to communicate about the local section/division, chemists, or chemistry. Just make sure it fits the situation and is brief.
- Do not speak "off the record." Don't say anything you would not want to be reported.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, say so. If appropriate, offer to find out the answer and get back to the reporter. Above all, don't fake it!
- There is no rule that you have to answer every question. Some are simply not relevant to the topic or even advisable to respond to.

Other ways to get out the word. In addition to press releases, fact sheets, media advisories, public service announcements, and answering media inquiries, there are many other communication avenues available to publicize section/division activities. Examples include:

- Direct mail
- Pamphlets and flyers
- Banners
- Paid advertising (some media outlets have discounted rates for non-profit organizations)
- Social networks, e.g.—ACS Network, FaceBook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.
- PR partnerships with other organizations
- Proclamations from government officials
- Exhibits
- Laboratory tours (or some other place of interest that involves chemistry)

There are two other ways to reach members of the community that, although not typically used for publicity purposes, may be useful to PR Chairs in specific circumstances:

- Letter to the editor
- Op-ed

These two communication tools are generally used to comment on a current topic of interest, not to publicize an event.

■ **Letter to the editor.** These usually relate to an article that a newspaper (or magazine) has recently published. A letter to the editor should be brief and to the point. Look at the letters that your local newspaper has printed and you will get an idea of what gets an editor's attention. Not all letters that are sent to a newspaper get published; those that do are usually edited for space and style considerations.

■ **Op-ed.** An op-ed is typically carried *opposite* the editorial page; thus, the name. Newspapers have guidelines for op-eds, such as length, topic, timeliness, and relevancy to its readers. Some larger newspapers even require that an op-ed be exclusive; in other words, not submitted to other papers. A key factor in determining if an op-ed will be published is who wrote it. An op-ed authored by a well-known person or someone with considerable expertise in the topic area is likely to receive more consideration from the newspaper's editors than a less-known or less-qualified person. Check with your local newspaper for its requirements and guidelines.

Note: *An ACS member who writes an op-ed or a letter to the editor should express their opinions only as an individual chemist, not as a spokesperson for the American Chemical Society, unless specifically authorized by the ACS.*

Templates, Timelines, and Examples

This section contains several templates and examples of press releases, fact sheets, media advisories, public service announcements, and PR plans and timelines for:

- National Chemistry Week
- Chemists Celebrate Earth Day
- Tour Speakers
- Awards/New Officers

Feel free to utilize the templates and examples in whatever way works best for you and your section/division:

- Use as is and simply insert information pertinent to your section
- Adapt to fit your needs
- Use as a reference example and write your own

National Chemistry Week. NCW is considered by many as the American Chemical Society's premier annual outreach activity. It is celebrated each year during the fourth week of October. During the designated week, chemists around the country conduct myriad public outreach activities, all with a single purpose: to raise public awareness of the importance of chemistry in everyday life.

Nearly all ACS sections have NCW coordinators and committees that develop ideas for special public events and activities to be held during National Chemistry Week. A list of NCW Coordinators and a Community Activities Event Locator are available at: www.acs.org/ncw. The Event Locator includes activities for National Chemistry Week, Chemists Celebrate Earth Day, and other outreach initiatives of sections around the country. You should be sure to submit your section's events and contacts for inclusion on the Event Locator.

Chemists Celebrate Earth Day. CCED is a wonderful opportunity to show the positive contributions that chemists make toward a more sustainable planet. Each year, on April 22, ACS members nationwide take part in CCED in support of different topics and themes. Check out the ACS Community Activities Event Locator at: www.acs.org/ncw for outreach ideas. The Event Locator includes activities for CCED, NCW, and other outreach initiatives of sections around the country. Be sure to submit your section's CCED events and contacts for inclusion on the Event Locator.

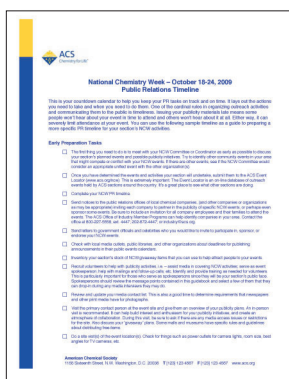
Tour speaker. Having a noted expert or well-known person speak at one of your section meetings is a splendid chance to draw people to your meeting—members, potential members, students, community leaders, and even reporters. Since 1936, the ACS Speaker Service has provided people to speak at section meetings on a variety of topics—technical and non-technical. Some of the talks, especially those that are non-technical, could be of interest to reporters and the public in your community.

Awards/New Officers and Divisions. Sections and divisions frequently honor their members and others with awards and various forms of recognition for a variety of achievements. These are excellent opportunities to let the public know about someone's accomplishments and contributions. Awards and elections are opportunities to develop hometown and personal profile releases. If possible, include a photo of the person being featured in your release.

ChemLuminary Awards. Each year, ACS presents awards to sections, divisions, and individuals for outstanding volunteer efforts in community outreach and promoting career opportunities in chemistry. The annual ChemLuminary Awards often are of interest to local media in the geographic area where the section is located. In the case of divisions, the media in the area where the division chair or program chair are located might be willing to carry a short announcement of the award, provided you localize your release by highlighting the local tie of the Chair or Program Chair. Don't forget to also send your release to your section/division newsletter editor and website administrator. If your section/division has a Facebook page, you could include it on there, as well as on other websites that may be appropriate. See the ChemLuminary Press Release example in the Awards section of the *Templates, Timelines, and Examples*.

National Chemistry Week materials

The following National Chemistry Week materials are available for download by clicking on the links below:



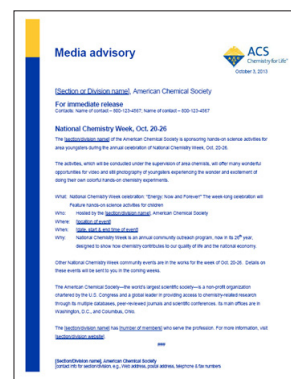
PR Timeline



Press Release: Hands-on activities



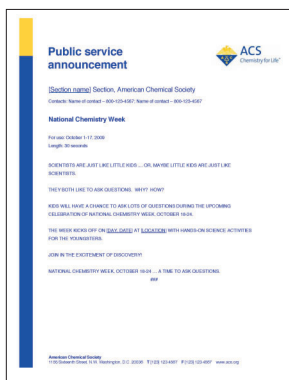
Press Release: Poem contest



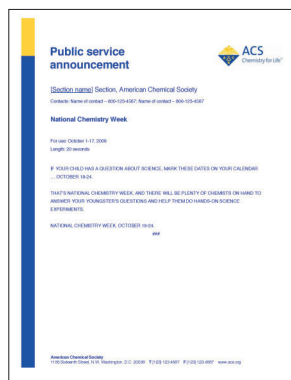
Media Advisory



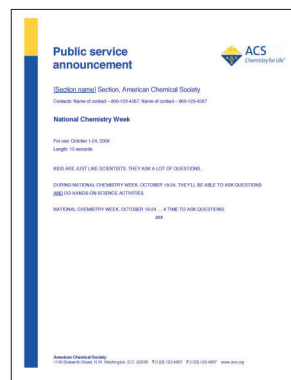
Fact Sheet



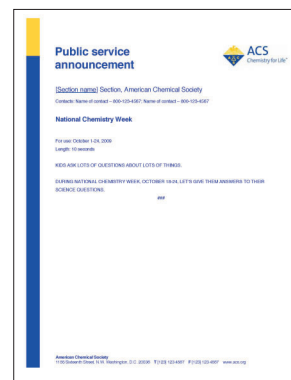
PSA: 30 seconds



PSA: 20 seconds



PSA: 15 seconds



PSA: 10 seconds

Tour speaker materials

The following tour speaker materials are available for download by clicking on the links below:

PR Timeline

Press Release: Forensic expert discusses TV crime

Media Advisory

Fact Sheet

PSA: 60 seconds

PSA: 30 seconds

Award/New Officer presentation materials

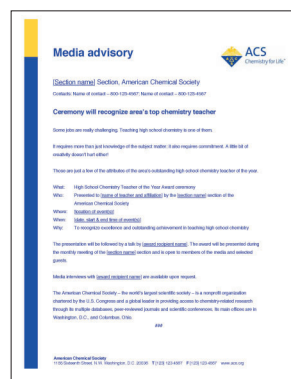
The following Award/New Officer materials are available for download by clicking on the links below:



Press Release: Member honored



Press Release: ChemLuminary



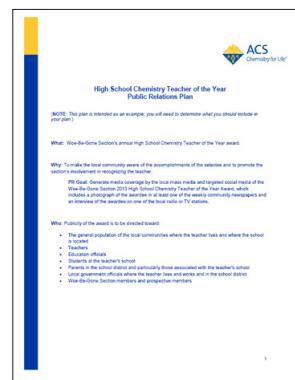
Media Advisory: Teacher of the Year



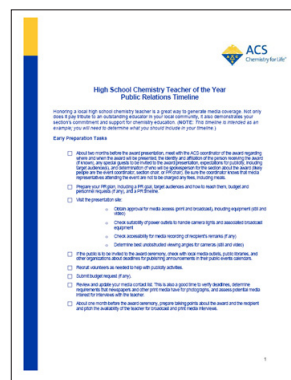
Hometown Release: Chair election



Personal Profile Release: Teacher of the Year



PR Plan Sample Template: Teacher of the Year



PR Timeline: Teacher of the Year

Resources for PR Chairs

ACS Public Relations

- Online version of ACS Guidebook to Public Relations
www.acs.org/lspr
- ACS Local Section Public Relations page
www.acs.org/lspr
- Office of Public Affairs
800-227-5558, ext. 4381
or 202-872-4381

ACS Community Outreach Programs and Products

- ACS Office of Local Section Activities
olsa@acs.org
- ACS Community Outreach
www.acs.org/outreach
- National Chemistry Week
www.acs.org/ncw
- Chemists Celebrate Earth Day
www.acs.org/earthday

- Salutes to Excellence
www.acs.org/salutes
- ACS Online Store
www.acs.org/store

Other

- ACS Legislative Action Network
www.acs.org/policy
[click on “Act 4 Chemistry”]
- ACS Chemistry Olympiad
www.acs.org/olympiad
- ACS Science For Kids
www.acs.org/kids
- ACS Local Sections
(multiple links to local section websites and local section activities)
www.acs.org/localsections
- ACS Network (professional networking platform; requires registration)
www.acs.org/network

- “Getting Your Message On the Air” (a how-to guide for getting PSAs broadcast by the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association)
<http://www.wi-broadcasters.org/wba/index.php/for-the-public/psas/>
- Send free electronic invitations to your section events. www.evite.com
- “Public Relations Kit for Dummies” by Eric Yaverbaum with Bob Bly; published by IDG Books (a comprehensive reference book on public relations for PR novices and veterans; includes tips on writing, staging publicity events, things to avoid, and many other helpful PR insights.)