

Issuing a Press Release

After working with a Public Information Officer at AGU or another institution or organization to determine that your work or research results are newsworthy, it's time to issue a press release!

What is a press release?

A press release is a 1 to 2-page synopsis of your newsworthy work or research results, written for a journalist-based audience. After learning about your work and/or reading your research paper, a Public Information Officer (PIO) will usually interview you, and often a second source not involved with the project who can provide perspective, to write the press release.

Press releases emphasize both scientific accuracy and appeal to a non-technical reader. The PIO writing your press release will work with you to ensure that the facts are correct and that they are digestible to readers of varying, or no scientific expertise.

Once the press release is finished, PIOs will distribute it to journalists, often via e-mail or as a paper copy handed out at a scientific meeting. Press releases are also usually posted online on the website of the institution distributing it.

What happens after a press release is distributed?

Journalists who are interested in writing or producing a story about the press release will contact the PIO who sent out the press release who will in turn contact you to set up an in-person meeting or a phone interview. If your contact information was included on the press release, the journalist might contact you directly.

What is an embargo?

An embargo is the date and time that a journalist is allowed to print, broadcast or post a story on specific results. Embargo times can correspond to the date and time you are giving a talk about your work, your journal paper is published, or you are presenting results at a press conference.

AGU does not normally embargo its press releases or the relevant journal papers, but some other institutions and publishers do.

I have news to share!

Your work or research results will be newsworthy to journalists if they are of interest to the general public (media consumers). If you believe your work or results are newsworthy, contact a PIO at AGU or your home institution. They will work with you to determine for sure whether your work is newsworthy, and if so, to craft a press release to publicize it. You may contact the AGU Public Information Office by e-mailing news@agu.org.