

Reaching out to Community Groups - Guidelines

- **Identify a community partner.** Libraries, local service organizations (Kiwanis, rotary), business associations, churches, activities groups (gardening clubs, hikers, skiers, etc.), and museums are just some of the many groups that may already host lecture series or be interested in working with you.

Community partner(s):

- **Know your goals.** What do you want your audience to get out of this talk? Do you have a call to action for them?

Your goals:

- **Know their goals.** What would your audience like to get out of this presentation? Do they enjoy many opportunities for discussion or debate amongst themselves? Do they simply want to be better informed on an issue? Do they wish to connect your expertise to a larger question or topic?

Their goals:

- **Know your audience.** What are the demographics of this group? What is the average level of education and in what fields? How familiar will the members of this group be with scientific terms or methods?

Audience:

- **Know your audience's interests.** **Your specific research is unlikely to be interesting to your audience unless it has a direct influence on their lives.** Instead, ask yourself, "What aspect of my field of study will be most relevant to this group? What kinds of questions will they have? How does my research or discipline relate to important or timely events in my community?" For example:

- Is it hurricane season and do you study storm surge?
- Are you a soil scientist in a community with many farmers or avid gardeners?
- Can you talk about space weather in the context of smartphones?

Negative example: If your work involves modeling extremely specific aspects of the weather or climate system, *don't talk about that*. Instead, talk more broadly about what climate or weather research helps us understand, do, or prepare for in this town, city, or region.

What aspects of your research or overall discipline will be of interest?

- Remember your connection.** You may not be a member of the organization you're reaching out to, but you are a part of the same larger community, and you share many of the same concerns and interests as those in the group. Make sure that's clear to you and to the group when you talk with them.

- Know your format.** Is this group looking for a lecturer or someone to moderate a discussion, be part of a panel, or answer their questions?

Format:

- Emphasize relevance.** Explain the importance of your topic in relation to local interests, health, or investments.

Relevant connections: