

Guidelines for promoting and communicating your research

Hi! This is Håkan Soold, your communications officer, with a few notes on how we can proceed if you need help with promoting and communicating your research. If possible, I'd be happy if you'd be able to contact me as soon as you've got notice of a paper that is scheduled for publication.

The first step you need to take when reaching out with new research results is to think about its news values, that is whether the research is of interest to people outside the research community. Try to formulate for yourself what the news is and which target group(s) you think might be interested in and benefit from your research results. See more about newsworthiness under the heading "news criteria" below.

I am well aware that you as a researcher have limited time and that it can be hard to prioritize the effort of trying to reach out with your research to a broader audience. However, there is much to be gained by doing that. And as your communicator, I am happy to help. Below I list three different options as for how we can proceed if I shall write a news story about your research.

A basis for an article or press release about your research – three different options

In order for me to help you promoting and communicating your research results, be it an article or a press release, I would need some kind of document that summarizes the most important things that need to be communicated. Something that would be a basis for a news story or a press release. I have three different options as for how we can achieve that, where you as a researcher can choose the one that suits you best, the one that you feel most comfortable with:

- 1) I will interview you on site at the institution. It usually takes half an hour up to an hour.
- 2) I will interview you via Zoom or telephone. It also usually takes half an hour up to an hour.
- 3) You write a short popular science summary of the main findings of your research and send it to me – which after that will be complemented with a few interview questions from me, on site at the institution, via Zoom, phone or email.

Then I write the article.

Regardless of which option you choose, the following points are good to keep in mind:

- You will of course, if you wish, receive my questions before the interview – so you can prepare yourself for the interview. This, of course, also goes for option 3 above.
- You will of course get a chance to read and approve the article before it is published.
- The news criteria I list below are good to keep in mind, whether you choose option 1, 2 or 3.
- Whether you choose option 1, 2 or 3, in order for you to prepare yourself for communicating your research results in a popular way, it's also a good thing if you check the document "Guidelines on writing popular science" also here on the server. In the document I briefly point out the most important things to think about as for popular science communication.

News criteria:

What's the news? Try to formulate a few sentences, and try to put the topic in a context, such as benefits to society.

Which target group(s) might be interested in or benefit from this, in Sweden and/or internationally?

What makes the topic interesting? How can the research results be used? What is the benefit to society? Does it affect people's everyday lives? If so, in what way? Is there anything in the topic that is sensational or unexpected?

Is the topic topical? Is the topic being debated in the public sphere? Has the media already written about the topic, and does your research add to those news stories? Can it be linked to a current event or a particular time of year? Sometimes timing can play a role in reaching out.

How can the research results be explained in a simple way? Think about how you describe the research so that it can be understood by people with no prior knowledge of the subject.

Target groups:

Consider which target group(s) might be interested in, affected by, benefit from the research results. Target groups could be:

- Prospective national students
- Prospective international students
- Current students
- Alumni
- Research funders
- The research community
- Politicians and policy makers
- The media
- The interested general public – and in particular those affected by the topic

These are relatively broad target groups, which means that the news published on our website or as press releases needs to be understandable to a larger group of people. You should not need prior knowledge of the subject to understand the articles.

Share the news about your new research

Do you have a research news that you want to share? Please contact me, Håkan Soold, the department's communications officer, at hakan.soold@su.se.

Please also let us know if you have any pictures, illustrations or videos that could be used in a news story. Good pictures increase the news value. Don't forget to mention who owns the rights to the images and whether there are any special conditions for usage.

Remember to contact us in good time, if possible a few weeks before your scientific article is published. Expect that it normally takes two to three weeks from the first contact until an article can be ready for publication.

When an article is ready, it is published on the department's website, shared on Stockholm University's central website and shared via social media. In some cases, I as a communications

officer send heads ups to journalists and forskning.se about the news.

If I, as a communicator, consider the news to be particularly interesting, I will first of all advise Stockholm University's central press office of the news.

Welcome to contact me about your research news!

Håkan Söld

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