



## How to give media visibility to Energy projects: tips for an effective communication

The Pressensave media team has produced this document to assist energy project coordinators to better communicate their project and the results of their work to the media. These are some suggestions that can be useful to define the message, target the audience, and write a press release or just preparing a meeting with a journalist.

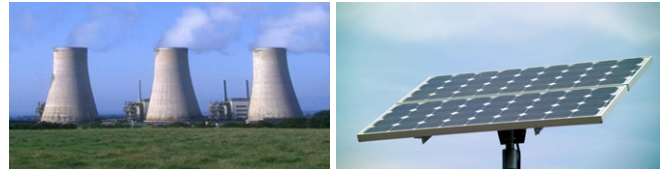
### Tips For an effective communication

#### 1. Define your message

- ✎ Evaluate the project and its results and identify information that could be interesting to the media. Focus on positive achievements and their benefits they bring.
- ✎ The message must establish a connection to the real world. It must show the application in daily life. Give concrete examples.
- ✎ The message could connect your project to the news agenda (e.g. if the project is about saving energy you can connect it to the situation of the security of energy supply in Europe and the conflict with energy suppliers like Russia).
- ✎ Bear in mind that country is a variable and the enthusiasm for a topic may change depending the country.
- ✎ Explain the timing of the project.
- ✎ Link your message to other projects. Make references to other stakeholders or institutions. It will give you more credibility among the media.
- ✎ Focus on technology (concrete, useful, everyday life, interesting) instead of Science (theoretical, difficult and not interesting enough).
- ✎ Provide supporting documents, best practices, technical studies, impact assessments, forecasts or other kinds of material.

#### 2. Target the audience

- ✎ Evaluate the target audience and select the media that you consider that might be interested in receiving your message.
- ✎ Identify specialised press which is dealing with energy issues.
- ✎ Identify specific journalists who are dealing with energy issues in the mainstream media.
- ✎ Adapt your message to your audience. Be as clear as possible. Do not presume that they will understand you. Explain all technical terms.
- ✎ Apart from traditional media such as TV, radio and newspapers, you should also include in your target list important (in terms of readers) but unconventional media – such as free newspapers, company's magazines, newsletters, web magazines and blogs.



### 3. Disseminate your message

Use a press release to communicate to the media (instead of using fax or telephone). A press release is information that is communicated proactively to the media. Journalists will edit (or expand upon) your story to produce a broadcast item or text that they consider to be most appropriate.

#### When writing a press release:

- ✓ Present the results or the important information in the first paragraph. This should answer the six basic questions – who?, what?, why?, when?, where? and how?
- ✓ Find a “catchy title”. The headline must be short and express the most important information. A good heading is a short heading – two lines is a maximum length.
- ✓ Use “spoken language” and maximum one page text.
- ✓ Provide pictures, diagrams, graphs and figures than can be compared
- ✓ Insert a short description of the project (in a separate paragraph, as you wish).
- ✓ Quote the managers of the projects (when it is really necessary, do not quote excessively).
- ✓ Do not talk about past events unless these are newsworthy.
- ✓ Insert the contact details of the project coordinator and make explicit an embargo or release time.

#### When sending the press release:

- ✓ Target the media.
- ✓ Include contact information.
- ✓ Send all the contacts in blind copy.
- ✓ Indicate clearly that this is a press release or an invitation to a conference.

### 4. Build good relations with the media

**The best way of ensuring the co-operation of journalists** is to establish a relationship of trust based on mutual respect. There is no point in contacting them constantly; sending too many press releases or swamping them with too much documentation. On the other hand, keep them informed when you have genuine news to be sent. Treat the media as partners, not as clients.

**Be proactive.** Do not wait for journalists to contact you. Go to them and anticipate their needs by drawing their attention to key events and particularly interesting developments.

Make yourself available and respond as soon as possible the requests of the journalists. Journalists need the information immediately and the answer must be given in the same day.

### 5. Evaluate results

Evaluate the results of your contact with the media. The most basic measure is the quantitative result – i.e. articles published in the newspapers, specialised press, web magazines, blogs or minutes in a radio or TV programme. More difficult is the qualitative assessment of the resulting of the impact. An article published in a local paper will not reach the same audience as the one published in an international newspaper or broadcast in a national TV. This becomes increasingly problematic when operating at a transnational level. Estimating the level of success will always involve a considerable degree of subjectivity.