



## PITCHING THE MEDIA

Media coverage is a great way to get the word out about a grant that you or your organization have received. Here are five ways to raise the visibility of your grant and the work it enables.

### GET TO KNOW YOUR LOCAL PRESS MARKET

Even before you receive a grant, it is beneficial to develop relationships with local journalists so that when it comes time to send out a press release or pitch a story, your grant has a better chance of getting good coverage.

- **Identify the reporters** and publications that cover local arts, culture, and education as they will be your best bet for garnering press coverage.
- **Reach out** to these reporters, either via twitter or email, when they write a piece that catches your eye.

### ISSUE A PRESS RELEASE UPON RECEIVING THE GRANT

A press release announces the basics of your grant quickly to a group of journalists. Feature the most important information up front—the date, time, and location should all be included in the first paragraph.

- **Mention the funder of the project** (i.e. the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Mellon Foundation, the Whiting Foundation, etc.).
- **Include quotes from the project director** and, if possible, the executive director/president of the organization that speak to the importance of this grant to both the institution and, if applicable, the community.
- If you don't get a response to your press release, it is appropriate to **follow up with the journalist** two to three days after you sent it. When you follow up, make sure you either provide a new bit of information or offer an interview with the project director about the project.

### PITCH A STORY ABOUT THE PROJECT TO A LOCAL JOURNALIST

A pitch is a brief explanation of your project that should make the case for why a journalist should want to cover it. Pitches can, but do not have to, include press releases.

- **Reach out individually to journalists** you already have a relationship with, those who are responsible for assigning pieces, or journalists who have a demonstrated interest in the topic. Whenever possible, offer interviews with participants and/or project leaders.
- Let the journalists know that either they can take pictures/video or that you will provide them with good pictures/video. You are more likely to get after-the-fact coverage if you have good media and good quotes from participants.
- **If you have an existing relationship with a member of the press, use it!** Don't feel that you need to pitch someone new because the person you know only covers politics and this is an education piece. It's okay to say, "I know you don't write about this topic, but I was hoping you could help me pass this story idea along to someone who does."

## TAILOR YOUR PITCH FOR SPECIFIC OUTLETS OR TYPES OF MEDIA

Different outlets require different kinds of media to make a good story. Think in advance about what kinds of media you can offer reporters.

- If you are trying to pitch a television station, **emphasize any good visuals** that could accompany the piece. If you are trying to pitch a radio station, emphasize good audio that could accompany a piece.
- If you don't hear back, **follow up with the journalist** two or three days after the initial pitch. When you do so, make sure to include a new piece of information as this may help to capture the journalist's attention.

## INVITE A JOURNALIST TO AN EVENT ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR GRANT

Whether a reception or community event, consider inviting a member of the press to come and participate. Whenever possible, offer interviews either with participants and/or project leaders.

- Let the journalists know that either they can take pictures/video or that you will provide them with good pictures/video.
- If you don't hear back, **follow up with the journalist** two or three days after the initial invite. When you do so, make sure to include a new piece of information as this may help to capture the journalist's attention.

## FOLLOW UP AFTER YOU RECEIVE COVERAGE

Always remember to reach out and thank the journalist for the coverage.

- **Only issue corrections if there are factual mistakes in the coverage**—names are spelled wrong, a location is incorrect.
- Make sure to follow up with your organization/department/in-house media relations team so that they can also publicize it. **Additionally, please follow up with us! We are happy to push the coverage out on our social media as well.**

## HOW NHA CAN HELP

- We can work with you one-on-one to strategize how and when to invite a member of the press to one of your events.
- We can help you identify local media outlets and reporters in the event that your communications team is unable to help you.

**Reach out to NHA Communications Associate Alex Nowicki at [anowicki@nhalliance.org](mailto:anowicki@nhalliance.org) to learn more.**

