

# How to: Gain Media Interest

## Overview

Getting media coverage is a great way to alert your local representative to what you're up to. It will let them know that their electorate care about the treatment of refugees and are taking action. This can be particularly useful when contacting them for a meeting later on.

It's election time and this is an important issue so it's possible that journalists will be interested in the campaigning you are doing, particularly those who are covering events in your local area.

Your media release might come before your stall, MP meeting or event to let people know it's happening or after the event to show the support from the local community. Consider what is most news-worthy in your particular case.

## Some tips for engaging journalists

- Where possible, identify journalists who have written on this issue in the past, or if not, those who are interested in similar issues or in your community.
- Explain why this is so important; given the timing on the eve of the election, and the importance of this issue in your area. If you are in a marginal seat, stress that refugee policy could be a deciding factor in how people vote.
- Prepare a media release (*see template provided in this pack*).
- Engage a good spokesperson if possible- this might be the head of your institution, a prominent member of your community, or perhaps someone who has had experience as a refugee themselves (please read our guidelines here for working with someone from a refugee background).
- If your media release is to promote the event before it happens, call the journalist to let them know what you're doing, and get their e-mail address to send the release through after you have spoken.
- Call the journalist again the day before your action to follow up and make arrangements if they are planning on attending.
  - If they come, make sure that you are available on your phone in case they need help finding you. Try and make sure other volunteers are covering the other tasks so that you can give them your full attention.
  - If they are not able to attend, offer to send them through a summary and some high-quality images. This is very helpful if they're busy and more likely to get you coverage.
- When you email your release through to them, ask if they can pass it on to anyone else that they think might be interested. Provide your contact details and let them know they can get in touch with any further questions.

# I CHOOSE HUMANE.

## Sample Media Release

Below is a sample media release. In this example, the media release would be sent out the day after a street stall. Feel free to use this as a **template** but remember to **update the parts in green**.

### Date

**Title, e.g. "It's time for change", X community tell local candidates / X town mobilises to support refugees ahead of general election / X University calls for humane treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum**

Members of **(insert name of community)** community are calling on local candidates to support the humane treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum as part of their election platform.

People from the **X community** have mobilised around a progressive platform for refugee and asylum policy, and are asking their local members to do the same. A spokesperson for the group, **insert name**, said that they have been buoyed by the support that they have already received from those in the electorate:

"There has been a shift in public opinion around the treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum" **spokesperson name** said. "We know this from the recent movements to get children off Nauru and to allow people in offshore detention to access urgent medical treatment. In just 2 hours of speaking to people at Saturday's market, we got hundreds of people pledging their support for a humane refugee policy. It's about time our local candidates took a stand on this issue too."

A group of local residents will be meeting with local candidates in the run up to the election to discuss this issue with them and request a commitment to support progressive refugee policy in their election platforms. The group are urging candidates to sign up for the **'Platform for Change'**, a 5-point plan which has been developed by hundreds of people around the country.

For more information, **contact X at X (number) or X (email)**.