

Drafting a press release

Press releases are an effective and generally accepted way of sharing information about an upcoming event / initiative and relevant or important news. The goal is to include as much information as possible so that when the release is disseminated to external media they have enough background to work with to produce their own content independently (they may rely solely on the release for this). Or the media house can use the release as context to develop follow-up questions and produce a possible news article / content that meets their own publication / media outlet's agenda.

Crafting the press release:

- A press release should pique the interest of a journalist / media house with the hope that they'll take further the event / initiative's traction by developing a story around it.
- It's important to equip them with what they need by covering the basics so they have enough to build on.
- The release should answer the 5Ws and H (**who**, **what**, **where**, **when**, **why** - and **how**). This is a basic formula journalists use to gather information - or in this case, that you'll use to ensure you've given them what they need.

See [UCT's Press Releases](#) for reference.

See *FHS-related press releases disseminated to external media by UCT's Media Liaison* off below:

- <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2021-03-03-uct-scientists-fine-tuning-tb-technology-to-understand-transmission>
- <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2021-02-15-uct-scientists-to-commence-phase-one-clinical-trial-of-covid-19-vaccine-candidate>
- <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2020-12-23-uct-medical-school-continues-its-body-donor-programme-despite-covid-19>
- <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2020-12-09-covid-19s-sex-bias-men-more-at-risk-of-requiring-critical-care-1>

If a partner institute requests a boilerplate (About Us) you can submit the below to them:

"The Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine (IDM) is a cross-faculty postgraduate research institute based at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Established in 2004, the IDM aspires to be an international centre of excellence where world-class scientists work together at the interface of the laboratory, clinic, and community to tackle diseases of importance in Africa. Comprising a suite of laboratories and specialised core facilities on the UCT Health Sciences campus and clinical research sites in peri-urban townships around Cape Town and the Western Cape, researchers in the IDM focus on understanding and intervening in tuberculosis (TB), HIV/AIDS, COVID-19, other viral, fungal, parasitic and bacterial diseases, and non-communicable diseases. As a global leader in TB and HIV research, the IDM is a major contributor to the high international standing of UCT in the field of infectious diseases."

Including images in releases:

- Images are an optional extra. It's always helpful for external media who might pick this up to have an image ready for publication.
- Images should be at least 1MB in size and captioned appropriately (max 25 words detailing context about the pic).
- Alternatively, you can source generic image options related to the work / event, or if they have any in their archives or that partnering institutions may be able to offer, that are suitable to run along with the copy.

