



Science & Technology
Facilities Council

An introduction to Science Communication

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**13th Oxford School on Neutron
Scattering – 11 September 2013**

Today

- PUS to PEST
- Why do any of this?
- Science Online
- Science and the media
- Presenting Science



Why communicate?

- Increase public scientific literacy
- Inspire the next generation of scientists!
- Demonstrate why your research should be funded
- Build your profile, and your career
- **It's fun!** Science as part of popular culture



Can be a bit easier now!



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Latest comment

Obesity 4hr 5min ago
How did obesity become such catnip for the news?

Zoe Williams: First thoughts: Obesity is not a cipher for a statement of political philosophy
221 comments

Infectious diseases 1 day ago
Five diseases that are, thankfully, consigned to the past

Richard Sugg: Richard roundworm was just one of the gruesome diseases that killed and maimed the British population through the ages
152 comments

Climate change 4 days ago
Climate change: warm words and cool waters



Science Online

- Blogging Ed Yong, Suzie Sheehy
- Twitter / Facebook / Tumblr
- Youtube Backstage Science
- Podcasts Naked Scientists
- Online games Foldit
- Citizen science Galaxy Zoo



Citizen Science

- Participatory research
- Galaxy Zoo
- Foldit
- Blackawton bees



Think about your message and audience

- What do you want to say?
- Who needs to know?
- What's the best way to tell them?



Engaging with the media

- Media engagement can reach the government, students, research colleagues, school children, your family!
- The media have hours of air-time to fill and pages of news to publish. Strong science stories should be a part of that material.



Getting your story out

- Build up an online presence demonstrating your experience and expertise
- If possible do not use jargon or acronyms – use plain English
- Rehearse your research story
- Use your press office!



Telling your story to the media

- What's the connection between research and people's everyday lives?
- Does your research results that change the way we think about something?
- Unusual/rare samples
- Is it a first / biggest / smallest ...
- Scientists that can talk passionately about their work and not confuse people



Telling your story to the media

The Steam Age meets the Neutron Age as train wheels take the strain

Train carriages in the UK should be spending less time out of service due to wheel stress cracks thanks to a new technique of using neutron diffraction to measure several centimetres into the steel wheels.



Exercise

- Can you tell your story in a 100 words?
- Can you explain it in 30 words?
- Can you turn it in to a 10 word headline?

- Half hour – work in pairs
- Feedback the headline and first 30 words



Help us help you

- Planning is key – Plenty of advance warning will help maximise coverage opportunities.
- Meet us when you have beamtime
- Think about how your story can be told visually with images, animations, film clips...
- Interview availability post paper publication



Good luck!

- Press offices are here to help!
- Your institution, and STFC for ISIS and the ILL
- Best time – after acceptance, before publication!
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