



How to... Promote your event through local media

Local media outlets like newspapers, radio and television frequently seek stories that are engaging and relevant to the local community. The best way to encourage local media to support your activity is to issue a media release.

What is a media release?

A media release is what journalists use to receive information about what's going on in the community. It is a really important tool for community fundraising as, if done well, it has the potential to gain free publicity for your event. As you can imagine, journalists receive many media releases each day, so in order to grab a journalist's attention and leave them wanting to learn more about your fundraiser, you need to be able to write a strong media release.

Writing a media release

Your media release should include the following elements:

- 1. Title:** Media Release
- 2. Date of Issue:** (day, month, year)
- 3. Headline:** Grab the journalist's attention. Keep it short, local and in an active voice.
Example: Mindarie mum goes the distance for the kids at Perth Children's Hospital.
- 4. Tell the story:** Make sure to include the basics – who, what, when, where, why, how. Use simple language and keep the tone upbeat.
*Example: On Sunday June 16 (when) Jane Clare (who) will run the Perth Marathon (what) to give back to Perth Children's Hospital for the help and treatment they provided to her daughter (why).
Now in its 35th year, the Perth Marathon is an annual event organised by the West Australian Marathon Club. The 42 km course will see participants start at Burswood (where) and run close to the Swan River through South Perth, Applecross and other riverside suburbs before reaching the finishing line (how).*
- 5. Use quotes:** Personal quotes or quotes from other noteworthy people such as a Perth Children's Hospital Foundation representative make your release more relevant. Try to use quotes that add clarity or sum up your release in a concise, lively way.
Example: In 2016, Jane's eldest daughter, Bella, spent time in Princess Margaret Hospital with a serious case of pneumonia and a collapsed lung.

"Fortunately, she made a full recovery with the help of the wonderful medical professionals. I will always be grateful for their care and support." Jane explained.

"I have been training for 11 weeks and have set myself a fundraising target of \$10,000."

Perth Children's Hospital Foundation's CEO said the Foundation is extremely grateful to supporter like Jane who help to raise money by taking part in challenging fundraisers.

"Through the dedication and hard work of our supporters we can raise awareness and funds to help children from across our state.

We are indebted to Western Australians who choose us as their charity of choice, and are always looking for more people to jump on board and help us to give kids in hospital the chance to live their healthiest and happiest lives."

- 6. Closing statement:** Include a call to action and be specific.

Example: Locals who would like to support Jane in her efforts to raise money for Perth Children's Hospital Foundation can make a donation to her personalised donation page at http://www.pchf.org.au/jane_clare.

- 7. Contact details:** State who the main contact is and include their direct contact details for both business hours and after-hours. Also include any relevant website and social media URLs. Extend the journalist an invitation to the activity or to a preview event with special access, and/or an opportunity to interview a notable person, and/or a photo opportunity.

- 8. Notes to editor:** This section is optional. If you need to include any extra information that might be relevant, you should do so here, not in the body of the media release. This section may include information about the individual/group organising the event or information about Perth Children's Hospital Foundation.

*Example: About Perth Children's Hospital Foundation
As the main fundraising body for the only dedicated children's hospital in Western Australia, Perth Children's Hospital Foundation is driven by the belief that all children deserve to live their healthiest and happiest lives. All net income raised through the Foundation is made available to the hospital to fund medical equipment, research, expertise, specialist services, capital projects, scholarships and education. Since its establishment as PMH Foundation in 1998, the Foundation has provided more than \$70 million to children's health in WA. To learn more about Perth Children's Hospital Foundation, visit pchf.org.au.*

Top tips to remember

Keep it short! 450 words is a good guide for the body of the media release. Read through what you have written with a critical eye and cut any unnecessary information. Remember, the goal is to persuade journalists to follow-up and feature your story, you do not have to write a full article ready for publication.

Proof read your release! Read it aloud and then have someone else read over it for you.

Issuing your media release

Once you have written your media release, you need to start distributing it to spread the word. Ideally, you should aim to issue your media release four weeks prior to your event.

Remember all media releases or any copy/design mentioning Perth Children's Hospital Foundation must be emailed to sarah.mcnamara@pchf.org.au for approval prior to distribution/production, so make sure you allow yourself enough time.

You can check the 'Contact Us' section on local media websites for information on who to contact and how to get in touch. Local libraries may also have copies of media directories or listings that you can use.

Try phoning the journalist first to introduce yourself and your event. After your phone call, email your media release to the journalist and refer to your phone call in the message. Close the email by asking them to contact you and say you will follow-up with them soon. If you haven't heard from them after five to seven days, make a follow-up phone call.

Successful media releases may result in requests from the media to conduct interviews or take photographs – this is great! However, please be aware that any requests for media visits to the hospital need to be directed to the Foundation. All media visits to the hospital must be authorised by the hospital and escorted by a representative from Perth Children's Hospital Foundation.

Please let us know if you receive interest from media about your activity or if a story about your efforts appears in the media.

