

Dealing with the Media

If asked to be interviewed for a programme - Questions to ask the person who has contacted you?

- Who do you represent? (check their credentials)
- What is the programme?
- What is the topic?
- What angle do you want me to cover? (if you do not feel comfortable with this then don't agree to be interviewed)
- Is it live or will it be pre-recorded? (this makes a difference in terms of how you prepare)
- Who else will be on it? (it's important to know who you will be sharing the stage with)
- Is the interview on the phone or in the studio?
- Can you let me know what the questions will be or the line of questioning being undertaken?

Don't feel pressure to say yes straight away – its ok to say I'll get back to you.

Then do your research on the programme or the journalist that contacted you to see if you like the way they cover issues.

How to do your research on journalists

- Who do they write for and from what political angle?
- Do they have a particular interest area they specialise in?
- Look for evidence of how they have written on a particular topic in the past

Approaching journalists - What journalists are looking for:

- 'New' news – e.g. new discovery
- Topical stories
- Controversy
- Human interest – personal stories/case studies which demonstrate any of the above

Do you have more you can add to make it interesting e.g.?

- facts and figures
- experts that can comment on your issue
- Exclusives – for them only to break the story

If you call or email a journalist keep it short, clear and to the point. Always good to do this before sending a press release.

Remember there are different types of news

- Proactive versus reactive
- Hard and soft news – hard is e.g. earthquake, Grenfell fire, people die. Soft is e.g. launch of a report or poll reveals something interesting.
- Feature – longer lead in – needs a news angle and relies on strong human stories
- Blog or comment piece – opinion piece usually on something topical - Brexit