

Guidelines: Media

Purpose

These guidelines set out guidance and governance of all media engagement on behalf of The Australian National University (ANU), including which staff should engage with media and how the University's media strategy and engagement is managed.

These guidelines reinforce the University's unwavering commitment to academic freedom, maintain and build the University's media profile and protect the University's reputation.

[ANU Media](#) lead and coordinate the University's media engagement.

Scope

These guidelines apply to all ANU staff and students.

Definitions

ANU Media: The team, which is part of the ANU Communications and Engagement Division in the Vice-Chancellor's Portfolio, that leads all media engagement and strategy on behalf of the ANU, as well as media training for academics, media issues management and providing strategic media advice to the University Executive, Deans, Directors and other members of the ANU community.

Media: Mass communication, reporting and publishing across broadcast, print and online outlets and publications.

Media engagement: Promoting ANU work, activities and expertise to media.

Media release: A formal media release or media statement or other content (e.g. ANU news story, *ANU Reporter* article) highlighting ANU research and other activities sent and/or pitched to journalists, media outlets and publications by ANU Media.

Media pitching: Promotion of ANU research and other activities to media outlets and publications by contact with journalists.

Comment: Analysis and insight provided to media based on and related to an ANU researcher's or academic's field of study or research. Also, an official response provided to media on behalf of the University by a delegated authority (Vice-Chancellor, Chancellor or ANU spokesperson).

Spokesperson: An ANU staff member who has been given designated authority to provide comment and responses to media on behalf of the University.

Media training: Training provided to ANU staff and students for the purpose of proactive media engagement, the preparation of media materials (including media releases and op-eds) and providing expert comment to media.

Issues management: Proactive and reactive responses to media interest in the University's activities and which can also have an impact on reputation.

Guidelines

1. As part of the University's unwavering commitment to academic freedom, our academics are free to work with the media, as well as build their own media profile, in their fields of study or research, with support from the ANU media team.
2. Further, as Australia's national university and as part of its unique national mission, ANU has distinct responsibility to shape public debate and thinking for the better, as well as widely communicate how our work improves Australia and the world. One of the most effective ways to do this is through mainstream media. The University, through ANU Media, supports its academics with media engagement.
3. To ensure the enhancement and protection of the University's reputation, as well as maximise media opportunities and maintain our significant media profile, the University's media engagement needs to be consistent and strategic. This work is undertaken and led by ANU Media.
4. ANU Media is the only unit with the mandate to lead media relations on behalf of the University, to issue media releases and alerts about ANU, and to pitch stories to media. The team oversees all media engagement opportunities on behalf of ANU, operates the University's 24/7, 365-day media hotline and maintains the University's expert guide for journalists. The team works with academics to prepare media materials, connect journalists with experts and establish relationships between academics and journalists.
5. No other staff, contractors or partner organisations have the mandate to do this work, although the overarching principle of academic freedom allows all academic staff to discuss their work and expertise with journalists as they see fit.
6. Only the Vice-Chancellor, ANU Media or individual staff who have been specifically delegated authority may provide comment to the media on behalf of the University.
7. All academic staff are encouraged to provide comment to media, including in the form of opinion pieces, under the principles of academic freedom and if they are commenting in their field of expertise and/or on their research.

8. Academic staff are encouraged to make their ANU affiliation clear to journalists to help establish their credentials as an expert in their field, and to help the public understand the role of the national university.
9. All staff and students are free to comment to the media as private citizens and on the basis of free speech, as long as this comment does not contravene any laws or University policies and as long as they make it clear they are not commenting on behalf of ANU.
10. All media releases are to be approved by the Director, ANU Communications and Engagement or Associate Director, Media and Communications.
11. To maximise opportunities for ANU research and activities to get media exposure, ANU Media will only issue media releases or pitch stories that are likely to result in media coverage. Issuing releases that are unlikely to get coverage damages the University's reputation and makes future ANU stories less likely to get coverage.
12. Media releases and alerts from external organisations referencing ANU, its research, teaching and operations must be cleared by the Associate Director, Media and Communications or Director, ANU Communications and Engagement before being issued. Similarly, ANU Media will work with academic staff to ensure partner organisations are aware of ANU media releases that mention them.
13. Academic staff are required to review media releases relating to their research or academic work. Academic staff are responsible for the accuracy of the information provided in the media release. This includes quotes attributed to researchers.
14. All media enquiries directed to professional staff should be forwarded to ANU Media for coordination.
15. ANU Media leads all media training activities for the University and its staff and maintains a database of experts available for media commentary. All ANU academics are free to and encouraged to sign up to the University's expert database for media.
16. Academic staff are encouraged to notify ANU Media of any comment to media, including the form of an opinion piece, to assist with planning, coordination and monitoring, but there is no formal obligation to do so. ANU media is also happy to assist academics with the placement of opinion pieces with media outlets.

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