

COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA

Everyone wants to get the word out about what they're working on. Good content means good communications, and good communications help us spread the word about your creative and impactful work. When taking on a community-engaged initiative, consider these tips and best practices.

MEET THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The Sam Fox School Communications Office should be your starting point for ANY questions or requests related to communications, promotion, and media interaction.

- Stop in or contact the Communications Office (Givens 110) to share information.
- Be prepared with your facts. Helpful information includes: timeline, partners, location, course name and number, descriptions, and funders.
- If your initiative is tied to a course, give Communications a heads up before the semester starts.
- If you are seeking media coverage or want specific types of printed materials, you must connect with Communications at least 1 semester in advance of the start of the project.

SETTING COMMUNICATIONS EXPECTATIONS WITH PARTNERS

Many partners work with the University in hopes of receiving "good press" or something positive they can market to their constituents.

- Discuss expectations at the onset of the partnership. Be sure to ask specific questions about what media exposure your partner would like, and what materials they expect to receive.
- Utilize the [Curriculum Collaboration Project Proposal](#) or a project agreement to establish guidelines. Contact the Office for Socially Engaged Practice for more information.
- Work with Communications, the Office for Socially Engaged Practice, and the University's Public Affairs Office to think about representation of the work, students, and the University.
- Consider copyright ownership and issues related to future use of work produced by students. For more information, review the Blue Page for [Protecting Your Copyright](#).

CAPTURE DETAILS, IMAGES, & CONTENT

Think about how you will document your process and all people involved. The more content (images, proposals, descriptions, etc.) you can provide, the more we can do with it. You may want to share:

- Succinct description of your initiative, including main goals.
- Names and areas of study of student participants.
- Details about community partners.
- Images of work in progress.

SHARE DETAILS, IMAGES, & CONTENT

There are many ways to share the content that you collect. You could:

- Set up a *box.com* folder for your team, and share it with the Office of Socially Engaged Practice and Communications.
- Send your content via email to the Office for Socially Engaged Practice and Communications.
- Speak with Communications about the best way to document your initiative.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Any external media requests or pitches must go through the University's Public Affairs office. The Communications Office can help facilitate communications with WashU Public Affairs.

- Before contacting external media, contact Communications to discuss.
- Understand your partner's interest in external media. Connect with Communications to discuss possibilities.
- If external media is coming to campus for any reason, Public Affairs must be informed. Contact Communications for more information.
- Think of your contacts: local and national blogs can be great channels for getting in touch with a wider audience.

REMEMBER

Seeing your process can be as exciting as the final product. Document what happens along the way through photos, video, and stories. Time-lapse videos, even short ones, can be fun ways to show your work over time.

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MAXIMIZE SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an incredible tool for connecting with audiences inside and outside the University.

- Do not create special pages or accounts for one-off activities or initiatives; use the resources below.
- Create Facebook event pages for specific events via personal account, or work with Communications.
- Utilize hashtags and direct your communication to the main Sam Fox School Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter accounts.
- Work with the Office for Socially Engaged Practice to feature your initiatives on Facebook & Instagram accounts.
- Closed groups or stand-alone events can be beneficial to engaging audiences.
- The best social media is active, engaged, and has regular content updates!

USING LOGOS

Depending on factors such as funding source, affiliation, and partnerships, you may need to include logos and sponsorship credits in your materials. The Communications Office can help you navigate this process, including reviewing materials to make sure they adhere to University standards.

- Review Public Affairs' [Communication Resource](#) for more information about use of the WashU Logo.
- Ask your partner for their most recent logo file, preferably in an .eps format. Confirm any requirements and restrictions for use of their logo.

CONSIDER REPRESENTATION

When working with community partners or clients, consider the representation of individuals, especially minors or those representing marginalized communities or populations. Review the Blue Page [Representing People: Photography & Visuals](#) for more information.

- Confirm that you have permission to use an individual's image, likeness, words, or other representation.
- Minors must have a release signed by their parents for photography or video.
- A general media release is available for your use and/or adaptation. It is strongly recommended for most documentation, and required for documentation involving minors.

CONSIDER LEAD TIME & APPROVALS

Depending on what you like to do, consider how much time is needed to make it happen. The more lead time you provide, the better. Discuss the review process and approvals needed with Communications early on. Consider these timelines:

- At least 10 days advance notice to be included in the School's weekly e-news ([submission form](#)).
- At least 1 month to be included in the Socially Engaged Practice e-news (email samfox-engage@email.wustl.edu to submit).
- At least 5-6 weeks for a press release — requires multiple approvals (discuss with Communications for more information).
- At least 4-6 months for printed materials (discuss with Communications for more information).