



CONNECTED TO THE ISSUES

Why the Media Guide?

When to Use the Media Guide

Introducing ACS' New Media Guide!

Don't get caught off guard—get proactive instead and become a media expert!

For many organizations, our nation's current political climate means it's more important than ever to share your messaging with supporters, policymakers, and the communities you serve. Whether you're looking to get your organization's opinion considered in a public conversation, secure press coverage for a new program or initiative that benefits the community, or respond to an incident, it is crucial to work effectively with the media. ACS' new [Media Guide](#) offers tips and templates to help build strong relationships with the media and amplify your chances of getting good coverage.



Why the Media Guide?

The media landscape of today has changed significantly from just a few short years ago. Traditional independent local news outlets are closing at a rapid pace, replaced with a combination of large corporate news companies that provide less tailored coverage for local consumers, with simultaneous growth in the number of digital outlets that cover a broad range of interests and perspectives. There are varying degrees of news accuracy and journalistic integrity across this spectrum as well. This changing media environment means we can't assume coverage will happen on its own. We must be intentional about knowing who to talk to, how to build trust, and how to share information effectively.

The [Media Guide](#) helps you identify trustworthy media outlets and build productive, mutually beneficial relationships with them. Through consistent use, the Media Guide can help your organization:

- ✓ Amplify its impact
- ✓ Protect its credibility
- ✓ Promote transparency and preparedness
- ✓ Track the impact of your media outreach and engagement

How is the ACS Fund Making a Difference?



Last year, we launched the ACS Fund for Women & Girls, prioritizing young women and girls of color or those with limited income. In this edition of our newsletter, we're featuring the inspiring stories of the first three grantees of The ACS Fund for Women & Girls. Click to learn more about what [Matriots Ohio](#), [Preterm](#), and [Say Yes! Cleveland](#) are doing to improve lives and increase opportunity. Want to be part of the success? [Make your gift today!](#)

Perfect Your Media Response

Prepare for an efficient and effective response to media inquiries using the new [ACS Media Response Protocol Tool](#). This short-and-sweet resource helps you capture and organize contact information for internal media contacts and know what to do when reporters come calling.

12 BEST STEPS TO EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

The guide includes 12 best practices for working with media of any type to help you grab (and keep) the attention of reporters while simultaneously ensuring your public communication reflects your organization's values. These include the following:

1. Incorporating media outreach into a clear communication plan.
2. Developing key messages and keeping them updated.
3. Using the "brother-in-law" test to ensure your messages are easily understood and relevant to key audiences.
4. Identifying the best spokesperson(s) who can deliver your messages to the media with confidence and clarity.
5. Framing a story in a way that highlights the points you want to make and learning how to pivot reporters back toward your frame when their questions stray away from those points.
6. Practicing your message delivery repeatedly to make sure you can always communicate clearly and confidently.
7. Making reporters' jobs easier by checking in with them ahead of time and letting them know what to expect from you in terms of interview, audio, video, or photography opportunities.
8. Creating and distributing a press kit that tells reporters who you are, what you do, why it matters, and why people will care about it.
9. Using clear, factual and accurate language for written outreach, such as letters to the editor, op-eds, media advisories, press release, or responses to online media.
10. Maintaining honesty and integrity with reporters to establish yourself as a credible source.
11. Offering to fact check stories or sections of stories for reporters before they are published.
12. Monitoring and tracking your media coverage to keep your leadership informed and celebrate your successes.

In the Media Guide you'll also find:

- ▶ Tools to use for outreach
- ▶ Guidance and templates for letters to the editor, op-eds, media advisories, and press releases
- ▶ Advice for hosting a press conference
- ▶ Digital media best practice
- ▶ PLUS—a link to the new [ACS Media Monitoring Tracker](#) tool

Check Out the ACS Media Monitoring Tracker

How do you know if your media strategy and outreach are working? Use the new [ACS Media Monitoring Tracker](#). This handy tool allows you to track all coverage—and its impact—in one place. Use it for regular internal reporting and collecting stories to share with board, staff, donors and more. Create your own version in your preferred software [or download our Google Sheets template](#).

When to Use the Media Guide

Use the Media Guide any time your organization wishes to generate coverage or is contacted by media. It includes step-by-step guidance on:

- ▶ Conducting outreach
- ▶ Creating and sharing content
- ▶ Working with non-traditional outlets
- ▶ Handling inquiries
- ▶ Coordinating your response
- ▶ Tracking and responding to coverage

When times are chaotic, it's more important than ever to communicate your mission and value clearly to the right audiences. If you've already established good relationships with the media, you're halfway there. If not, it's never too late to get started. Download the [Media Guide](#) today!

WANT MORE?

Want to learn how communication, strategy development, advocacy, or capacity building can move your organization forward? Need an expert for training sessions or conference presentations?

Contact one of our team members, call toll free at 1-877-372-0166, or visit our website at advocacyandcommunication.org.

Lori McClung, CEO

Scarlett Bouder, President

Lauren Sogor, Vice President

Allison Marker, Senior Strategist

Amber Hill, Executive Administrator

Malissa Bodmann, Strategic Partner

Betsey Russell, Strategic Partner

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Summer 2025



Emotional Intelligence
Leading with Compassion and Insight in Today's Workplace

In today's complex work environment—checklist of diverse teams, remote workers, and constant change—emotional intelligence (EQ) has never been more important. EQ is not just about how well you strategize or execute an initiative. It's about how well you're able to understand and influence the emotions of those around you.

Don't be confused by the term emotional intelligence (EQ). Simply put, it is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions, as well as the emotions and influence the emotions of those around you.

On the very popular and emotional words of Maya Angelou, "We learned that people will forget what you say, people will forget what you do, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

View the full issue online at advocacyandcommunication.org/acs-today/summer-2025/

Spring 2025



Political Activism Made Easy!
ACS has simple ideas (and tools) to make lasting change.

Have you ever seen an injustice and thought, "I should do something about it!"

Well, you can! Become a political activist!

Don't worry, being involved in political activism doesn't need to be a full-time job. Whether it's a rally in the streets, or petition making the rounds online, or simply writing a letter to your elected officials, there are many ways to get involved and stand up for what you believe in and work to make a difference.

But honestly? There are a lot of misconceptions about what political activism looks like. Let's dispel them.

We've got you! ACS is here to demystify political activism and show you how to do it—in your community and beyond!