

PROMOTING YOUR RESEARCH

Status of Women Canada

Promoting Your Research

Now that all the research is compiled, the data is analyzed and the report has been written, how do you ensure that all your hard work doesn't just sit on a shelf? Do you have a plan to promote your research findings? Do you know where to start? In order for your research to become a tool that enhances public debate your report must make its way into as many hands as possible.

- The Policy Research Fund at Status of Women Canada ensures that your report is widely disseminated throughout the federal government.
- Your research report will have been distributed to federal Cabinet Ministers and to relevant government departments.
- Copies of your report are also sent to approximately 300 libraries across the country via the federal government's depository services.
- In addition, Status of Women Canada processes hundreds of requests per year from Canadian libraries asking for copies of research reports.
- Fact sheets about each research report are developed and these fact sheets are widely distributed to our SWC colleagues across the country.
- Your report will be posted on the Status of Women Canada Web site (<http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/>) where it can be easily accessed and downloaded.
- The Status of Women Canada Web site receives thousands of visitors per year who download our published research reports.
- In addition to this distribution and promotion, the Policy Research Fund encourages you to further promote your research findings. The more people who access your research, the greater contribution your research can make to the public policy debate.

Here are some ideas of how you can get your findings out there:

- The Policy Research Fund will send you the fact sheet for your report. Feel free to photocopy this sheet and distribute it as widely as possible. Take copies of the fact sheet with you to any event that you take part in and place a stack of the fact sheets on display tables

- Don't be media shy. Develop a media release about your report (advice on writing a media release and an example of a typical media release are included in this kit) and distribute it widely (a media contact list is included in this kit).
- Contact local media presenting yourself as an expert in the field; offer to speak on local radio or TV on issues relevant to your work. Encourage media outlets to have you as a guest on phone-in shows to answer callers' questions on the issue.
- Tap into any resources that may be available to you. If you are a member of an advocacy group use the group's Web page, communications person and or newsletter to spread the news about your report.
- If you are affiliated with a university or other academic institution, advise the public relations or communications department of your publication. Suggest that they promote it on the university Web site (see the promotion of Policy Research Fund reports on the University of Alberta Web site http://www.expressnews.ualberta.ca/expressnews/articles/news.cfm?p_ID=16 and the University of Victoria Web site http://communications.uvic.ca/experts_releases/releases/release_archive/MR010402.html).
- Work with the public relations or communications department to organize a report launch on campus (with enough notice Status of Women Canada can provide you with additional copies to have on hand at the launch).
- Meet with the academic press to discuss publication.
- Present your research at conferences. Offer to facilitate workshops on the issue or participate in panel discussions or debates.
- Put together an e-mail list-serv group of all your colleagues in your field (an electronic discussion group). Refer to the fact sheets and offer to fax them out. Send out periodic updates on your work to the list-serve group. Use the group to solicit feedback on your work (engage the external audience in the feedback process). Develop discussion of developments in the field.
- Contact local public libraries and offer to make a presentation (e.g. brown bag seminars, free public workshops on specific themes).
- Ask a colleague to review your report in a policy journal.
- Develop your own Web page and post links to it everywhere (on list-serv, media releases, etc.).

- Encourage groups who would be interested in your report to set up a link from their Web sites to the electronic copy of the report on the SWC Web site.
- As all Policy Research Fund reports are published in both French and English you will want to be sure to promote your report in communities of both official languages.
- Submit a brief to a Parliamentary Committee.
A list of Commons Committees can be found at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/InfoCom/committee.asp?Language=E&Parl=37&Ses=1>
A list of Senate Committees can be found at http://www.parl.gc.ca/Common/Committee_SenList.asp?Language=E&Parl=37&Ses=1
A list of joint Committees can be found at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/InfoCom/committee.asp?Language=E&Parl=37&Ses=1&Joint=1>
Information on preparing a submission to a Parliamentary Committee can be found at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/InfoCom/documents/guide-brief-e.htm>
Information on appearing as a witness at a Parliamentary Committee can be found at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/InfoCom/documents/guide-witness-e.htm>
- Send media releases to community partners and advocacy groups who work on the issue; encourage them to mention your report on their Web pages (e.g., Philippine Women's Centre Web page <http://pwc.bc.tripod.com/index.html>) or in their newsletters.
- Send an abstract of your report to research networks and academic journals (lists of some networks and journals are included in this kit).

Web resources for promotion and publication

<http://www.Web.net/blackrosebooks/>

Black Rose Books publishes books that deal with important concerns such as gender equality, ecology, cities and neighbourhoods, and questions of peace, freedom and social justice. Their list of writers includes many key authors in the social sciences and humanities, with particular strength in politics, cultural studies, history, philosophy, sociology and environmental and urban issues. Black Rose Books began in 1970 as a non-profit book publishing project committed to publishing the kinds of books that were begging to be written, and published, in a marketplace dominated by commercial publishing.

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/Publications/TPP/tpp.htm>

The Policy Press is a specialist policy studies publisher in the UK, publishing books, journals, reports and guides from leading academics and researchers working in policy and practice. Policy Press publications provide the latest policy research in accessible formats,

reaching those who formulate or implement policy at executive and grass-roots levels - as well as academics and students.

<http://www.garamond.ca/>

Garamond Press, Canada's leading independent academic publisher, was founded in 1981 by Women's Press, Between The Lines publishing, and Fernwood Books, a sales agency. The Press now runs independently. Garamond was the first Canadian-owned book publisher to specialize in publishing for university and college areas. The company's mandate is to provide an alternative to multinational textbook publishers and university presses, publishing critical works in such areas as political economy, labour studies, popular culture and gender issues.

<http://www.caledoninst.org/>

The Caledon Institute of Social Policy does rigorous, high quality research and analysis; seeks to inform and influence public opinion and to foster public discussion on poverty and social policy; and develops and promotes concrete, practicable proposals for the reform of social programs at all levels of government and of social benefits provided by employers and the voluntary sector. Caledon's work deals with poverty and other social and economic inequalities, and covers a broad range of social policy areas including income security (e.g., pensions, welfare, child benefits, Employment Insurance, benefits for Canadians with disabilities), taxation, social spending, employment development services, social services and health.

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/>

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives offers an alternative to the message that we have no choice about the policies that affect our lives. The Centre undertakes and promotes research on issues of social and economic justice. The Centre produces research reports, books, opinion pieces, fact sheets and other publications, including The Monitor, a monthly digest of progressive research and opinion.

<http://www.irpp.org/indexe.htm>

Institute for Research on Public Policy is an independent, national, non-profit organization. Its mission is to improve public policy in Canada by promoting and contributing to a policy process that is more broadly based, informed and effective.

Writing a media release that will be noticed

A media release can be one of your best promotional tools. Local media are always interested in stories that come "pre-written" -- and that is what you provide with your media release. In order to get attention your media release needs to meet the editor's basic needs. Your media release should be a clear, concise announcement of your research findings; the main purpose is to attract the attention of an editor to your report. Media

releases summarize the most important points; they don't include every detail. Because media releases are only meant to encourage the journalist to find out more, they do not need too much background information. Most releases should fit on one page. The following are some tips that will help route your release to the reader/viewer/listener rather than the trash can:

- A media release must be NEWS. If what you have to say isn't news, then dress it up to LOOK and SOUND like news.

- Play up the local aspect if you're sending the media release to local media. Features editors want to present stories with local flavour. Draw attention to the fact that you work within the community or teach at the local university.

- Make it urgent. Put a date on it and in big letters across the top: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. Write as though something newsworthy has just happened or is happening now, and must be reported immediately.

- Create community value. Your news should not only be interesting but also helpful to the newspaper's readers.

- Make it timely. Make a connection between your report and a current event or ongoing issue.

- Compose a grabber headline. What will command the editors' attention? They're hungry for local, urgent, valuable news. Be dramatic.

- Boil down your basics into ONE PARAGRAPH (about ten lines). You don't need to tell the whole story now; your goal is to get an interview. That's when you can elaborate.

- Use plain language. Avoid research terminology that non-researchers may not understand.

- Compose a simple cover note that an editor can scan quickly. Four sentences will do. "Please consider a story on _____. Your readers will find this valuable because _____. Contact me for an interview at _____. Media release enclosed." This format may sound abrupt, but editors don't have time to read long cover letters.

- Don't mail -- FAX! Faxes have a certain urgency, and short ones with simple formats beg to be read right away. Send additional material only upon request.

- Don't send the media release/fax to a particular editor or department. Simply address: "TO: EDITOR" and your fax will then be directed to the proper person and department.

- Quote yourself. Come up with one or two noteworthy lines and attribute them to yourself. This gives the release a more human touch and a more objective feel, as though written by someone else. Your media release should be written in the third person.

When you write a media release, remember that you aren't submitting an article for publication. A media release is not copyrighted; it is, by definition, "for public release", and is therefore considered in the public domain. Don't be surprised if your release shows up, verbatim, under someone's byline. That's completely legitimate and not an infringement. It conveys the impression that the media outlet considered your report newsworthy enough to prepare a story, even if you wrote every word yourself!

The following format is standard:

You should have **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** across the top of the page, bold type, in upper case letters.

Skip (2) lines and enter your contact information. Here, you will include the name of your spokesperson, work /home telephone, fax numbers and e-mail address.

Skip (2) lines: and enter your headline, bold type and in upper case letters.

Skip (2) lines then enter the dateline. The city in which your media release is issued, and the date. This also begins your very first sentence.

In the lead paragraph you need to write the who, what, when, where and why, about your report. Make sure the first sentence captures the reader's attention.

Skip (2) lines between paragraph's or indent 5 spaces.

Use bullets, they work well when listing the key points that you want to get across.

At the very bottom recap your key points and contact information.

To symbolize the conclusion of your media release type -30- or use three number symbols ###.

On the following page you will find a sample media release template:

Your organization's letterhead.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact person:

Telephone:

Fax number:

E-mail:

HEADLINE

City, Province, Date. Start your paragraph here and include the 5 W's (who, what, when, where and why).

- ◆ Continue with the details that you want to stress.
- ◆ Use bullets to best convey the key findings and key recommendations of your report.
- ◆ Summarize the report highlights and contact information at the end.

You may also include a brief paragraph on your credentials or background on your advocacy group or community partners.

Media contacts

You can find Canadian media contacts through the following Web sites. The people in various positions in media outlets are likely to change often so it would be wise to send releases or to direct e-mails or phone calls to a position (e.g., Editor) rather than a specific individual.

Canadian Media Directory 1999 Print media

<http://Web.idirect.com/~cic/publications/mediaDir99/print/print99.html>

Daily Newspapers in Canada

<http://www.altstuff.com/daily.htm>

List of Canadian television stations

<http://tv.zap2it.com/resources/stations/ca/stations.html>

Canadian radio stations

<http://www.canadaclicks.com/radio.html>

List of Campus Community Radio Stations

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/public/Iplists/campus.htm>

List of Campus Instructional Radio Stations

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/public/Iplists/instructional.htm>

List of Community Radio Stations

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/public/Iplists/community.htm>

List of Ethnic Radio & Television Stations

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/public/Iplists/ethnic.htm>

List of Native Programming Undertakings (television & radio)

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/public/Iplists/native.htm>

List of Specialty Services (television & radio)

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/public/Iplists/specialty.htm>

Online media directory

http://www.editorandpublisher.com/editorandpublisher/business_resources/medialinks.jsp

Research networks

Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

<http://www.criaw-icref.ca/>

Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women

<http://www.nald.ca/cclow.htm>

Queen's Centre for Health Services and Policy Research

<http://chspr.queensu.ca/>

Canadian Women's Health Network

<http://www.cwhn.ca/indexeng.html>

Social Science Research Network

<http://www.ssrn.com/>

Canadian Policy Research Network

<http://www.cprn.com>

Conseil du statut de la femme du Québec

<http://www.csf.gouv.qc.ca/>

Le répertoire des femmes

<http://pages.infinit.net/ffranco/toile/rep1.html#reseauxel>

Fédération des femmes du Québec

<http://www.FFQ.QC.CA/>

Net Femmes

<http://netfemmes.cdeacf.ca/>

Franco-Femmes

<http://www.francofemmes.org/>

Institut de recherches et d'études féministes (UQAM)

<http://www.unites.uqam.ca/iref/>

INRS - Urbanisation, culture et société

<http://www.inrs-urb.quebec.ca/>

Institute for Research on Public Policy

<http://www.irpp.org.indexe/htm>

Policy Research Initiative

http://policyresearch.gc.ca/index_e.htm

Metropolis Project

<http://canada.metropolis.net>

Academic journals

Canadian Public Policy

<http://qsilver.queensu.ca/~cpp/>

Canadian Review of Social Policy

<http://www.carleton.ca/crsp-rcps/>

Canadian Public Administration

<http://www.ipaciapc.ca/>

Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal

<http://www.ss.ucalgary.ca/ces/>

Canadian Woman Studies

<http://www.yorku.ca/cwscf/>

ISUMA: Canadian Journal of Policy Research

<http://www.isuma.net/>

Journal of the International Association for Feminist Economics

<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~femec/>

Recherches féministes

Revue.Gremf@fss.ulaval.ca

L'année francophone internationale

<http://www.francophone.net/AFI/>

List of academic journals (Université Laval)

http://www.ulaval.ca/BI/activite/act_revues.html