

## Research communicators: press-releases are key

**Are big data, RSS-feeds and search engines replacing old time communication with journalists? No, according to a survey of 2000 journalists from around the world. Personal relationships and press releases are still top priority for journalists seeking news and article content. This is important information for researchers and research communicators.**

The survey shows that journalists struggle under increasing pressure to publish on numerous platforms, but they often feel that they don't have the time to do quality work. This means that it becomes more important to

support them with relevant stories and reliable facts.

### Press-releases are important

Journalists prefer to go to the original sources, namely a personal contact (e.g. the researchers), but the press release is still considered a relevant source of information for nine out of ten journalists.

As important for research communicators as writing a good press release is to build a relationship with the journalists. This means knowing what sort of content they produce and what they will find useful as stories.

### Credibility of the sender

The credibility of the source is a key to whether journalists follow up a story or not. Good quotes from credible people and the opportunity to interview these individuals increase the success rate of a press release.

### Lack of time versus depth

Journalists are often frustrated by their lack of time, with short deadlines and a demand to publish on at least three platforms – print, web and social media. But still they prioritise in-depth articles, meaning that they need to access supporting information. The visual content has become more important for journalists, so providing supporting photos and images with press releases is also important.

Source. *Journalism Trends 2016*

### Comments from the editor

The survey confirms the advice given by Professor Lena Gustafsson in News & Views No. 3, 2016. She calls for researchers to summarise their results into a format that is easily accessible for journalists and the public, easy to read but still comprehensive enough to pick out a story. If this summary supports a good press release with quotes from a trusted researcher, and visual material is also included, then there is a good chance that the results will attract the journalist.

Inspiring title and well-written introduction

**Plant gasses can counteract arctic climate change**

PLANT GASSES POSSIBLY DAMPEN the temperature rise in Greenland. Plants emit compounds to deter pests or attract pollinators, and as a side effect particles are formed when the compounds interact in the air. These particles can contribute to the formation of clouds, which reflect incoming solar radiation, and thus prevent solar heat from reaching the ground and warming it additionally. Researchers from the University of Copenhagen have studied the effect of the imminent climate changes on the release of so-called "biogenic volatile" to the atmosphere above Greenland. The sensational results are now being published in the prestigious scientific journal Nature Geoscience.

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Kramshøj M., Vedel-Petersen T., Schollett M., Sunnan A., Nymand J., Ro-Poulsen H., Rinnan R. (2016) Large increases in Arctic biogenic volatile emissions are a direct effect of warming. Nature Geoscience, doi: 10.1038/ngo2692

Researchers measuring on the top of the island. Credit: Rikke Rinnan

The study of biogenic volatile organic compounds (BVOCs) is in itself interesting. They include fragrances, which are released by all organisms, and they are important to the communication between plants and animals, e.g. as a defense mechanism through the repelling of pests. This is well-known in the scientific community, but the possible role of these gasses is less well-known in connection with the arctic climate changes, which are predicted to be more pronounced than elsewhere on the planet.

Contact with the responsible scientist

Links to original article and other supplementary material

Credibility – published in distinguished journal

Images to download

## Contact News & Views

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