

PRESS COVERAGE OF YOUR PhD RESEARCH

Dear PhD student

Each year several doctoral defences are covered by various media. The Office of Communications – which mediates between the university and media – is happy to assist you in drawing extra press attention for your research project. This consists of writing a press release and/or personally approaching a journalist.

What do you have to do?

We kindly ask you to answer the questions on the next page and send them **(in a Word document, a total of 300 words max)** to nieuws@uhasselt.be – before your defence takes place.

Is press coverage guaranteed?

Unfortunately, the Office of Communications cannot guarantee (any) press coverage. Some PhD projects, for example, are too specialist or fundamental.

By answering the questions on the next page, the Office of Communications is able to assess whether your research project will draw the media's attention or not.

What if the Office of Communications decides to send a press release?

The Office of Communications will contact you and your promoter if it wants to garner media attention for your PhD research project. It will send you a draft version of the release with some further questions. A final version will go out only after your approval.

The Office of Communications will set a release date according to your (and your promoter's) availability. It is policy *not* to send a press release until after your doctoral defence has taken place.

Where do I have to go for some advice on dealing with the media?

If the media are interested in your PhD research, you may need some advice on dealing with them. The Office of Communications is the place to turn to.

THE SIX QUESTIONS WE WANT YOU TO ANSWER

1. What is your research about?
2. Why this topic? (*Please give some wider context*)
3. What did you exactly do? (*'How?'*)
4. What is/are the most important result(s)?
5. Why is/are that/these result(s) so important? (*'So what?'*)
6. What is the next step? (*'What now?'*)

BEFORE ANSWERING, SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND...

- A lay audience has no knowledge, no background, no expertise in your research domain.
- Avoid technical terms/jargon/acronyms.
- Analogies and/or metaphors are great tools to clarify.
- Don't be afraid to provide an explanation.
- Make sure your reader doesn't miss a step.
- Don't go into detail.