**Tips for contacting local media**

Being awarded funding from Sport England is a huge achievement and great news for your local community.

If you are receiving National Lottery funding, please reference it in all of your communications and let the public know how they are making life better across the UK by playing National Lottery games.

Your local newspapers and radio stations are likely to be interested in your success story and appearing there is a great way to raise awareness of your project.

**Tips for contacting the media with your news story**

* **Identify which media to target**

It may sound obvious but local newspapers and radio stations will only cover stories that fall within the exact area they cover. The newspapers you should contact are the ones that are available to buy or free in the area your project is based. If you are unsure you can always ring and ask what area they cover. With radio stations, think about your local BBC as well as any commercial stations in your area.

Most newspapers and radio stations will have an email address for the news desk on their website. They will receive a lot of emails so it is worth calling the news desk to tell them about your story and ask if there is anyone in particular you should send it through to.

* **Draft your press release -** Press releases are the format journalists are used to receiving stories in. We have included some templates you can use to draft your press release.

National Lottery funding from Sport England - template press release

Sport England funding – template press release

* **Think about the impact of our investment** –Explain how the investment will help local people get involved in sport and activity. Highlight any aspects that will appeal to new groups of people, such as disabled participants.
* **Make sure you have a good story to tell** – Think carefully about what would be interesting to local people who read the news. Stories with a strong human-interest angle often gain more media coverage, as do those with scale. Was the club’s future at risk, until you secured this funding? Did some famous once train at your club? Do you have a dedicated volunteer with an inspiring story? How many people will benefit from your project. Always keep the wordcount to a minimum.
* **Think about a hook** – Journalists are looking to cover stories that are timely and already in the public interest. Is there a particularly good time to announce your funding or subject to hook it onto? Look into whether there are any significant external events or current affairs stories, awareness days (local and national) that the media we be looking for content on, and mention it when pitching your story.
* **Provide high quality video and photo -** Videos and photos can really improve your chance of gaining publicity. Make sure you provide the names of everyone in the video and photo and make clear who is who. Videos can significantly boost the prominence of online articles and increase chances of securing broadcast coverage.
* **Include your contact details** – This is essential.
* **Sending it out -**  It's best to paste the press release into the body of the email rather than attach it so journalists can read the information quickly. Think about your subject line as this is the first thing the journalist will see, and if it doesn't catch their eye they may not even open the email. It's a good idea to reference your local area in the subject so the journalist can see it’s relevant. If you’re sending to multiple contacts, it’s best to put everyone’s email address in the BCC box and not CC.
* **Follow up with a phone call**

Journalists receive lots of emails and may need a nudge. Try to leave it a few hours at least so they have a chance to read it!