

# Media Toolkit for Plast Events - Overview

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Media Advisory example used by Plast DC: Ukrainian Scouts in DMV to Help Ukraine

Social Media Guide: Amplifying our Media

## Securing Media for Plast Events

1. **Write a media advisory** with a clear headline. This is different than a press release in that it is an invitation to a future event vs. reporting on something that has happened. It should provide information about the purpose of the event, logistics, and also the background about the organization hosting it, as well as the contact information for the media.
2. **Distribute to media outlets** one or two days in advance of the event. Media firms, nonprofits, and other organizations have access to media database platforms. They may be willing to send out a media advisory using that platform, as part of their way of standing with Ukraine.
  - a. If you don't have that kind of access, google local media firms and ask for help in sending out a media advisory as an *in-kind contribution*. (The media advisory will have to go out using the email of someone at the institution that has the database platform.)
  - b. The platform allows you to search and select reporters who have written about certain topics. For example: search for local reporters who wrote stories about Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. In smaller media markets, also search for reporters who are writing about Ukraine. (The bigger the media market, the less helpful Ukraine may be as a search term, because you'll get reporters with politics as their beat vs. local happenings.)
3. **Make follow up calls to reporters** to make sure that they received the media advisory, see if they have any questions, and ascertain whether they will be able to attend your event.
  - a. The media platforms often don't want you to download the contacts and share that list. But ideally, you're working with a sympathetic institution that will give you the list they are using to send out your advisory, so that you can make those follow up phone calls.
  - b. There will be a lot of reporters to call. So, in an ideal situation, you should divide up the list. Either way, you may need to prioritize. The platform download should include the reporter's beat. For example: Some reporters have only written about the Boy Scouts because of their scandals, not because they cover local events. You should skip these. You'll mostly be leaving voice mails. The database will have wrong numbers. You won't reach everyone on the list.

4. **Prep to talk to reporters and for the event to be media friendly.** Consider who you want to speak to the media—organizers, parents, and kids. Give them a head's up that they may be asked to speak. Whichever contacts are on the media advisory should have one or more quotes ready to send to reporters should they ask. They should also prepare talking points for themselves in the event that they get phone calls. The best practice is to prioritize three main talking points and continue to pivot back to those points.
  - a. Have a point person who has some idea what media is showing up and is on the lookout for them. That person should help direct the media to spokespeople at the event. (The media will talk to whomever they want, but may appreciate guidance.)
  - b. Make the space visually impactful. Hang Ukrainian flags wherever you can. Put up eye-catching signs about donating to Plast. Have the children in full *odnostroyii* or *vyshyvanky* with *xystky*. Ask the girls to wear *vinky*. The media will gravitate toward the children, who visually represent the story they're trying to tell. If people are wearing masks, have them remove the masks for the interview (if they feel comfortable doing that).
5. **Get a photographer** to come and photograph the event. It may be possible to get a professional photographer to donate their services as part of their contribution to Ukraine. These kinds of events are hard to photograph well, so an experienced photographer is ideal. If you have spokespeople in mind for the media, the media point person should make sure the photographer gets images of those individuals in particular.
6. **Amplify the media** that you receive via social media. Track the media that you receive (Google should work fine for this) and ask all participants and parents to amplify it. Ideally, send all parents a guide on how to amplify the articles. If newspapers pick up the story, we want Plast members to leave the first and the most comments about the story. We also want to share the stories on Facebook and Twitter.
7. **Send a press release** after the event. If not enough media was secured for the event, send out a press release after the fact. The media advisory can be rewritten to be in past tense. Several quotes should be added from organizers and participants. If the quotes are from children, include their ages. And photographs can also be included. Ideally, you should have photos for the people who are quoted in the press release. The file name for the photograph should be edited to include copyright information and identity of person or people in the photos if there are 1-2 main individuals. For instance, file name: © Taras Shevchenko – Scout Lesya Ukrainka age 9.jpg.
8. **Share with decision-makers.** If you have really engaged parents and participants, you can share the media you receive with your Member of Congress (MOC)—particularly for anyone featured in the media. Look up your MOC and their contact info at [house.gov](http://house.gov). Call to ask for the contact information of the legislative aide who would cover military and humanitarian aid for Ukraine for that MOC. Email the story to the aide, identify yourself as a constituent, and ask for military and humanitarian aid for Ukraine. The same process can be done with your Senators ([senate.gov](http://senate.gov)).