

# Press Coverage

**Want to make a far-reaching impact? Your message will connect with a much larger audience if you can convince local, regional, and national media to report on your activities and publish your views. There’s no limit to the points you can earn for press coverage, so use the tips in this guide to attract as much media attention as you can to your Global Debates activities.**

## How many points can you earn?

You can earn **500** points per submission, and you can submit an unlimited amount of press coverage! But...you **MUST MUST MUST** follow the rules!

## How do you earn points?

Whenever a media outlet covers one of your climate change activities, submit those clips to us, whether they are print, audio, or visual.

To earn points for your media clips you must submit ALL of the information below:

**Use this checklist!**

### Press Coverage Submission Checklist

- Name of the publication  
*(please provide the title in English)*
- Location: city, state, and nation
- Author’s full name or, in the case of radio and television, host or interviewer
- Date, including day, month, and year
- One-paragraph summary if the clip is NOT in English

If the newspaper is online, send us the URL. You can also scan a copy of a news article, save it as a PDF, and email it to us. Or, send us an original or photo-copy of the article by snail mail at:

United Nations Foundation Global Debates  
1800 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20036

For **audio and visual** press coverage, send a DVD copy of the news coverage via snail mail, or upload it onto YouTube and submit the URL.

## What is a media outlet and what counts as press coverage?

In order to earn points, a reporter needs to write about you. While it is great to reflect on your own work, it is not considered press coverage unless an accredited media source has shared your story.

**Use this checklist!**

### A media submission will count if:

- It is a unique article written by an independent reporter for a newspaper (online newspapers, blogs, and school papers are OK) or magazine
- It is published/broadcast by an independent source (TV or radio)

### A media submission will NOT count if:

- It is written by you, your teacher, or teammates
- It is published on a personal website, blog, or the Global Debates website
- It is posted in the comments section of a blog or in an online community forum
- It is a posting of the press release that you wrote
- It is the same article posted in multiple places (each submission must be unique!)



**Please remember!**

You must provide all of the information requested on page 1 when you submit your clips. We have to be fair to all schools, hence we must stick to the rules!

**Get Organized and Increase Your Coverage!**

**Make a Media List**

Think of the media sources around you, the ones that you see every day—newspapers, TV, radio, online news, etc. Then do some research to find sources that will be interested. Consider:

- Which reporters cover local stories?
- Which reporters would be interested in your debate topic?
- How will you contact these people? Who do you know?

During your research, use the following chart to organize and document the contact information for each potential media outlet:

**Newspapers:** Local, Regional, National - Daily, Weekly

*Local reporters want to know what's happening at local schools—this could be the best way for you to spread the word and earn the most points!*

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**Magazines/Journals:** Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly

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**Radio:** Local or Regional News

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**TV:** Local or Regional News

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## Get Writing! Write a Press Release

You can refer to the Press Release information sheet and [template](#) in the toolkit for this. After you've completed your press release, use this checklist to make sure it's as effective as possible:

**Use this checklist to earn the most points!**

### Press Release Checklist

- Strong title — clear, concise and attention-grabbing
- All of the information is there:
  - Who
  - What
  - Where
  - When
  - Why
- Use a good quote — it reinforces your main point. The quote should be from a student on your team, your team advisor, or your school principal
- Emphasize that this is a local event — reporters like to write stories about local activities!
- The right length — remember, journalists have tight schedules, so to keep their attention, keep it short and to the point (under one page)
- Contact information — choose a spokesperson for your team, make sure their correct contact information is on all materials you send to your list of media contacts

## Get Out There! Write a Pitch Letter

Now that you have the materials you need, get them out there! Mail, or e-mail your information to ALL of the contacts on your Media List, separately.

When you send your material to your media contacts, write a brief note in the body of the email, above the press release. This note is meant spark a reporter's interest, and make him/her want to read on.

This note should be direct and contain (only)

the most important information from your press release, in no more than a few sentences. Don't become bogged down in details; there will be time to elaborate later.

**Use this checklist to earn the most points!**

### Pitch Letter Checklist

- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- Why
- Fewer than four sentences

Keep in mind that reporters work in a fast-paced, high-pressure environment, and focus on getting the facts as quickly as possible.

*Note: some SPAM filters block emails with attachments, so it's best to paste your press release into the body of the email, rather than send it as an attachment.*

## Get Back Out There!

Once you've sent it out, make sure to follow up! It's good to follow up with a phone call. Write down what you plan to say when you follow up:

**Use this checklist to earn the most points!**

### Follow-up Checklist

- Introduce yourself, and your group
- Think about what kind of story the reporter could tell; tell them why it would be interesting to their audience
- Keep it brief
- Stay consistent — make sure everyone on your team is saying the same thing



### Who should you call?

Every outlet has different rules about who makes the decision about story placement.

### Generally, direct your calls to:

#### Television:

- Assignment Editor (for news programming)
- Specific reporter who covers your issues (climate change, education, local events, etc.)
- Producer or booking agent (for public affairs/talk show)

#### Radio:

- Director (for news story)
- Public Affairs Director or specific show producer (for public affairs/talk shows)

#### Print:

- Assignment/Assistant Editor
- Metro or specific reporter (environment, education, etc.)

### When should you call?

#### Television:

- Planning editors generally take calls between 10:00–11:00 am and 1:00–3:00 pm
- It's best to call the assignment desk after the morning planning meeting, which usually ends between 9:30 and 10:00 am

#### Radio:

- The best time to call is early; around 7:30–8:30 am
- After that, staff go into planning meetings, but you can start calling again after 10:00 am
- News directors, reporters and producers are often gone by the afternoon
- If a reporter is not able to attend the event, offer to have one of your speakers or interviewees do a taped interview

#### Print:

It's best to call a newsroom between 10:00am and 2:00pm, when reporters are not in planning meetings or working against a 5 o'clock deadline.

### Get Creative!

- Create an event — get it on the community calendar of your local paper.
  - o For example, invite people to watch you debate
- Invite officials to your events to increase visibility
- Send in photos of your debate practice to journalists — everyone likes a visual!
- Get others involved to support your debates — get your whole community thinking about your topic!
  - o You can involve other clubs from your school or community (YMCA clubs, the Boys and Girls club, church or temple groups, etc.)
- Take a poll to see where everyone stands on the issues — or create a message board in your school where people can come and write down their thoughts
- Get Creative! Come up with your own great idea to attract media coverage and spread the word