

THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

I-13 Media Policy

Number and Title:

I-13 Media Policy

Effective Date:

To be determined

Approval Date:

To be determined

Policy Type:

Internal Policy

Review Date:

Every two (2) years

Responsible body:

Executive Committee

Authority:

AMS Bylaw 5, Section 1(a)

"[Council] may make such further rules and regulations as may be considered necessary for the Society, provided such rules and regulations are consistent with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Code of the Society."

AMS Code of Procedure Section II, Article 11(1)

"Council may create external and internal policies as well as combined policies."

Purpose and Goals:

This Policy is designed to:

- 1) Ensure that the external communications with the media, and the wider community, is shared in a manner that is consistent, accurate, fair, and timely;
- 2) Pursue a culture of transparency and openness;
- 3) Remain committed to the dissemination of knowledge in a prompt and fair manner;
- 4) Ensure that all AMS Executive and staff communicating with media have received proper, successful media training.

Applicability:

This policy is applicable to all statements or comments requested by media, as well as those issued on behalf of the AMS to all media platforms and outlets, including print, online, digital, and social media.

Exclusions:

There are no exclusions for this policy.

Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy:

- *President:* The primary person authorized to engage directly with the media on behalf of the AMS. They represent The Society and, as the spokesperson of the AMS, are responsible for ensuring accurate and consistent messaging to the media and the wider public.
- *Communications Manager:* Along with the President, the Communications Manager is also authorized to engage with the media, as an AMS Spokesperson.
- *Executive:* Includes the four Vice Presidents: VP Finance, VP Academic and University affairs, VP External Affairs, and VP Administration. These individuals offer their subject matter expertise, relevant industry and communications skills, to ensure the external communications are accurate, consistent, and represent the needs and concerns of the AMS.
- *Subject Matter Expert:* Any AMS staff member with extensive knowledge and understanding on any issues or topics which may be relevant to media releases or requests. AMS staff members and may be quoted in the media statements and releases issued from the President of the AMS/Communications Manager.

Policy:

- 1) Media request fulfilment protocol:
 - a. Inform both the AMS President and Communications Manager by forwarding the request to (President@ams.ubc.ca) and (communications@ams.ubc.ca) as soon as possible. Please include the following information in your correspondence, whenever possible:
 - i. The urgency of the request/ time sensitivity (i.e. reporter's deadline);
 - ii. Any available context about the request.
 1. What information the reporter is after;
 2. What media they work for;
 3. The reporter's beat;
 4. The reporters angle;
 5. Any previous reportage;
 6. Any other known information.
 - iii. Where the interview will be conducted;
 - iv. How long the interview will take;
 - v. How the interview will be conducted;
 - vi. Who else will be interviewed as part of the story;
 - vii. Anyone at the AMS who you believe could provide:
 1. Content;
 2. Consultation;
 3. Advice.
 - b. In the event that the request is highly time sensitive or particularly contentious please follow-up the forwarded request immediately with a phone call or in-person visit to the AMS President or Communications Manager to alert them of the high priority request;
 - i. If neither the AMS President or the Communications Manager is available, forward the request to:
 1. The AMS Executive (vpacademic@ams.ubc.ca, vpadmin@ams.ubc.ca, vpexternal@ams.ubc.ca, and vpfinance@ams.ubc.ca), and
 2. AMS Managing Director, Keith Hester (keithhester@ams.ubc.ca);
 3. In such an event, the Managing Director or any member of the Executive, who has met all requirements to be eligible to speak to the media on behalf of the AMS, may be designated spokesperson with the agreement of all parties.

- c. Refer all media requests to the AMS President or Communications Manager regardless of the complexity of the request or inquiry.

2) AMS President interview protocol:

- a. Consult with AMS Executives, Communications Manager, and/or any relevant Subject Matter Experts on the issues under discussion, gathering background information, facts and relevant context, in advance of the interview;
- b. Provide background information to the media;
- c. Schedule interviews with the media;
- d. Arrange for an interview time and location;
- e. Provide photos if required;
- f. Strive to:
 - i. Stay focused on the key messages;
 - ii. Keep things simple;
 - iii. Be professional;
 - iv. Be punctual;
 - v. And be polite to all media.
- g. Prepare for interview by outlining three to five key messages, such as:
 - i. The issue;
 - ii. The AMS' involvement on the issue;
 - iii. The importance;
 - iv. The historical perspective.
- h. If helpful and relevant, brainstorm potential questions with AMS Executives and conduct practice interviews with the Communications Manager;
- i. After the interview, ask when the story will appear;
- j. Follow-up to bring to the attention of the reporter any:
 - i. Serious errors;
 - ii. Serious misconceptions;
 - iii. Omissions in the interview.
- k. Share the interview with the wider UBC community through our own AMS channels, if appropriate.

3) AMS media release and statement protocol:

- a. The AMS President and Communications Manager (with the support of AMS Vice Presidents and permanent staff) are responsible for creating media

- releases and sending them to the appropriate external and campus media;
 - b. In order to ensure timely dissemination, the Communications Manager and AMS President will determine a strict deadline by which designated AMS Executives and staff will be responsible for contributing their:
 - i. Content;
 - ii. Consultation;
 - iii. Expertise.
 - c. Media releases that concern highly time sensitive or particularly contentious issues will still be circulated to collect immediate feedback, by a specified deadline, from the:
 - i. Executives;
 - ii. Policy Advisor;
 - iii. Managing Director;
 - iv. Appropriate staff.
 - d. After the indicated deadline, the Communications Manager and AMS President have the authority to distribute the media release in a timely and appropriate manner.
- 4) AMS Executive and Subject Matter Expert interview protocol:
- a. At the discretion of the AMS President and Communications Manager, the AMS Executives or select members of permanent staff, may be permitted to have direct contact with the media as designated spokespersons. In order to do so, the following three conditions must be met:
 - i. The designated spokesperson has undergone successful media training, approved by the Communications Manager and President;
 - ii. The designated spokesperson has established talking points with clear and consistent messaging, for review by the President, Communications Manager, and the AMS Executive team;
 - iii. The media request has been cleared and approved through the office of the President and Communications Manager.
- 5) AMS Executive and Subject Matter Expert media release protocol:
- a. Provide media release draft content to the President and Communications Manager, for review and release;
 - b. If a media release concerns a contentious issue, the media release will be

circulated with a deadline for input from:

- i. Executives;
 - ii. Policy Advisor;
 - iii. Managing Director;
 - iv. And appropriate staff.
- c. Due to time sensitivity, these deadlines are not negotiable and releases will be sent out regardless if input is submitted;
 - d. The Communications Manager is always available to advise and consult if there are implications beyond the VP's portfolio;
 - e. Other ways to help when a media request/interview is made:
 - i. Try to clarify what the reporter is after (identifying reporter's beat, story angle, previous reportage, background context etc.) if you have previous experience with the subject, reporter or media outlet;
 - ii. Identify who else the reporter is interviewing;
 - iii. Help to formulate concise, key messaging (two or three short key messages);
 - iv. Offer to help the AMS Spokesperson practice these key messages before the interview;
 - v. If the need arises, supervise the media while on site.

History:

The following groups have been consulted during the development of this policy:

The President, Communications Manager, Managing Director, Executive Committee

History:

This policy was initially outlined as a Media Relations Protocol before it was rewritten into policy.

Related Policies:

There are no policies related to this policy.