



## Tips for Press Conferences

Press conferences are an opportunity for you to deliver your key points to a number of reporters at one time. The reporters may attend in person or online.

- Ask the organizer in advance.
  - How much time will you have to deliver your points? The answer is usually about five minutes, but it could be less.
  - How long will the entire press conference last?
  - Who else will be on the panel and in what order will you speak?
  - Who is likely to attend? Often there is a mix in the kinds of media as well as in how familiar the reporters are with the topic.
  - Can you bring slides, video or props to illustrate your points?
- Speak clearly, simply, and avoid jargon. Use analogies if appropriate.
- Assume you are talking to a nontechnical audience. Some reporters have a science background, but others don't.
- Mention that you are a chemist, biochemist, or whatever your field is. This helps make the connection that chemists and chemistry are responsible for the advances you are describing. That's a key objective.
- Everything you say is on the record and may be recorded.
- If you are the first presenter, you may want to provide some brief context to the subject matter: Ask the organizer if this is desirable.
- Reporters expect to hear what is NEW about the topic. Prepare your remarks such that you report what is new, different, or otherwise significant about what you did or found, relative to what's already known. Tell them why your work/findings matter. Don't get bogged down in details of procedure unless you are asked.
- Anticipate questions ahead of time and prepare easy-to-understand responses.
- Speak in complete sentences—that makes it easier to edit your responses for radio or television and you will also help ensure that the words are not misconstrued.
- Dress for the camera. TV crews may be there, but even if not, most ACS press conferences are streamed live online at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/acslive>, where they are archived and typically receive thousands of views. See Tips for Television.
- Tell us about any outcomes: Were you contacted by reporters after the press conference? Did you hear from anyone about your work, as a result of them seeing the coverage?