

## LEEDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

### A GUIDE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS

As part of your grant we ask you to try and gain local coverage about your project. This will not only promote your activities but it will enable others to hear about the work of the Leeds Community Foundation and may attract further funding from other parties.

You may already be familiar with PR. If so, we this guide will act as a refresher and a reminder of what can be achieved locally. If not, we hope it will assist you understand what is involved.

#### WHAT MAKES A GOOD NEWS STORY?

Getting good coverage from the media is all about having the ability to identify a good local news story when you see it.

The stories that the local media like best are those that contain genuine human or local area interest. The press like to hear about anything that involves people doing things that are slightly out of the ordinary or are helpful for people to know about, and are connected in some way to the local neighbourhood.

Your project is likely to be all of these things: it has direct benefits to local people as well as the wider community.

#### TARGETING THE MEDIA

There are two main ways of capturing the interest of the media:

- **A photocall notice** gives local media details of a forthcoming story with a good photographic opportunity. This should be issued to the media at least one week in advance of the event. It should be sent to the news editor or picture editor of your local newspaper and regional TV stations. Do not send a photocall notice to a radio station!!
- **A media release** gives additional information on your grant or event. This should be sent to the news editors of your local media, including radio stations. You can issue a media release before an event, at the event or afterwards to any media who were unable to attend.

It is always important to follow up the issue of either notice with a phone call to check they have received it and have the information that they require. You can use this opportunity to answer any questions that they might have. Be careful not to call them too often, as this may be counter-productive and put journalists off.

#### PHOTOCALL NOTICES

When you are planning your photocall, think of creative images that will give readers an immediate idea of your story and will make a photographer want to attend. The more unusual your photocall, the better. Remember a picture can speak a thousand words.

Consider the following points when thinking of your photocall:

- Are there any props you can use to tell your story visually?
- What is the best location? – a local landmark or specific place unique to your project?
- Can you incorporate any branding? – do you have branded t-shirts or caps?
- Backgrounds? – don't forget about the background they can add to the local angle of the story
- Cheese! – happy faces will give your project a positive image

Even if you send out your photocall notice in time and follow it up with a phone-call, you are not guaranteed that a photographer will attend. If a story breaks on the day of your photocall you may find that you lose out. Also, before you decide on a date for your photocall, it is worth checking to make sure the event does not clash with another local event taking place in the area.

If a photographer fails to attend or another news story breaks, hold the photocall anyway and take your own photographs. Use the best quality camera available and vary the shots you take. Make sure you get several shots of the key people and have your film developed quickly. Send a good print to your newspaper with the names of everyone in the picture attached (either on a sticky label or piece of paper). In addition please send a copy to Leeds Community Foundation with the name of your organisation and the date on the back.

If you have a good digital camera you can email the shots directly to the newspaper (check with them, first, if they would like them in digital or hard copy format). You can also email us any shots of publicity or other events, for our own files.

## **MEDIA RELEASES**

To help create publicity for your project, you can issue a media release to inform journalists. If the story is printed or broadcast, it will highlight your involvement in the local community.

### **Writing a Media release**

Before you start to draft your media release, always answer the following five questions – the five questions a reporter will ask every time:

- **Who.** Who is involved in the story – the project and those who will benefit as well as the fact that the Leeds Community Foundation is awarding the grant.
- **What.** What is your project all about?
- **Where.** Where exactly is the project taking place? Remember, your local press will always need a local angle.
- **When?** News needs to be current, so let the media know as soon as possible. If you're planning an event you can always do a follow up release after the day.
- **Why?** Why is it newsworthy? Your project will have various benefits to the local community. You can always refer back to our section about "what makes a good news story".

Always use real quotes to tell the media just how a project works or how much the grant has enabled you to undertake.

### **Release Layout**

- Use white A4 paper and mark it up as a media release.
- Use black ink and double space your story so it's easy to read
- If it's a photocall announcement, mark clearly the date, time and venue so a photographer knows exactly when and where they have to be. Tell them a bit more about what they might see if they appeared i.e. what might be most visually appealing.
- Always include a contact name and telephone number so they can easily reach you with any queries.
- Remember to find out the newspaper's deadline so your story is included at the appropriate time.

## **BROADCAST**

Local radio stations in your area may well be interested in your project. Broadcasters will also be keen to uncover “radio personalities” and if you are a good “talker” then they may come back for interviews on a regular basis.

Local TV coverage is the most difficult to obtain, but it is possible if you have a highly visual and newsworthy story to capture their interest. Your story must have a visual impact, be exciting to the viewers and involve some action to keep them interested.

If you are approached to do a TV or radio interview, take as much information from the caller as possible about what the interview is about, when it will be broadcast etc. Please then call Sally-Anne Greenfield at the Leeds Community Foundation on 0113 2422426 before agreeing to any appearances as she will be able to provide further advice and support.

**\*\*\*\*PHOTO OPPORTUNITY\*\*\*\***

**LAUNCH OF NEW AND IMPROVED LOCAL COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**WHAT:** The opening of the new ..... Resource Centre

**WHERE:** Address .....

**WHEN:** Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2005

10.00am Hot drinks and bacon butties

10.15am Prompt Start

10.30am Photo Opportunity

**WHO:** Sally-Anne Greenfield - Chief Executive of Leeds Community Foundation  
..... from ..... Resource Centre

Local Community residents - .....

**WHY:** ..... Resource Centre was awarded a £1,600 grant from The Leeds Community Foundation enabling them to open up the basement area and utilise extra space for all local residents to enjoy.

**WHAT:** A visual display by some of our younger users in full costume.

**For further information please contact xx at xxx on xxx xx xxx or mobile xxx xxx xxx**

For immediate release

(date)

## **LOCAL COMMUNITY CENTRE AWARDED GRANT BY LEEDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

..... **Resource Centre** has been awarded £1,600 by **The Leeds Community Foundation** it was announced today.

The Community Centre, on ..... (location), is used by xx local residents in .....(put your area) for a range of activities from xx to xx and from xx to xx.

The grant, funded by xx (name of funder) xx (name of funders) will enable vital building works to be undertaken to open up the basement area.

The Resource Centre Treasurer, ...(name)..... said: "The old pathway to the basement area at the back of the hall was unsuitable and unsafe for the elderly or those in wheelchairs. This award has helped us to provide easy access to that area and without it we simply wouldn't be able to utilise this extra space for all local residents to enjoy."

The Foundation, one of the fastest growing community organisations in the UK, matches the interests of a wide range of donors and funders to the needs of local communities.

**Sally Anne Greenfield**, Chief Executive of The Leeds Community Foundation explained: "We're delighted to make this award but the really good news is the fundamental benefit to the people of xxxxx. Our role as charity partner allows us to match the community aspirations of organisations, companies and individuals with the needs of charities and groups to everyone's mutual benefit."

### **Ends**

For further information and interview opportunities please call xx on xx. For further information on the Leeds Community Foundation please call Sally Anne Greenfield on 0113 2422426 or email [sally-anne@leedscommunityfoundation.org.uk](mailto:sally-anne@leedscommunityfoundation.org.uk)

### **Notes to Editors**

The Leeds Community Foundation was established in 2004. Its aim is to work with companies, individuals and organisations to establish and then manage a series of charitable funds that meet some of the needs that have been identified in Leeds. It then works with the local community and voluntary sector to apply to these funds, for grants, to help develop their worth further.