

Survey: science journalism and other hats

It used to be simple: journalism and public relations were separate worlds. These days, it seems more complex than that. Many science journalists also carry out work for non-media organizations such as research and research funding organizations, governments, NGOs or private companies. In other words, they are wearing more than just one hat.

On Tuesday June 25, 2013, at 14:00 (2pm), the World Conference on Science Journalism in Helsinki will feature an animated debate about this trend and its implications. (See: <http://bit.ly/11CTQ6u>.)

This online survey helps set the stage: which other hats are science journalists wearing? Outcomes of the survey will first be presented at the debate; after that, the results will be made available online.

Anyone professionally involved in science journalism worldwide is warmly invited to complete this anonymous survey. Whether you plan to be in Helsinki or not, thanks in advance for taking a few minutes to contribute to our understanding of how the science journalism field is evolving. And feel absolutely free to share the survey link with your science journalist colleagues!

* Required

Front door

We like this survey to reflect the professional status of those who identify as 'science journalists' or who see themselves engaged in 'science journalism'. Those who are scientists, PR officers, educators and so forth only need not complete the survey this time.

Are you engaged in 'science journalism'? *

(Answer required)

- Yes
- No! (Thanks, but this survey is not meant for you.)

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* Required

A. General questions

In which world region are you based? *

- North America
- South America
- Europe
- Africa
- Asia
- Australia/NZ

In which country are you based? *

Are you a member of a national science journalism/communication association?

- Yes
- No

How do you present yourself, e.g. on your website, web profile, business card, masthead?

Please pick the answer closest to your situation.

- Journalist, reporter
- (Copy) writer, PR officer, communications advisor
- A combination of the above

What is your professional status?

Note: only with respect to your work in science journalism/communication.

- Employee
- Employee plus freelance
- Freelance

Who is paying you salary/freelance income these days?

Note: only with respect to science journalism/communication; You can provide more than one answer!

- Media organizations
- Companies, industry organizations
- NGOs, political organizations, other non-profits

- Researchers, universities, research institutions
- Research funding organizations
- Governments

How much of your income came from fully independent journalism?

Roughly, what percentage of your science journalism/communication income is coming from independent media organizations?

- 0%
- 1%-33%
- 34%-66%
- 67%-99%
- 100%

Have you witnessed potential conflicts of interest (either with yourself or with colleagues)?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Frequently

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B. Some case studies

(Potential) conflicts of interest are difficult to define. What was your response, or would likely have been your response, to any of the following situations?

Note: Our definitions:

- Editor = independent media organization
- Reader = any public audience.
- Newspaper = any independent media outlet (including magazine, web, tv, radio).
- PR magazine = any non-independent media production (including website, brochure, video).

Case #1: Free travel

You took a trip with all expenses paid by a subject. Back home, you write a piece for a newspaper. Q: what would you do?

- I would tell my editor and my readers who organized and sponsored the trip
- I would tell my editor who organized and sponsored the trip
- I would not specify who organized and sponsored the trip
- Out of principle, I never join organized/sponsored trips.

Case #2: Newsworthy PR

You are paid to write a story for a research organization. They hope you (also) offer the story to a newspaper for publication. Q: Would you do it?

- Yes; I report the story's history to the editor
- Yes; I do not report the story's history to the editor
- Out of principle: No.

Case #3: Good relations

You do freelance work for a research organization. A newspaper asks you to interview the organization's new director. Q: Would you do it?

- Yes; I report my freelance work to the editor
- Yes; I do not report my freelance work to the editor
- Out of principle: No.

Case #4: Safe savings

You own stock in a promising biotech startup. An editor asks you for a story on research in which the startup is involved. Q: Would you do it?

- Yes; I report my stock ownership to the editor and to my readers
- Yes; I report my stock ownership to the editor, not my readers
- Yes; I do not report my stock ownership
- Out of principle: No.

Case #5: Income on the side

You are employee at a Newspaper. A research organization offers to pay you well for some freelance work on the side for their PR Magazine. Q: would you do that?

- Yes
- Out of principle: No.

Case #6: A warm welcome

You visit a research organization's press conference. Your press pack contains tickets for a popular concert. Q: What would you do?

- I use the tickets or give them to friends
- Out of principle, I leave the tickets unused.

Case #7: Sponsored journalism

A funding organization sponsors a series of newspaper stories. They determine the subjects and will get to *read* your stories before they are published. The editor is out of budget and agrees. Q: Would you do that?

- Yes
- Out of principle: No.

Case #8: Journalist/advisor

You write for a newspaper about a particular field. A research organization in that same field asks you to freelance as a paid communications advisor. Q: Would you do that?

- Yes
- Out of principle: No.

Remarks (if any)

You can use this field to leave us comments or other feedback.

Ready - thanks..

Make sure you hit the 'Submit' button only once!

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