

News Release Template & Best Practices

News releases are an effective way of spreading the word about your affiliate foundation. Below you'll find several tips and a basic template to follow.

Best Practices

- The value of a news release extends beyond engaging with local media. The message in a news release can be repurposed for social media, your webpage, or messages to donors, nonprofits or community leaders.
- When drafting a release, aim for a style that resembles an actual news story with clear, concise presentation of objective information. For example, the CFO follows the Associated Press Stylebook for its news releases and other external communications.
- Ask your local media for their publication deadlines. Send your release at an appropriate time before the deadline.
- Avoid overly promotional, subjective or casual language. Using a formal, just-the-facts tone better reflects the language used by journalists.
 - Including a quote from the affiliate president or other affiliate leader is an opportunity to include a more promotional or casual message.
- Only share factual information that answers the basic Ws (and then some): who, what, when, where, why and how much.
 - For grant announcements: if grant agreements must be signed by recipients, **do not** publish a news release until all signatures are in. In the interest of sharing factual information, the grant isn't complete until the contract (if required) is signed.
- If possible, include a high-quality, high-resolution photograph and a brief caption (or, in the very least, include names and titles for people in the image). Including a photograph can increase the chances that a local media outlet acts on your news release.
- After sending a news release to local media, they may do one of three things:
 - Publish a fully original story or a heavily revised version of the release;
 - Publish the release in its entirety; or
 - Not publish a story or the release.

You (or the CFO) cannot control which action a local media outlet takes. Providing well-written news releases and maintaining good relationships with local media representatives can increase the chances that they use your news release.

- Once you've drafted a news release, the CFO Communications team is available to review and, if appropriate, distribute your release. Ask your director of affiliate engagement or affiliate coordinator to request this support.

- If you are sending the news release to your local media, make it as easy as possible for your media contacts to use the information:
 - Begin the email subject line with “NEWS RELEASE: ” and copy and paste in the subject line of the release.
 - Copy the contents of your document and paste them into an email.
 - Do not attach the document or a PDF of a document.
 - Do attach an image (if available), but be mindful of attachment sizes — ideally 5MB or less.
 - High-resolution images may need to be resized before sending.
 - If sending to multiple outlets, include all email addresses in the BCC field.
 - You should also include addresses for your fellow board members and director of affiliate engagement in the BCC field.
 - Review the subject line, recipients and message before sending the release.

Basic News Release Template

Copy the content below and paste it into a new document.

<Insert Affiliate Logo>

NEWS RELEASE

Date: <Insert the date that you send the release>

Subject: <Insert a short, clear headline mentioning the news item>

Contact: <Insert affiliate contact name, email address and phone number>

The <insert affiliate name> granted \$12,000 to six nonprofits from its community grantmaking endowment. The grants were presented <insert date> at <location>. The recipients are:

- <Insert nonprofit name>: \$2,000 to support <insert purpose>
- <Insert nonprofit name>: \$2,000 to support <insert purpose>
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- <Insert nonprofit name>: \$2,000 to support <insert purpose>

"<Insert a quote from the affiliate president,>" said <Insert president's name>, president of the <insert affiliate name>. "It's okay for the quote to be a bit more casual or promotional."

Donations to the <insert community grantmaking endowment name> will help increase this grantmaking. Donate online at cfozarks.org/affiliates/<insert affiliate URL>.

The <Insert affiliate name>, founded in <insert founding year>, is an affiliate foundation of the Community Foundation of the Ozarks with a mission to improve the quality of life in <insert community/county/region>. The CFO is a regional public charitable foundation established in 1973 that provides asset and resource development, grantmaking and public leadership across central and southern Missouri.

<Insert affiliate name>

<Insert affiliate contact information>

cfozarks.org/affiliates/<insert affiliate URL>