

ASCE PROTOCOL FOR MEDIA OUTREACH

May 2021

Policy: When representing ASCE or any of its institutes, committees, programs, conferences, or other activities, all staff and volunteer leaders must coordinate any contact with the media through ASCE Media Relations. When a staff member or volunteer is contacted by the media, he or she must notify Media Relations either by phone or email, or should refer the reporter to ASCE Media Relations as soon as he or she is notified. If a staff member or volunteer would like to proactively reach out to media, he or she must contact ASCE Media Relations. If a Media Relations staff member asks you to respond to a media request for information or comment, you should attempt to do so promptly and within the reporter's deadline.

Media are defined as: newspapers, radio and TV stations, magazines, online publications media websites, internet bloggers, podcasts, and trade publications (like *ENR*, *Transport Topics*, or *Professional Builder*). Contact with the Society's own publications, including journals, *Civil Engineering* magazine, *ASCE News*, and Section and Branch newsletters, is exempt.

Issue: Uncoordinated contact with the media often results in incomplete, inappropriate, or inaccurate information being disseminated to important audiences. It also can result in missed opportunities to cross-market and effectively achieve communication goals for programs and activities, and hinder Media Relations staff from developing and nurturing effective relationships with key reporters. This policy ensures that staff and volunteer leaders are properly informed on the best way to meet the needs of both media and the society; enables Media Relations staff to track media contacts; and ensures media receive quick responses to requests.

ASCE Staff: All media calls/e-mails must be forwarded promptly to media relations *prior* to responding to any questions, sending information or referring calls to a member. If media call you directly, you should transfer the call to Media Relations for assistance or give them the best phone number to reach Media Relations staff. Do not send background material, answer questions, or refer them to a committee member or staff person until asked to do so by a member of the Media Relations staff. All news releases, press statements, advisories, letters and op-eds, guest blog posts or columns, pitch calls, or any other contact with the media must be coordinated *first* through this organization. Media Relations is the only Society entity authorized to issue news releases on ASCE's behalf.

ASCE Volunteer Leaders: If you receive a media call that has not been referred by the ASCE Media Relations staff and you wish to respond as a member or leader of the society or provide information about an ASCE program, policy, or other activity, you must *first* contact someone in Media Relations. All correspondence or any other written or verbal contact with media initiated by the member should be coordinated first with Media Relations. This includes all news releases, press statements, advisories, letters and op-eds, guest blog posts or columns, and pitch calls. When representing a Section or Branch, members do not need to clear their media contacts, but are encouraged to inform the section's designated PR coordinator and to seek professional counsel from the manager of state public relations on staff. Members should also notify his or her employer to avoid any conflicts of interest.

Media Relations Hours: Media Relations is under the Government Relations and Infrastructure Initiatives Department, which is staffed Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST. Media Relations staff is always available after hours in the evenings and on weekends and holidays.

Media calls should be referred in the following order:

Manager, Media Relations

Kevin Longley 202-701-8768 klongley@asce.org

ASCE Central: 1-800-548-2723