

NERC & BAS POLICY ON PUBLIC RELATIONS ISSUES WITHIN AFI

Communicating science to the public is a commitment set out in the NERC Charter. NERC expects award-holders to communicate their science to audiences outside of the scientific community, and to raise awareness of how science affects issues of public interest.

Every year, many AFI projects reach the stage of generating exciting new findings, after several years of substantial investment. It is important for all the institutions involved, and for the long-term enthusiasm and support for Antarctic science, that NERC and BAS should capitalise on that investment. This includes the effective handling of press and media coverage, together with proper acknowledgement of the source of logistic and financial support.

NERC and BAS have agreed the following policy, which we ask you to adhere to:

1. Acknowledgement of financial and logistic support

All publications based on AFI-funded projects must carry a statement to the effect that the work was carried out under the auspices of the NERC Antarctic Funding Initiative (AFI), with logistic support from the British Antarctic Survey. Conference posters should carry a similar statement and incorporate the logos of both NERC and BAS. Digital versions of the logos are available from Candy Sorrel (cmso@nerc.ac.uk) at NERC.

2. Coordination of media coverage.

BAS, and Antarctic affairs generally, attract a great deal of media interest. The Press Office at BAS has extensive experience of working with the media and is the natural first point of UK contact by the media when any Antarctic news breaks. It is most important that the BAS Press Office (Linda Capper LMCA@bas.ac.uk or Athena Dinar AMDJ@bas.ac.uk), as well as your University/local Press Office, is kept closely in touch with any impending developments, so that media coverage can be effectively coordinated. This will ensure maximum impact and, at the same time, reduce the opportunities for confusion or conflict with other breaking news stories.

You should use the BAS Press Office as the central point of contact for any AFI media announcements, although you will have local contacts for newspaper or media interviews. You should inform the BAS Press Office of any interviews that you give, or articles that you write. Both the BAS Press Office and the NERC Policy & Communications Office - Marion O'Sullivan (pressoffice@nerc.ac.uk Tel: 01793 411727) - will be pleased to discuss your ideas and possibilities for future Press Releases, and can advise you about how to prepare your material so that it achieves maximum impact. Furthermore, both offices have extensive photographic and video material on which you can draw.

3. Knowledge Exchange

AFI grant holders should be aware that using NERC science for the benefit of the UK forms part of the NERC mission. NERC science has the potential to underpin the development of sustainable solutions to environmental problems. It informs policy development and can lead to new and improved processes, services and products. Grant holders should familiarise themselves with NERC's knowledge exchange policy and outline strategy (published at: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/introduction/strategy.asp>).

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