



COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

For Local Charities and Good Causes

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This toolkit supersedes all previous communications guidance supplied to recipients of Community Programmes grants. An online version of this pack and supporting documents are available on our [Omnibus system here](#) and on the 'Grant holders' page of the individual Postcode Trust websites.





INTRODUCTION

How to use this toolkit and acknowledge your funding award.

Congratulations on receiving your award!

We are proud that Postcode Lottery players support thousands of local charities and good causes like yours. We hope the funds they raise by playing the Postcode Lottery will help support your work to change communities, and lives, for the better.

Effective communications play a vital role in making change happen. That's why we've collaborated with Media Trust to compile this practical communications toolkit to help you raise the visibility of your work and the impact of your grant.

Though we've aimed to make it as comprehensive as possible, we recognise that small local charities such as yours may not have the time or resources to implement all the suggestions included here.

“

There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.

Margaret J. Wheatley

”

Feel free to refer to this toolkit for advice on creating a communications plan, crafting compelling content, getting media coverage, engaging online communities, measuring your impact and much more, including:

- ▶ Sharing authentic stories
- ▶ Engaging underrepresented groups
- ▶ Using accessible language to connect with diverse audiences
- ▶ Pitching to local media and navigating interactions with journalists
- ▶ Identifying and testing new comms strategies
- ▶ Demonstrating the impact of your work.

We've also included customisable templates for creating a communications plan, writing media releases, interview pitching, letters to elected representatives, as well as a list of handy resources and guidelines.

We hope you find this toolkit useful – please email trustcomms@postcodelottery.co.uk if you have any questions.



INTRODUCTION

Acknowledging your award

When referencing your award, please use the following terms:

✔ Grant Award Funding Support

✘ Please **DO NOT** use the word **Donation**.

Every pound awarded to charities and good causes comes from our players. That's why the phrase "thanks to Postcode Lottery players" is so important to us.

Here are other examples of phrases you may wish to include in your social media, website, news releases and other communications activities.

“...made possible thanks to Postcode Lottery players.

“...funds raised by players of the Postcode Lottery.

We often talk about “...thanks to support from Postcode Lottery players too.

Please remember our players raise funds, but they do not award them. Funds are awarded by the relevant Postcode Trust, which should also be referenced in your communications.

For example:

“...Funds raised by Postcode Lottery players and awarded by Postcode X Trust.

“...Funding awarded by Postcode X Trust and raised by Postcode Lottery players.

And if possible, please place the Postcode Lottery dual logo somewhere that's easily visible on your website, as well as other marketing and communications materials such as newsletters, reports, leaflets, brochures, banners, posters, invitations, etc.

For guidance on how to access and apply our dual logos, see the [Brand toolkit on page 22](#).



CREATING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Articulate your aim, objectives, key messaging and audience

A communications strategy sets out your aim, objectives, key messaging and audience, and allows you to think strategically about bringing these elements together to tell the story of your local cause. Building on this, your communication plan details your specific communications activities and timescales.

Though having a communications strategy and plan is not a requirement of your grant, it might be useful for your organisation to compile one if you can. We hope the information provided here will help you to do so.

Use our [Communications plan template](#) to help pull together all the elements needed.

Aim and objectives

Your aim is a statement of intent that sets out the primary purpose of your work. For example:

We aim to double the number of local people coming to our 'gardening for wellbeing' project over the next three years.

Once you've defined your aim, you can set out your communications objectives. These are the steps to help meet your aim. For example, they could be:

- ▶ Raise awareness of the mental health benefits of community gardening
- ▶ Increase the number of people self-referring to the 'gardening for wellbeing' project
- ▶ Secure three pieces of coverage for our 'gardening for wellbeing' project in local press



CREATING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Key messaging

To support your objectives, you'll need clear, strong key messages that engage your audience and align with your goals. Keep them short and powerful, emphasising two or three essential points about your cause or project.

In addition, we would love to see acknowledgement of Postcode Lottery players, thanking them for their support. For suggested wording, see below or return to [page 4](#).

Here are some examples of strong key messages:

- ▶ Community gardening offers significant mental health benefits for individuals
- ▶ Community gardening can help foster a better sense of community and connection
- ▶ This project is possible thanks to funds raised by Postcode Lottery players

Audience and channels

Next, think about who your audiences are and what will resonate with them the most.

For instance, local residents who feel isolated might value community gardening as a chance to connect outdoors and forge new friendships. On the other hand, your local authority could be interested in the potential to alleviate pressure on local mental health services.

If you're unsure about your target audience, reflect on those who can help you achieve your goals. Ask yourself: Who's key to the success of this project? For example, when promoting a local event, it makes sense to get in touch with people who are active and visible in the community, such as teachers, school boards, faith leaders and local shop owners.

Even if you are aiming to reach a wide range of people with your campaign, it is worth identifying specific target groups and trying to tailor your messaging to them.

Carefully select your communication channels – whether this is social media platforms like X, Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn, or outlets like local radio, newspapers, local news websites and community newsletters.

It can feel overwhelming choosing which channels to use, so prioritise quality and embrace your strengths. If you're an excellent writer but not keen on public speaking, you might choose a newspaper over local TV or social media channels over podcasting.

Concentrate on one or two channels that you feel most comfortable with.



CREATING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Measuring success

You may want to consider how you could measure and communicate your impact, if you have the time and resources to do so. For example, for the objective of 'raising awareness about the mental health advantages of community gardening', potential measures could include:

- ▶ Boosting awareness by 10%, as indicated by pre- and post-event polls following speaker engagements in our community garden
- ▶ Achieving 5,000 interactions (likes, views and shares) on our social media posts
- ▶ 60% of respondents from our email survey agreeing that 'gardening has mental health benefits'.

Deciding what success looks like before you begin your planned activities will help you understand how well they're doing. Figure out exactly what you'll measure and how – this makes it easier to judge how well your messages are working and what to do better next time. You can find more about this on [page 21, What's working, and what isn't.](#)

Plan your communications activity in advance

This means putting together:

- ▶ Important dates for your calendar (like national awareness days that can help draw attention to your news or dates to avoid because of other events)
- ▶ A schedule for tasks and when they need to be done, along with the person in charge of each task
- ▶ A list of people who can speak on behalf of your project, when they're free and how to contact them
- ▶ A document with answers to common questions (FAQs).

Planning and preparing for your communications activities in good time will save effort and stress in the long run, and means you're all set when the time comes.



BRINGING YOUR MESSAGING TO LIFE

Make best use of key messages, calls to action, storytelling and data.

Capturing an audience's attention in today's media-saturated world is a big challenge. But by crafting compelling messaging and tapping into your audience's emotions, you can successfully cut through the noise and leave a lasting impression.

Here are some tips for how to do this:

- ▶ **Simplify your message**
Even complex ideas should be clear and understandable.
- ▶ **Keep it relatable**
Use simple terms and avoid unfamiliar jargon that may stop people from engaging with your work
- ▶ **Highlight collaboration**
Use 'us' and 'together with' to underscore a shared cause and create a sense of unity
- ▶ **Show, don't tell**
Blend visuals, stories and text for impactful communication
- ▶ **Practice inclusivity**
Consider how your messaging can be adapted for people of different ages, abilities, backgrounds and beliefs
- ▶ **Focus on local storytelling**
Share personal, local stories for emotional connections

- ▶ **Empower action**
If people feel like they can make a difference, they're more likely to try. Show them how their individual efforts can have an impact
- ▶ **Acknowledge our players**
It's important to acknowledge that your project was made possible thanks to players of the Postcode Lottery. [See page 4](#) for suggested wording.

Your calls to action

After considering your key messages and how to tailor them for different audiences, it's time to focus on your call to action.

Think of your call to action as a signpost, telling your audience what you'd like them to do after engaging with your content. Examples include 'like and share', 'donate and support', or 'contact your local MP'.

Keep your call to action practical and realistic. It's a good idea to vary your call to action based on the platform you are using: for example, keeping it simpler for social media or fleshing it out for newsletters.

You might also want to include multiple calls to action in the same piece of content. This can be useful as it enables choice, but take care not to overwhelm your audience.

Once you've established how to communicate your message and your call to action, you need to think how else to bring your messaging to life. Two effective but different tools for this are **storytelling** and **data**.



BRINGING YOUR MESSAGING TO LIFE

Storytelling

Using real people's stories helps to make your communications relatable and authentic. As a small charity or local cause, people's stories (also called case studies) vividly illustrate the real-life impact of your work in the community.

Be thoughtful with contributors

Make sure you're considerate in how you approach people who are sharing their stories. For example, be clear with your 'ask' and give them the chance to review and sign off on any quotes or articles before they're published. [You can find out more about how to do this here.](#)

If you are taking photographs or video of contributors, make sure that you obtain their written consent to use these – you can use our [Photo and video consent form template](#) and turn to [page 10](#) for more information. And ensure that you comply with GDPR when collecting and keeping their contact information – turn to [page 18](#).

Stories can be presented in different ways. You can ask people for videos or quotes that can be used on social media or in a press release. You can also ask if they'd be happy to be interviewed by journalists or featured in a blog.

When developing your stories, focus on quality over quantity. Make sure the experiences and opinions of your interviewees reflect the aims and values of your organisation and if possible, that they represent diverse voices and communities.

As well as using emotive real-life stories, think about requesting supporting statements from some well-known names in your community or your sector, for example local celebrities, politicians, social media influencers, campaigners or local experts. Their support could give you credibility, add weight to your messaging and potentially help secure media coverage.

Data, another powerful tool

Statistics and data also make a powerful tool in communications campaigns, and can be used to:

- ▶ Talk accurately about an issue. Having data means you can use statistics instead of phrases like 'a lot' or 'very little'. Let's compare the two statements below:
 1. "The wellbeing of rescued cats has been found to improve following rehoming by our Petersfield Animal Protection Group"
 2. "A study found that 85% of rescued cats saw an improvement in wellbeing after being rehomed by Petersfield Animal Protection Group"

The second statement makes a much stronger case for support, don't you think?
- ▶ Make an issue feel real. For example: "every year, 300 animals have to be rehomed in Petersfield"
- ▶ Provide a campaign target. For example, if you know that just 50% of people in your community currently adopt rescue pets, you can campaign to increase that figure to 70%.

MORE THAN WORDS

Creating compelling visual content to support your communications.

While clear and concise language is vital for successful campaigning, visual content can also help you to creatively convey what you're trying to say and communicate the difference you're making.

Visual content (sometimes called 'visual assets') is often the most shareable content on social media. Using visual assets gives you a better chance of reaching more people in your target audience. Photography, video and infographics are the three most common types of visual assets.

Using images to support your campaigning

Building a collection of images (an 'image bank') will allow you to have photos at the ready to attach to social media posts or send to journalists and other stakeholders. Shooting and gathering these in advance helps save time down the line.

Planning is crucial to ensure you're able to capture exactly what you need. If you're taking pictures or shooting video involving volunteers, advance planning is key.

Top tips for filming and photography

- ▶ **Think about diversity.** Try to represent all the communities you're hoping to reach when choosing your volunteer models
- ▶ **Location and timing.** Think about where and when you'll capture content. For example, you'll probably want to shoot outside before it gets dark. If you're shooting at a venue, check whether it'll be open for the duration of the shoot

- ▶ Ask your models to bring a few **changes of clothes** and let them know what you want them to wear. The clothing should fit with, but not distract from, your story. Avoid logos, brand names and distracting patterns. Stripes can cause a strobing effect on camera
- ▶ **Don't go it alone!** Find a couple of colleagues, friends or volunteers to help ensure everything runs smoothly
- ▶ **DIY or professional?** Think about the purpose of your shots. If the content is mainly for social and media outreach, taking photos yourself on a smartphone will probably do. However, if you're looking to produce printed materials with high-resolution images, you may wish to use a professional photographer
- ▶ **Ensure you have permission.** It may sound obvious, but remember to tell those people you are taking photographs of how, why and where you'll be using the images and get their written consent. You can use our [Photo and video consent form template](#) to create a consent form for your organisation if you don't already have one.
- ▶ **Acknowledge Postcode Lottery players.** Remember to acknowledge your player funding by using the Postcode Lottery's dual brand logo where possible. Photos showcasing projects and activities funded by Postcode Lottery players are great for effectively illustrating the positive impact of funding.

Find guidance on how to access and apply our dual logos in the [Brand toolkit on page 22](#).

MORE THAN WORDS

Obtaining consent

When supplying your images to us for use in communications, we ask that you help us ensure full compliance by obtaining written consent from individuals photographed or their carers, parents and/or guardians at the time the photo is taken. You can use our [Photo and video consent form template](#) to create a consent form for your organisation if you don't already have one.

Stock images

If you are unable to obtain suitable images of your own, stock imagery can provide a useful fallback. Two great free resources we recommend are [Unsplash](#) and [Pexels](#). Both are libraries of high-quality stock images that are free to use.

Using video to support your campaigning

Video is an extremely popular way for audiences to consume news and other content and, when done right, can help you reach a huge amount of people in a short space of time.

A smartphone is generally good enough for shooting videos for social media. Don't worry too much about video content not looking polished – content shot on a phone is often seen as more 'authentic' by viewers. Just make sure you're somewhere quiet so that any speakers can be heard. A detailed guide on how to successfully shoot video using your smartphone is found [here](#).

Live versus pre-record

Usually, pre-recorded video performs better and is of a higher quality than live videos. However, sometimes people choose to go live in their campaigns. While this can be effective, bear in mind there's a lot to think about when going live.

You can't plan for what might happen, it's often difficult to save the content for longer-term use and people can't always 'share' live content in the same way they can content that's pre-recorded and uploaded. For these reasons, you often reach less people with live video than you do pre-recorded content.

Choose your presenters carefully. If your primary target audience is parents of young children, do you have a parent who can talk to camera? If not, we suggest sense checking your script with someone who has young children to ensure the language and tone used is appropriate for your audience.

Now you can plan the recording itself. Ensure you've got good natural light, an appropriate backdrop and the sound is clear.

When interviewing someone for video, ask them to repeat the question in their answer. For example, if you ask them their name, they should say "My name's Anuj" rather than just "Anuj". This makes it much easier to create a cohesive narrative when you're editing.

MORE THAN WORDS



Consider this when planning video

Planning in advance will save you a lot of stress on the day. Ask yourself:

- ▶ **What's the purpose of the video?** What do I want viewers to feel or do when they watch it?
- ▶ **Portrait or landscape?** Filming landscape is better for news sites but portrait might be better for social media
- ▶ **Where will it be uploaded?** In other words, how will you share it? Perhaps you're planning to screen it at an event. You might want to consider platforms like YouTube or Vimeo if you're sharing the link to newsletter subscribers or journalists. Otherwise, uploading it directly to your social media accounts makes it more immediate for people to access and view
- ▶ **Do you need to edit your video?** Apps like Instasize have both free and premium subscription options for straightforward editing. You can also do basic editing on your smartphone, such as cutting the length of a video
- ▶ **Will it be suitable for social?** To ensure a video clip is optimal for all social media channels, shoot it in square or in 9:16 (vertical portrait), and make it no longer than two minutes in length (10–30 seconds is ideal)
- ▶ **How will you ensure your video is accessible?** Make sure you subtitle your video and ensure it's accessible to deaf and disabled audiences
- ▶ **Not confident with video?** If you don't have experience of recording and uploading videos, find someone to help. This is a brilliant volunteer job for someone who can put their skills to good use and is much more time efficient than you trying to learn from scratch!

Most important of all, don't overcomplicate things. Tell the story and keep it simple. Your video should be no longer than two minutes and for social media, 10 to 30 seconds is ideal.

Don't forget to include your call to action at the end!

Using infographics

Infographics are images that convey key statistics and information by using easy-to-digest and visually striking graphics or images. This makes them very shareable and means they can help you reach and engage large audiences.

Tools like [Canva](#) can help you create infographics. Charities and non-profits get free access to Canva's premium service. As well as media templates in different sizes for both Instagram and X, Canva also has poster and flyer templates – useful for promoting events. The platform is straightforward to use and there are numerous tutorial videos available on [YouTube](#).

An alternative to Canva is [Adobe Spark](#) which also offers a free-to-use version of its online tool, although this comes with a faint watermark.





LAUNCHING YOUR CONTENT



How to choose your channels and keep people interested.

You've written your communications strategy and plan, crafted your key messages and created your content. Now it's time to share it with your audience.

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

'Traditional' media can be categorised into print (e.g. newspapers), broadcast (e.g. radio and TV) and online (including blogs).

Within this, you can categorise by audience:

Media	Audience	Example
National	Anybody in Britain	
Local	Anybody in your local area	The Northern Echo
Sector	Those interested in a specific topic	

For traditional media, consider who your target audience is and where they go for their news. If you're talking to people about their local community, then local media probably makes the most sense.

Local radio can be particularly effective – being able to speak directly to listeners can bring a story to life. It's worth reaching out to your local radio stations and asking them if you can talk about your projects. Some stations also offer free advertising to community groups, which might be worth exploring.

Alternatively, if you want to reach a specific group, like the South Asian community, you could look at more focused outlets like BBC Asian Network.









National news coverage obviously packs a huge punch, but it can be hard to secure and most readers or viewers won't be local to you. Working with journalists can also be time-consuming, so it's important to weigh up the cost/benefit of trying to secure national coverage.

LAUNCHING YOUR CONTENT

Social Media

Be smart with your choices for social media and prioritise the channels you use. It can be time-consuming producing tailored content for numerous channels, so start by focusing on one or two that best fit you, your project and how you want to communicate.

Here is a brief overview of the most widely used social media platforms:

Platform	Good for...
 Facebook	Content that people can engage with and share with their personal networks
 Instagram	Creating and sharing image-focused pictures and video
 LinkedIn	Sharing news and updates with professional networks
 Nextdoor	Connects neighbours in a local area, so good for promoting local activities and events
 Snapchat	Instant messenger prioritising video and image-led messages
 TikTok	Creating and sharing short videos to inform and entertain
 X (formerly Twitter)	Sharing news, views, infographics and short videos with the X community
 Threads	New Meta platform for real-time conversations and sharing; aims to provide a similar experience to X

While many people use a range of platforms, it's worth considering their main audience demographics when deciding which ones to go for. For example, TikTok is very popular with teens, while Facebook is more popular among older audiences. Policymakers and elected representatives (MPs, MSPs and MSs) generally use X.

Active users on Nextdoor are often people who want to know what's happening in their area and what they can do to help make it a better place to live. This means it could give you a cohort of potential volunteers and campaigners at your fingertips.

Remember to play to your strengths. If you're a confident Facebook user and have never even looked at Instagram, it's probably better to stick with what you know. If there's a platform you think you should really be using for your campaigning but you're not familiar with it, find someone who is and can help get you started on the channel.



LAUNCHING YOUR CONTENT

Creating engaging social media content

With the sheer volume of content on social media, it's important to create content about your project that will stand out and capture the attention of your audience.

- ▶ A good social media post will be **clear**, have the **key points upfront**, and **invoke an emotional response** – whether that's laughter, sadness, shock or something else
- ▶ **Including an image in your post is far more engaging than text only**. You can use tools like Canva to overlay text and logos onto an image
- ▶ **Video posts are the most engaging of all**, so use short, snappy video clips where possible. Clips shot square or in 9:16 (vertical portrait) and up to two minutes in length are optimal for all social channels
- ▶ **Reel content** is increasingly favoured by social media platforms that offer this format, and should be shot in 9:16
- ▶ **Tailor your content** to the platform
- ▶ Include tags, links and a **clear call to action**.

You can find more tips in the [Writing for social media](#) resource at the end.

Thanking our #PostcodeLotteryPeople

Many charities thank us on social media for the funding they receive. But it's important that our players receive the recognition, not us.

On social media, you can use the hashtag **#PostcodeLotteryPeople** to thank our players.

Capitalise #PostcodeLotteryPeople, as capital letters on hashtags can be read out loud by audio tools for the visually impaired.

We suggest positioning the tag near the start of your post, rather than leaving it to the end. For example:

“ Thanks to the support of #PostcodeLotteryPeople, we've scaled up our engagement with young people and reached an extra 500 fostered children since last year.

For more guidance on thanking our players and acknowledging your award, return to [page 4](#).




LAUNCHING YOUR CONTENT

Our social media channels

At the Postcode Lottery, we use our presence on a variety of social media platforms to disseminate our messages to a range of audiences.


Charity content, stories about our winners and customer service information is shared via Facebook, X and Instagram. Our accounts on Threads and Snapchat are currently dormant, but we encourage the use of our hashtags on these channels where appropriate.

 **@PostcodeLotteryUK** is our Instagram account. We would love you to follow, share and tag us in relevant posts, stories and reels.

 **@PostcodeLotteryUK** is our X account. Please follow and tag us in your tweets. As a 'results only' channel, we will not like/reply/retweet/requote.

 **Postcode Lottery UK** is our Facebook page. We encourage you to tag us in your posts and stories.

 **@PostcodeLotteryUK** is our TikTok account. Please follow us and tag us in your posts.

 We also encourage you to follow Postcode Lottery UK on **LinkedIn** and tag us in your charity's posts when appropriate.

Please ensure you only tag the handles listed above, as fake accounts pop up regularly. We are always grateful to have these flagged to us by direct message on the relevant platform.

Name checking and tagging us

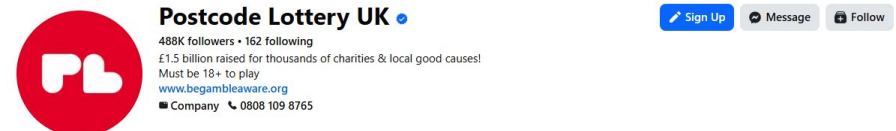
When referring to the Postcode Lottery in your posts...

✔ Do use:

- ▶ Postcode Lottery in full
- ▶ #PostcodeLottery
- ▶ Postcode Lottery UK on Facebook and LinkedIn
- ▶ @PostcodeLotteryUK on Instagram
- ▶ @PostcodeLotteryUK on X

✘ Don't use:

- ▶ Any abbreviation of our brand name



LAUNCHING YOUR CONTENT

Top tips for using social media

Think about timing. The timing of your post can be the difference between someone seeing it and sharing it, or not. Consider your audience and when they are most likely to be online, as well as other factors like key events – for example, avoid exam results day when targeting young people.

There might also be big events or days you deliberately choose to post your content on, such as Volunteers' Week. If these events have their own hashtags (e.g. #VolunteersWeek), you can tag these in your own posts to reach more people.

Keep it short and regular. Posting succinct content on a regular basis will have a greater impact than less frequent and longer posts. The more your followers see your content, the more likely they are to engage with it.

Some platforms like X and Instagram have scheduling tools that allow you to schedule your posts ahead of time. This means you can set up a regular flow of content without having to log in the whole time. Tools like Hootsuite offer similar features across a range of platforms.

Try something different. Consider the kind of content your audience will find most engaging. You might want to try partnering with well-known local influencers or encouraging your followers to create user-generated content (sometimes called 'UGC') for your channels. For example, you might ask them to post a selfie on their social channels with your campaign's hashtag.



Use hashtags. As well as using the hashtags #PostcodeLottery and #PostcodeLotteryPeople, consider using cause-related or topical hashtags. For example, if you're an environmental charity, you might use #SustainableLiving or #SecondhandSeptember.

Always include a call to action. Finally remember to make sure all your content, whichever platform you share it on, includes a clear call to action for anyone reading listening or watching.



LAUNCHING YOUR CONTENT

Email marketing

Email marketing is another way to keep those interested in your work up to date. Building a mailing list can take time but it helps you to curate a loyal and interested audience, so it's generally worth the effort you put in.

Free tools like [Hubspot](#), [Sender](#) and [MailChimp](#) are useful for creating e-newsletters.

Reach out to your social media followers or people you know and ask them to sign up to your newsletter. Also, remember to have a sign-up sheet or a QR code linking to a digital sign-up form at any local in-person events.

You can find more information on how to construct an e-newsletter [here](#).

Remember GDPR

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is the current data privacy and security law and it applies across the UK. Make sure your mechanisms for collecting and storing personal data, including email addresses, are GDPR-compliant. We are unable to provide you with legal advice about GDPR, but you can find out more in the official guidance [here](#).

Your website content

To grow your visibility and impact online, get strategic about crafting your web content. Write articles and blogs that are tailored to your audience's interests and needs. You can use keyword search engines like Wordstream to look up search terms that are related to your cause, and use them in copy for better search engine discoverability.

Engaging and informative content like articles, blog posts and infographics can establish your authority and captivate visitors. Don't forget to leverage your social media channels to promote your content and broaden your reach. And remember to thank the players of the Postcode Lottery (and use our dual logos if possible) wherever you talk about a funded project.

Backlinks

Building backlinks – links to your website from other reputable websites or blog posts – can significantly improve your website's credibility and search engine ranking. Collaborate with partners and other local charities, share success stories and provide valuable resources to encourage others to link to your site.

And of course, please consider linking back to the [Postcode Lottery charities page](#) wherever player funding for your project is mentioned.



GETTING MEDIA COVERAGE

Step-by-step guide to working with the media.

Securing media coverage for your project can help you reach a wider audience and inspire more people to take positive action. It's also an opportunity to thank Postcode Lottery players for making your work possible.

Don't be afraid of working with the media. Just be prepared.

Step 1: Compile your media list

To get started, think about which local media (newspapers, radio and TV) and journalists you want to talk to. This is called a media list and you should aim to gather contact names, emails and phone numbers where possible. Often journalists will share this information on their social media channels. We've provided tips on this in our [Media release template](#).

Step 2: Develop your content and resources

Once you have a list of local media, work on developing the content you'll need:

- ▶ **A press release** announcing the work you'll be doing – we've provided a [Media release template](#) to support you with this
- ▶ **Case studies.** These should be of real people with real stories which they're happy to share with the press, as discussed on [page 9](#)
- ▶ **Supporting statements.** Quotes from relevant respected figures and organisations e.g. local campaigners and community leaders, as mentioned on [page 9](#)

- ▶ **Spokesperson list.** A list of your key spokespeople (e.g. CEO, Services Manager and Volunteer Coordinator), their availability and preferred contact details
- ▶ **FAQs document.** Possible questions and suggested answers on everything you could be asked
- ▶ **Accompanying assets.** This is where the images, videos and infographics mentioned earlier come in.

Obtaining quotes and clearance from us

The communications team can provide quotes on behalf of the awarding Postcode Trust – just get in touch if you'd like a quote from us. Please send all draft press releases to trustcomms@postcodelottery.co.uk for approval before sending out, allowing five working days for clearance.

Step 3: Pitch and prepare for media interviews

There are two stages to think about when it comes to media interviews:

- ▶ Pitching to the media title or individual journalist to secure the interview
- ▶ Preparing and supporting whoever is doing the interview

GETTING MEDIA COVERAGE

Feel free to use our [Pitching to local media template email](#). Three important rules to remember when pitching are:

- 1. Don't waffle.** Begin your email or call to the journalist with the who, where, when, what and why of what you want to tell them. Be as succinct as possible in your introduction. You have to persuade them this is important for them to cover
- 2. Who's available for interview?** Provide details of case studies and spokespeople who are available and who have agreed to be put forward
- 3. Try and tie it to something newsworthy.** Has there been anything relevant in the news recently? Is there a national awareness day or week approaching that would be a good hook? For ideas, take a look at www.awarenessdays.com – you can use a simple sentence to link the two e.g. 'Volunteers Week next month is a perfect time to share this story since it's all about people giving up their time to give something back.'

Once you've secured an interview, the next thing to think about is interview preparation.

Preparing a case study for interview

Confirm in advance with the subject of your case study that they're happy for their full name to be used. If they want to see and suggest edits to the interview before it's published, make sure you raise and agree this with the journalist ahead of time. Remember this may not always be possible – 'read backs' aren't standard nor guaranteed, especially when journalists are working to tight deadlines.

Ask the subject if they would like you to sit in on the interview with them. Finally, try and secure written confirmation from the journalist that if they use your case study, they will also include a spokesperson quote from, or at least mention, your organisation.

Preparing a spokesperson for interview

If you are prepping a spokesperson, ask the journalist in advance what topics they'd like to cover. This will help you put together a briefing document which should include any useful and relevant facts, statistics, news stories and the suggested line to take on any potentially tricky questions.





WHAT'S WORKING...AND WHAT ISN'T?

Measuring the effectiveness of your communications activities.

As part of your communications plan, you might consider looking at how to measure your progress and success, if you have the time and resources to do so. You might choose one specific measure, or a selection.

Examples of outcomes and results you might decide to measure include:

- ▶ Number of people who turn up for an event
- ▶ Growth in social media followers
- ▶ Digital engagement, for example likes or shares on social media, or increased email open rates
- ▶ Achieving an increase in new newsletter sign-ups or a fundraising target.

Make your metrics as detailed as possible. For example, rather than 'increased email open rates', try and be more specific – e.g. 'open rates increase by 20% in 12 months'.

Your metrics should speak to your project's objectives and your communications plan, so if one of your objectives was 'raising awareness of my charity's work', the corresponding measure could be growth in the number of social media followers.

Google analytics

If you have a website, you can also use Google Analytics to help track your web traffic and where it's coming from. This is a free tool.

For advice and tips on how to start using Google Analytics, visit support.google.com and search 'Get started with Analytics'.

Once you're up and running with Analytics, you can look at trends like:

- ▶ How many website visitors did we generate this month from social media?
- ▶ What percentage of email newsletter signups came from homepage visitors?
- ▶ How many donations did we receive from Facebook ads?

You can use this information to shape website-based strategies for your communications and related measures for success. It's worth taking a bit of time, if you're able, to evaluate what worked and what didn't. Use any available data to dive into the reasons behind why something has or hasn't worked. This will help you continually improve your communications plan.



BRAND TOOLKIT

How to access and use our dual logos.

We're thrilled that many supported charities choose to showcase the support of Postcode Lottery players by incorporating our branding into their marketing materials and communications outputs.

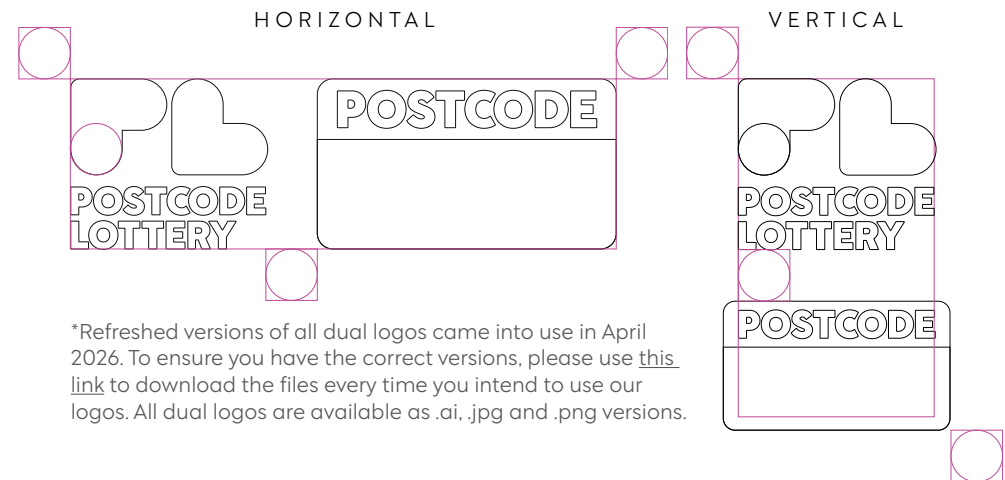
To ensure consistency, we kindly ask you to adhere to this guidance when featuring our logos on materials and outputs, including:

- ▶ Websites and blogs
- ▶ Social media
- ▶ Leaflets and brochures
- ▶ Invitations
- ▶ Newsletters (printed or digital)
- ▶ Reports and publications (printed or digital)
- ▶ Posters and pull-up banners
- ▶ Presentations and information boards
- ▶ Vehicle livery and equipment
- ▶ Uniforms or clothing for staff and people over 25.

Using our dual brand logo

Please acknowledge the support of players and the awarding Trust by using the dual brand logo for the relevant Trust. For example, if your organisation is awarded funds from Postcode Local Trust, you should use that Trust's dual logo.

Horizontal and vertical options for each Trust are available on the 'Grant holders' page of the relevant Trust website. They look like this:*



*Refreshed versions of all dual logos came into use in April 2026. To ensure you have the correct versions, please use [this link](#) to download the files every time you intend to use our logos. All dual logos are available as .ai, .jpg and .png versions.

Young people

No-one who is under 25, or who appears to be under 25, can appear the Postcode Lottery branded clothing



BRAND TOOLKIT

Publications and print

When using the logos on printed material, please make sure that you meet the following minimum sizes:

Size of materials	Minimum size of dual logo stack	
	Horizontal Stack	Vertical Stack
Up to and including A5	20mm in height	40mm in height
Up to and including A4	25mm in height	45mm in height
Up to and including A3	30mm in height	50mm in height

Digital

We recommend a minimum width of 60px, and a clear area around the logo of 40px. However, we understand the responsive design of websites, e-newsletter templates etc will make the size seen on-screen harder to control.

Dos and don'ts

DO:

- ✓ Always use the dual logo format to acknowledge our players as well as the awarding Trust
- ✓ When using our logos alongside that of another organisation, ensure it has equal prominence
- ✓ Keep us informed of your plans and obtain our approval for your final design by emailing the charity communications team

DON'T:

- ✗ Change or alter the logos in any way
- ✗ Redraw, stretch or crop the logos, and do not add or remove any elements
- ✗ Use a drop shadow beneath the outline of our logos
- ✗ Use our logos on clothing or sports kit worn by under-25s.
- ✗ Use the Postcode Lottery logo on its own to acknowledge funding

How to download the right dual logo

Go to the 'Grant holders' page on the website of your awarding Trust, where you will find a link to download the dual logo.

TEMPLATES & RESOURCES

Media release template

Your media release gives journalists all the information they would need to write a news story about your campaign or project.

Checklist for a good media release:

- ▶ Find a newsworthy angle. Try to identify a strong news hook and start with that.
 - ▶ Keep your headline short and snappy.
 - ▶ Include succinct information about your group or organisation: who you are and what you do.
 - ▶ Acknowledge your grant – include a thank you to Postcode Lottery players (refer to the guidance on page 4 of the toolkit). Write in the third person and use factual, plain language.
 - ▶ Avoid using hyperbolic adjectives like “amazing” and “brilliant” in the main body of the media release. However, these are fine in quotes where people are expressing opinions.
 - ▶ Keep it local. Stress the relevance of your project or campaign for the local community. For example, continue to refer throughout the release to your local area and the fact you want to work with – and for – the community.
- ▶ Try to include impactful quotes from real people (‘case studies’) who have been affected by your cause or have benefited from your activities.
 - ▶ Try to secure external support in the form of a quote from someone with influence or relevance, for example your local parliamentarian or a local community leader.
 - ▶ If you can’t get a quote from an external spokesperson, consider whether you could include a statement from your CEO, a trustee or the coordinator of your project.
 - ▶ At the end of your release, after Notes to Editors, include what’s called a ‘boilerplate’. This is a section that explains broadly what you do and provides more information on this.





TEMPLATES & RESOURCES

How to source journalist contact details

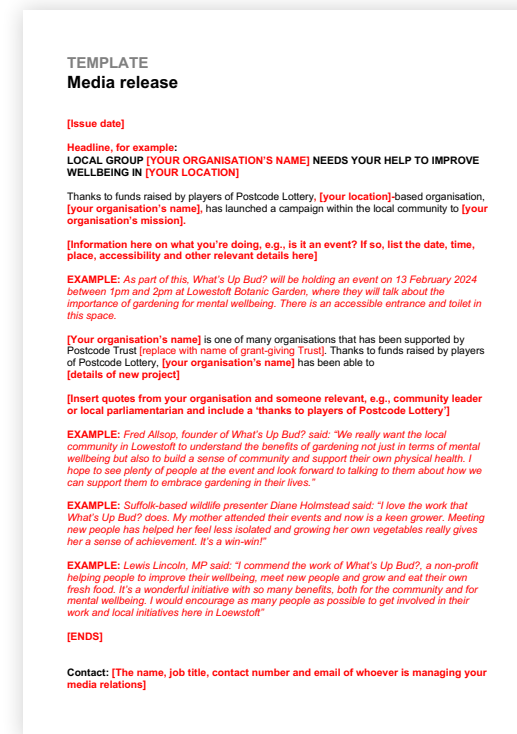
These days, you don't need a dedicated PR person to get in touch with journalists. Here's where to find contact details online:

Media outlets' websites. Visit the websites of relevant media outlets and look for a "Contact Us" or "Editorial Team" section. Often, you'll find the contact information for different departments, including news, features and more.

Social media. Many journalists are active on X. Follow them and engage with their content. Sometimes, they include contact information in their bio or share it in their tweets. You can also search for journalists on LinkedIn who cover topics related to your press release. While some information might be restricted, you can still find valuable contacts and send connection requests to initiate conversations.

Free online directory. You can sign up for a free account on the media database service [MuckRack](#) to look for journalists' profiles along with their contact information and recent articles. After sending the release to the journalist, follow up with a call later that day or the following morning to see if they received it. Ask if there's any further information you can give them to help them write about your cause or project

Click [here](#) to download this Word document template



To get your press release out into the world, you can also use [Pressat](#), which offers a free press release distribution service for charities and social enterprises.

TEMPLATES & RESOURCES

Pitching to local media

It's natural to feel nervous but pitching to the media needn't be intimidating. Remember, this is about pitching local news to local media. You've got exactly what they're looking for! Here are a few tips and a template to get you started.

Tips to nail your pitch:

- ▶ **Think local.** Your message must resonate with the local community and local press. Keep it snappy, and deliver your key points quickly, like you would in the opening paragraph of a press release.
- ▶ **Include your release.** You're courting outlets for collaboration, so make sure to include your media release. It's best to paste the content of your release directly into your email, rather than as an attachment, so it's easy for journalists to find the information they need. See our [Media release template](#) for useful tips.
- ▶ **Personalisation is key.** Tailor your pitch to suit the outlet's style. Can you offer a fresh angle or spotlight a previously untouched topic? Emphasise the significance of your story to their publication.
- ▶ **Begin with a nod to the journalist's recent work.** It's a testament to your research and genuine interest in their work.
- ▶ **Remember, finding the right contact is paramount.** Not every reporter/publication will be aligned with your cause. Some reporters cover a broad spectrum, while others have specialised beats, like health or education.

Click [here](#) to download this Word document template

Pitching to local media

TEMPLATE EMAIL

Dear **[journalist first name]**,

I read your recent piece on **[subject of piece]**, which I thought was brilliant and **[add a bit more detail here, e.g., "really captured the importance of supporting children through the care system"]**.

I'm writing to you on behalf of **[your organisation's name]**, where I work as **[your job title]**, as we're **[running an event / launching a campaign / looking to raise awareness of an issue]**.

[If you're running an event, list the date, time, duration, location, and any speakers here.]

[Add a bit more information here on why your mission is important, for the local community, and if possible, provide data to back up what you're saying.]

If you'd be interested in covering this, we have a range of case studies and spokespeople who would be happy to share their experiences and talk more about the work we do. This includes **[give brief detail of a case study or two, and of some spokespeople]**.

EXAMPLE: We have a young care-leaver named Kirsty who joined our after-school programme two years ago. Through it, she not only improved her performance at school. She's just won a place at Oxford University, starting in September.

EXAMPLE: Secondly, we have Jon, a 17-year-old who was kicked out of school and is struggling with his mental health. He joined our after-school club as part of a project to support young people and because of it has developed a passion for cooking and will soon start his training to be a chef.

Spokesperson-wise, we have a volunteer who's been with us since the charity was founded, or our CEO Freya Chakrabati.

I've included a press release (below) for **[the event/campaign]**, which has been made possible thanks to players of Postcode Lottery. If there's anything else we can do at our end to help make it work, let us know – we would really love to develop this piece with you!

Very best wishes,

[Name, job title, your organisation name]

--- PASTE IN PRESS RELEASE BELOW---

TEMPLATES & RESOURCES

Writing to your elected representatives – email template

Securing support from your local Councillors as well as your MP, MSP or MS helps add weight to your campaign in terms of how residents view you and your work, and can also help drive longer-lasting policy change.

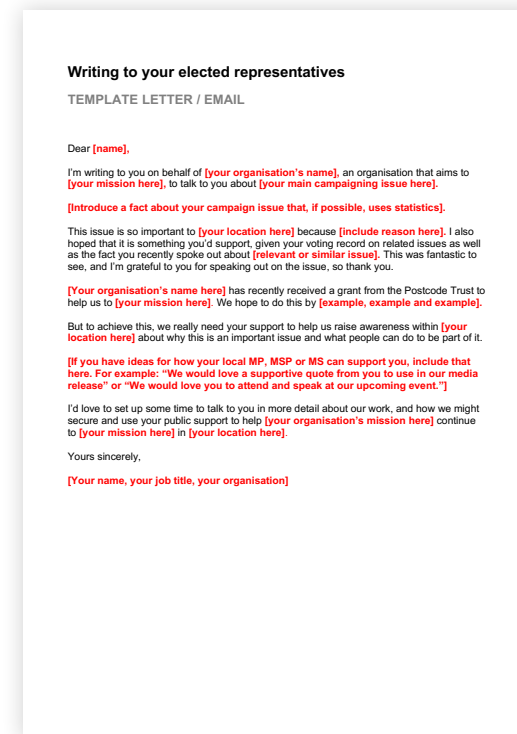
Before writing to your elected representatives, you should do a bit of research to see how they've voted on issues related to your cause. You can do this via the website [Theyworkforyou.com](https://www.theyworkforyou.com).

It's also worth looking at if, when and how each of them have spoken to the media about relevant or related issues. You can find this out with a quick search online.

Additionally, you can use the search function on X to see if, when and how they've posted on issues close to your cause.

When you write to your elected representatives, start by mentioning you know they've voted or spoken on relevant issues, especially if this was in a positive light. If it wasn't, then be tactful about how you include or word this in your letter.

Click [here](#) to download this Word document template



TEMPLATES & RESOURCES

Writing for social media

How we write copy for social media depends very much on the platform. Below are a few useful tips and examples for each of the key platforms.

As already discussed in 'Launching your content' on [page 13](#), remember to focus on the channels that are the best fit for you – don't try and take on more channels than necessary!



Name checking and tagging us

When referring to the Postcode Lottery in your posts...

✔ Do use:

- ▶ Postcode Lottery in full
- ▶ #PostcodeLottery
- ▶ @PostcodeLotteryUK on Instagram
- ▶ Postcode Lottery UK on Facebook
- ▶ @PostcodeLotteryUK on X

✘ Don't use:

- ▶ Any abbreviation of our brand name



X

Posts on X must be 280 characters or less. If you have more to say, you can create a thread. To do this, use the 'reply' function to your own tweet, then continue to reply to the latest tweet in what becomes your thread.

While threads can be good for 'explainers', you should try and be as concise as possible on X, as brevity of thought is the whole point of the platform.

Also consider including any relevant hashtags to gain reach, but don't overdo it. Popular hashtags might help you reach more people, but this is likely to be a more general, less targeted audience. Local or community specific hashtags will give you a better chance of being seen by your target audience.

You can also tag relevant journalists, news outlets or parliamentarians, either in your tweet or in a follow-up tweet (as a reply) underneath to save space. Here's an example:

First tweet: Thanks to #PostcodeLottery, we're helping locals in Bedfordshire manage chemotherapy side effects through community yoga classes. Learn more: [website link]

Reply tweet: @PostcodeLotteryUK @CardiffHerald @BBCRadioWales



TEMPLATES & RESOURCES



Facebook

Tagging ('@') and hashtags aren't commonly used on Facebook so avoid these unless necessary and relevant. Research also shows that content on Facebook receives 66% more engagement when it uses 80 characters or fewer, so be succinct in what you're saying.

Try a format like this:

“ Thanks to Postcode Lottery players, [your organisation] is supporting 50 breast cancer patients in Bedford with free yoga and movement classes. [Link to website or webpage].

If you don't have a website, you might need a longer post but make sure you're directing your audience somewhere else to either learn more or take action. For example:

“ [Your organisation's name] is here to [your organisation's mission]. With your help, we can support better mental health in our local community and make [your location here] a happier place to live.

[Details about how someone might get involved, e.g., if it's an event, capture your date, time, duration, location, and accessibility details here]

If you or someone you know wants to take a stand and drive positive change, contact [name and job title of contact] on [contact details].



Instagram

While Instagram is obviously an image-led platform, you can still use the caption to include a message and use hashtags to drive more engagement. You can use the hashtag #PostcodeLottery on Instagram and you can tag @PostcodeLotteryUK.

You can't include a link in Instagram captions. A popular way around this is to include the words "link in bio" within your caption, and then edit your profile bio (via Settings) to add the link there, for example to your general website homepage.

To promote an event, you might want to create a poster as the image that you share. Alternatively, infographics can be used to raise awareness, while action shots of your work help people get an authentic insight into what you're doing.

Poster example:

“ We're so looking forward to talking #cancermovementtherapy with you next Wednesday 16 February at Bedford Green Community Centre between 17:00 – 18:00. We'll be giving you an overview of how movement therapy can help you, followed by a free chair yoga session. Click the link in our bio for more information! #BedfordCommunity #Yoga #CancerSupport

(Don't forget to include the dual Postcode Lottery logo in your graphic!)



TEMPLATES & RESOURCES

Infographic example:

“ These stats demonstrate how much #YogaMovementClasses can boost wellbeing during chemotherapy! Furthermore, it can also contribute to your fitness and prevent isolation. Click the link in our bio to find out how you can enrol in our free movement classes for breast cancer patients #BedfordCommunity #CancerSupport

Action shot example:

“ Here’s one of our volunteers, Gaia, leading a free #movement session at Bedford Green Community Centre. Check out that downward dog! Click the link in our bio to learn more! #BedfordCommunity #CancerSupport



LinkedIn

Your audience for LinkedIn is more likely to be made up of professionals. They could be working for local businesses that could potentially sponsor or donate resources (e.g. free event space).

Or they could be staff or volunteers at other charities or third sector organisations with whom it might be useful to connect and forge a relationship. A LinkedIn post celebrating positive impact – for example of a collaboration with another organisation (and tagging them) – is a great way to get noticed and widen your network.

Example targeted at local businesses:

[Your organisation’s name] is here to [your organisation’s mission]. With your help, we can provide better mental health support to our local community and make [your location here] a happier place to live. Do you have [list items, services or resources you might need, that a business would have], that you can donate to help us continue our vital work? Or are you interested in sponsoring or partnering to help us continue our vital work? If so, we would love to hear from you. Please contact [name and job title of contact] at [contact details].

Example celebrating impact:

We are thrilled to be working with [xx] to provide better mental health support for marginalised teens in our local community. Together we are making a difference to young people’s lives and helping them achieve their full potential.



TEMPLATES & RESOURCES

Links To Online Resources

Below are links to resources and articles you might find useful in your communications activities.

Free support services from Media Trust

Media Trust, our partner in creating this toolkit, offers the following free support services:

Online matching platform where charities looking for pro bono help with their communications are matched with media industry volunteers looking to contribute their skills for social good.

Resource hub containing a wealth of guides, templates, blogs and tips designed to help nonprofits enhance their communications skills, stay informed about trends and get expert advice from media and creative industry professionals.

Free media, marketing and communications webinars and training for charities throughout the year. Sign up to the mailing list [here](#).

Creating content

- ▶ Getting your messages right:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/getting-your-messages-right/>
- ▶ How to create email newsletters:
<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/how-to-create-email-newsletters-ht>

Digital

- ▶ 13 free digital tools for charities:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/13-free-digital-tools-for-charities-2>
- ▶ The Art of AI prompt-writing:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/the-art-of-ai-prompt-writing-for-charities>
- ▶ Get started with Google Analytics:
<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1008015?hl=en>

GDPR

- ▶ What is GDPR?
<https://gdpr.eu/what-is-gdpr/?cnreloaded=>

Measuring impact

- ▶ A guide to measuring impact:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/a-guide-to-measuring-impact>

Pitching to media

- ▶ A charity guide for getting your story into the media:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/stronger-voices-guide-get-your-story-media/>
- ▶ How to get into local and regional media:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/how-to-get-into-local-and-regional-media/>
- ▶ Writing a press release and how to pitch it:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/writing-a-press-release-and-how-to-pitch-it/>



TEMPLATES & RESOURCES

Preparing for interviews

- ▶ A charity guide to media interviews:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/stronger-voices-guide-media-interviews-2>

Social media

- ▶ A charity guide to social media:
<https://mediatrust.org/events/beginners-guide-to-social-media-success-for-charities-6/>
- ▶ Measuring your social media success:
<https://mediatrust.org/events/measuring-the-impact-of-your-social-media/>
- ▶ Getting started with social search:
<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/getting-started-with-social-search/>
- ▶ Social media content writing tips:
<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/7-social-mediacontent-writing-tips/555805/>

Working with case studies

- ▶ 7 ways to tell stories ethically:
<https://communitycentricfundraising.org/2021/01/06/7-ways-to-tell-stories-ethically-the-journey-from-exploited-program-participant-to-empowered-storyteller/>



COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

For Local Charities and Good Causes

