

Amnesty International

How to publicise your events



Publicity is key! There is no point putting loads of effort into organising an action, a meeting or a fundraising event unless you publicise it widely. And you can never do enough of it...

Before the Event

- **Notify the calendar sections of newspapers**

If your student and/or local newspaper has a diary section, then notify them of your event. Include the date, time, place and a contact name and phone number. Also include a one-sentence description, which will grab people's attention.

- **Write a press release**

If you want a newspaper to cover your event, send them a press release. (See "How to write a press release" for advice).

- **Contact your local radio station**

Commercial radio stations have to give time over to community coverage. This can be through news bulletins, but some also leave space for "what's on". If this is the case, then send details of your event to the radio news desk one week prior to your event.

If you have a student radio station, ask them to announce details of your event.

- **Make announcements**

Ask lecturers if you can make an announcement at the beginning of their lecture. If your student union has a p.a. system (and if you are brave enough!) use it to tell people about the event.



- **Put up posters**

It is very difficult to compete with the hundreds of posters that go up each week on university campuses. It is a good idea to develop a "house style" for your group's posters – people will then immediately know whose they are and the profile of your group will increase.

Another trick is to design a series of 'cryptic' posters, which get everyone talking. Then you paste up the final poster, which explains all...

Or why not design simple black on white posters and then get your group to help paint them by splashing colour across them, giving them borders etc. If you then paste loads of them up in a row, their irregularity and uniqueness will catch people's eye.

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- **Distribute fliers**

A quick way to make a flier is to reduce the poster you have designed for an event down to A5, or even A6 size. Make sure they are still easy to read, print them on coloured paper and distribute them on tables in your cafes and bars, or hand them out outside lectures where you are likely to generate interest.

- **Organise a publicity stunt**

Draw attention to yourselves - dress up, borrow a megaphone, make a banner and hang it up, have someone giving out leaflets through the bars of a cage, hold a stall...

At the event

If you have sent out a press release for an event, then you will need to:

Designate someone to be a spokesperson at the event. Make sure that they are clear about AI's mandate, can answer questions about the event and are willing to approach any journalists.

Have a useful quote up your sleeve in case the journalist wants you to sum up the aims of the event.

Take your own photographs of the event. Always ensure that the candle logo and/or the name "Amnesty International" can be seen in the photograph.

After the event

If you have sent out a press release then... Upload a photograph of the event and send/email it to the newspapers with a two/three line caption.



If the press do not turn up, don't give up! Write a short report of the event saying how many signatures were collected/how much money was raised and anything else interesting that happened. Send it to the news desk, as well as your student newspaper / magazine.

Alternatively, if you collected a lot of signatures/money, then write a letter to the Editor, thanking local people for their support.

A few important tips

- **With the media**

No matter how informal reporters are, assume all you say will be published.

If in doubt, tell a reporter that you don't know the answer and you will get back to them with it promptly.

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Develop a reputation for supplying concrete, accurate and timely information.

Develop a media contact list and make sure to keep it updated for handing over to a new committee.

- **With your University/Student Union**

Be sure to find out where it is 'legal' to put up posters around your university and student union, or else they will be taken down as soon as they go up.

Ask a cross section of people what they think of your publicity. Use their comments to improve on it for next time.

If you have any ideas for publicising events which we could add to this leaflet, then please contact:

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