

Write for Rights 2018

Media Guide

Working with your local media is a great way to increase the impact of your Write for Rights event by telling your community about the human rights cases you care about and spurring others to take action. This guide offers some quick tips and materials to help you get the attention of local media.

Quick Tips:

Let Your Local Media Know About Your Event: included in this package is a template of a Write for Rights press release to help you inform your local media of your event. Make sure you customize it to let them know what makes your event unique – do you have a personal connection to a human rights issue? Are you a life-long human rights defender? Is there something creative and interesting about your Write for Rights event? Make sure you include that in your pitch: journalists want to know what makes your story special and different.

Think Local: with over 1700 Write for Rights events in Canada last year, not everyone can make it to the front page or into the national news. By standing up for human rights around the world, you are doing something of tremendous importance in your community, so try to share it with them. Your best bet is to focus on local and community media – they are an important voice!

Be Polite and Provide Advance Notice: the human rights cases you are writing about are extremely important and deserve lots of attention. But journalists are incredibly busy and it can be hard to get their interest. When you contact your local media, try to send them your press release about 4-5 days in advance. It's OK to follow up on your initial email, but keep in mind that chasing them too much usually doesn't help get more coverage.

No Luck with Media? No Problem: getting media attention is not easy and sometimes it just doesn't work out. The good news is there are lots of other ways to spread the word. Are you part of a community, student, faith or social group? Do they have a newsletter, website or social media page? Are you on Facebook or other social media? These are also great ways to share your passion for human rights and engage others in the Write for Rights campaign.

No Pressure: a lot of people are nervous, too busy or don't like to work with media and that's absolutely OK. By taking action with Write for Rights, you are already making an incredible difference – thank you for your valuable support!

Write for Rights 2018

Media support - here to help

The Amnesty International Canada media office works with journalists every day and they can be a resource to you. However, with so many supporter and groups taking action with Write for Rights, and all of the human rights issues in the world, they can't help with everything all the time. Here are the key areas where they can help:

- 1- **Contact Information for Your Local Media:** Most people don't have their local newspaper contacts, but the Amnesty International Canada press office does! If you want to get in touch with local media but don't know how, send us an email and we'll send your own community media list.
- 2- **Press Release Template:** Included in this package is a template for a Write for Rights press release. The more you personalize it, the better it will work. Make sure to follow the quick tips for some guidance on the best way to reach out to media.
- 3- **Help with Tough Questions:** What do you do if a journalist wants to know more about Amnesty International or about specific human rights issues and you don't know the answer? No problem - just refer them to the AI Canada press office. Just give them our contact and a media officer will follow up with them directly.

Contacting the Amnesty International Canada Press Office

The Amnesty International Canada press office has two media officers – Beth Berton Hunter and Lucy Scholey. The best way to get in touch is by email. Beth's contact is bberton-hunter@amnesty.ca and Lucy's is lscholey@amnesty.ca. Send an email to both of them and one will get back to you.

Thank you and good luck!

Write for Rights 2018

Community group takes action with Write for Rights campaign to do the 'write' thing

When: Date & Time

Where: Location and Address

In [your town], [your title / name of group] is standing up for human rights and inviting the community to join Amnesty International's annual Write for Rights campaign. It is a global letter-writing campaign offering the public the opportunity to write on human rights issues and bring meaningful change to people and groups who need support to uphold their human rights. Last year, more than 5 million messages were sent to world leaders demanding human rights progress. This year, activists are aiming to replicate that success, focussing on ten critical human rights cases in ten countries where peoples' rights are being violated and action is urgently needed.

[Personal quote: why have you decided to participate in Write for Rights? What makes you passionate about human rights advocacy? What makes your event different, special or unique?]

This year, all ten cases focus on women human rights defenders, to celebrate the role of women who stand up against injustice and lead the charge for change. At the same time, we will also show how discrimination, abuse, intimidation and violence uniquely and disproportionately affect women, and in particular, women who speak out in society.

Two of these women are Nonhle Mbutuhuma, an Indigenous woman in South Africa who defends land rights, and Vitalina Koval in the Ukraine, who advocates for the rights of women and LGBTI people. Civil society's capacity to peacefully advocate for human rights is shrinking the world over, and this is especially true for women human rights defenders.

This year also marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Canadian John Peters Humphrey played a central role in drafting the new Declaration in 1948, which laid out a comprehensive blueprint for a world of justice and rights. The Declaration equally recognizes the importance of civil and political rights, such as freedom of expression and protection against torture, and economic, social and cultural rights such as access to education and healthcare.

The legacy of John Humphrey lives on in Amnesty International, as the UDHR became the framework for Amnesty International's human rights work. Write for Rights is one Amnesty event held every year in over 150 countries and is now the world's largest writing event.

When hundreds of thousands of people around the world get together and send a clear message demonstrating they will stand by a person or group whose human rights are being violated, the impact is huge. It gives people the strength to keep going." says [your name]. "It also sends a message to those who are violating human rights that they cannot keep their crimes secret because the world is watching. Every letter, email and petition signature chips away at the problem."

A full list with more information about the ten cases featured in this year's Write for Rights campaign is available at writeathon.ca.

For more information about the Write for Rights event in [your town] please contact

➔ Name of your spokesperson

➔ Contact information – email and phone number