

## The basics

- Press releases are designed to give information on your event to journalists, as clearly as possible.
- If you have a news angle, use it! Your show might become a feature or interview if there's anything topical about it. Is it about a recent news story? Is your company working with a particular group?
- It may sound obvious, but always read your release through before you send it and look for the important info: Who, What, When, Where and How. It's really easy to say how much the tickets are, then forget to add the box office number.

## Sending your press release

- Copy it into the main text of the e-mail, rather than attaching it as a Word document or PDF. This reduces the number of steps the recipient has to take in order to read it.
- Always personalise your message, rather than sending the release under BCC to multiple contacts.
- **If you have a good image, attach it.** If that image is below 1MB in size, don't bother – they need high-quality files. If the image is black and white, they will ask you for another one. If the image has text on it, they won't use it.
- A great way to get into the paper is to mention when you send it that you could do a photo-call. This is a time during a weekday (newspaper photographers are almost never available after 5pm, or at weekends) when you and any other relevant people would be available for a photograph, ideally in costume or with your artwork. See the image, right, for an example. >



## Who to send it to

- Locals: find out the best person – either by looking at articles online, or phoning the switchboard and asking them for the contact information.
- Nationals: research journalists, and let them know why you're talking to them, specifically. Have they written about your company before? Do they like work which is similar to yours? Have they previously expressed an interest in the themes of your show?  
e.g. "You wrote an article in September 2016 about the importance of engaging people with Alzheimer's in the arts. Our show may be of interest: etc."

## Example press release

Dear [insert name here],

Write two or three lines to introduce yourself, your event, and why you're writing to the journalist.

Best wishes,

[your name]

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### **HEADLINE: Make it punchy and interesting**

*Title of production, date of production, time of production. Tickets: how much, and where from.  
Full address of venue.*

Opening paragraph: Keep it interesting and tightly-worded.

Follow-up paragraph: This is your chance for more detail.

Quote: A nice place to say something more meaningful, from the point of view of someone involved in the project. e.g. *Joe Bloggs, artistic director, said: "We're really excited to celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> year as a theatre company by doing X..."* (Fun fact: Journalists will occasionally cut these up to make it seem as if they have interviewed you.)

End paragraph: Finish your press release here.

ENDS – so that they know the press release has finished.

### **Notes to editors**

For more information, interviews, images etc, contact [your name] at [e-mail address] or [phone number].

Include your boiler-plate here. A boiler-plate is a short paragraph about the company(s), including relevant information. The Old Fire Station's boiler-plate (circa 2016) is:

#### **About Arts at the Old Fire Station**

A thriving arts centre in the heart of Oxford, showcasing the best of local and international performance and artwork, which takes a risk and entertains.

- Theatre, comedy, dance, music, visual art and design.
- Space for performance, exhibitions, rehearsals, meetings, classes, innovation and debate.
- Working closely with the homelessness charity, Crisis, helping to build the confidence and skills of people who are homeless through projects and opportunities.

[www.oldfirestation.org.uk](http://www.oldfirestation.org.uk) | [www.facebook.com/artsattheoldfirestation](https://www.facebook.com/artsattheoldfirestation) | [@ArtsatOFS](https://twitter.com/ArtsatOFS)

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