

Media Engagement Policy (Global)

June 2023

1 Purpose

This policy provides direction for the framework of interaction between Oxford Policy Management Limited and all entities within its group (collectively referred to as “**OPM**”), directors, employees, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers, and agency workers with the Media. OPM is also referred to in this policy as **we**, **us** and **our**.

It outlines Your responsibilities in relation to contact with the Media. Anyone who breaches this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. See the section 4 on “Responsibility” for more information.

Media is defined in this policy as all print, radio, television and electronic media including the internet and allied distribution channels. It also includes social media which are works of user-created video, audio, text or multimedia that are published and shared in a social environment, such as a blog, podcast, forum, wiki or video hosting site. More broadly, social media refers to any online technology that enables people to publish, converse or share content online.

2 Scope

Management of OPM’s appearance in the Media, and interaction with members of the Media, is an important aspect of protecting OPM’s brand and maintaining its reputation. The protection of OPM’s brand is the responsibility of OPM’s Board and, given that Media engagement is a key aspect of this, oversight of this policy sits with the Senior Management Team, as delegated by OPM’s Board. The Communications and Marketing Team holds responsibility for the day-to-day execution of OPM’s Media engagement, including the implementation of this policy.

This policy applies to all persons and entities working for or on behalf of OPM in any capacity, including directors, employees, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers, and agency workers, , all of whom are referred to in this policy as **staff**, **You** and **Your**.

This policy applies when You:

- represent OPM in the Media for OPM business purposes (which must be authorised in writing in advance) – see section 3.3 below; and/or
- make reference to OPM when interacting with the Media in a personal capacity.
- Interact with the Media in a personal capacity, even where OPM and its work is not the focus.

This policy applies to all areas of OPM’s work, including its projects. It is supported by, and must be read in conjunction with the Social Media Policy, Brand Guidelines, and Corporate Communications Policy.

This policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis by the Head of Communications and Marketing. Any changes will be approved by the Senior Management Team.

3 Principles

3.1 Position and profile

OPM seeks to celebrate the impact of its work and projects through Media engagement. In all Media - local, national and international, specialist and digital - OPM's position and profile must demonstrate a unified position and support its professional reputation.

3.2 Reputation and image

All those to whom this Policy applies must respect and care for the reputation and image of OPM and conduct themselves in accordance with any other relevant OPM policies at all times.

Consideration will be given to the impact that all communications and/or activities may have on the OPM's standing in the regional, national, and international communities in which it operates.

In engaging with the Media, OPM strives to:

- Respond to inquiries promptly and truthfully;
- Gain favourable coverage that can build support for its mission and enhance its reputation among its audiences and stakeholders;
- Limit potential damage to its reputation caused by adverse or incorrect media coverage;
- Develop trusting relationships; and
- Protect itself and its employees from unfair intrusion.

3.3 Authorisation to comment

The Communications and Marketing Team oversees all engagement with the Media, including responding to Media requests, advising staff on Media engagement, and approving Media spokesperson opportunities and external opinion pieces. This applies at a national and local level, as well as to international Media.

Where there is an on-going Media relationship as part of a project's communications work, and individual approvals for multiple articles or comments may be arduous or time-consuming, agreement on the level of approvals necessary will be decided at the beginning of the Media partnership with the Head of Communications and Marketing and Project Director.

Even where staff provide comment, interview, or an opinion piece in another capacity - not as an OPM staff member - Your connection to OPM can often be identified (via Google search, through social media, OPM website profiles, etc). You must make the Head of Communications and Marketing aware of any media work you are undertaking in a personal capacity. You must alert the Head of Communications and Marketing for authorisation to comment if the topic of the Media interaction is one in which OPM works (e.g. a practice area or geographic region) or has the potential to be controversial or cause confusion, harm, or a negative perception of any staff member or the company.

3.3.1 Responding to media enquiries

Responses or comments to the Media on behalf of OPM must be made either by the Chief Executive Officer or other person authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or, in his/her absence, the Head of Communications and Marketing subject to consultation with the rest of the Senior Management Team. The Chief Executive Officer may at any time give or withdraw authorisation for any staff member to initiate or respond to Media contact.

You must adhere to the following practices:

- Refer any request for comment from the Media in writing to the Head of Communications and Marketing, copying in Your line manager or Project Director as appropriate.
- Include in Your written request, any information from verbal interactions with the Media representative in question, such as the angle of the story, timings, and deadlines.
- If You are a member of an international office, You should copy in Your Director, if different from Your line manager.
- Comment should not be given to the Media without first having the approval of the Chief Executive Officer or Head of Communications and Marketing as the case may be.

If Your request to comment or respond to a media enquiry includes reference to work on an OPM project, You must also ensure You get appropriate approvals from the relevant funder or client. Please refer to the Project Communications Policy which outlines Your responsibilities in relation to donor requirements.

In connection with Media engagement, the Communications and Marketing Team also:

- Welcomes ideas for news releases and Media work;
- Often asks staff members and suppliers working for or on behalf of OPM to assist with news articles, blog post content, or to engage with Media as subject matter experts;
- Will provide upon request, guidance to anyone working for or on behalf of OPM who believes comments they made to a Media organisation were reported inaccurately, inappropriately contextualised, or otherwise misrepresented in such a way as to cause confusion, harm, or a negative perception of any staff member or the company; and
- Can provide guidance and support on preparing for Media interviews.

3.3.2 Authorisation for opinion pieces

In addition to responding to requests for comment from journalists or other Media representatives, You may be approached to write an opinion piece for an external third party, or plan to write an opinion piece or engage with the Media as part of a project's communication work. Opinion pieces are longer-form pieces in the style of a blog post.

The Communications and Marketing Team must be made aware of, and approve, any such plans. This is to ensure consistency of message and brand use, as well as coordinated and professional interactions with the Media, and is especially valuable if there is reason to anticipate negative coverage related to any project or OPM.

You must adhere to the following practices:

- Notify the Head of Communications and Marketing in writing via email of any plans to write for an external third-party site in the form of an opinion pieces or blog posts, or any plans as part of a project to proactively engage with the Media.
- Copy Your line manager, Project Manager or Project Director as appropriate.
- Include a draft of the opinion piece, press release, or any other elements for submission to the third-party site or Media representative for review by the Communications and Marketing Team.
- Opinion pieces should not be sent out externally without first having the approval given by the Head of Communications and Marketing.

3.4 Confidential information

You must respect the confidentiality of others and ensure that access to Personal Data and OPM's proprietary and/or confidential business information (in particular, commercial and in-confidence matters) is appropriately restricted and used only for company or client contractual purposes and not disclosed except in accordance with any relevant policies and or procedures. Those who have access to such information have a duty to maintain the confidentiality, integrity, and security of such information, irrespective of the storage medium.

Personal Data is defined in this policy as information or an opinion, including information or an opinion forming part of a database, including names and personal corporate information such as job title and email address, whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion.

4 Responsibility

The Board of Directors has responsibility for the preservation and protection of OPM's brand and has delegated its responsibility to ensure its effectiveness to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Head of Communications and Marketing has day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, monitoring its use and effectiveness, and the effectiveness of the procedures, and other controls included in this policy.

OPM business leaders (directors, office directors and managers, practice leaders, project managers and directors, team managers) have specific responsibility for ensuring that they and all staff operate within the boundaries of this policy and understand the standards of behaviour expected of them.

All staff (as defined on page 1) are required to comply with the policy and a shared responsibility for its implementation by participating and contributing to its success through their actions and suggestions.

Compliance with all OPM guidelines and policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy

- Codes of Conduct (staff and supplier)
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Global Brand and Communications Policy
- Global Social Media Policy
- Physical Security Policy
- Issues Concerns Reporting and Management Policy
- IT and Information Systems Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Anyone to whom this policy applies who breaches:

- any of the above policies;
- OPM's obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
- any obligations contained in those policies relating to confidentiality; or
- any other applicable laws or regulatory requirements

may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

5 Contact

For any questions about this policy, please contact the Head of Communications and Marketing via communications@opml.co.uk.

Media Engagement Policy

Document Purpose:

To provide direction for the framework of interaction between Oxford Policy Management Limited and all entities within its group with the Media.

It outlines Your responsibilities in relation to contact with the Media.

Policy Overview			
Policy Owner	Head of Marketing and Communications		
Applies to	All employees, Directors and anyone representing OPM		
Global or local scope	Global		
Version Number	3.0	Effective from	01.06.2023
Approvals (Dates)	Board		N/A
	Policy Authorisation Committee		25.05.2023
	Other (please state)		N/A