



Tips for Communicating with Policymakers

If you are a geoscientist, it's likely that you are either working or have previously worked on research that could be of interest to policymakers.

Communicating research with policymakers can enhance decision making, increase the reach and impact of your research and improve your career opportunities. While communicating your research to policymakers can be rewarding, it can also be challenging. This short guide aims to provide some tips to help you effectively communicate your research with policymakers.

Understand your audience

- Examine policy relevant websites to establish which government agency(ies) or department(s) is(are) most relevant to your research. Additional investigation may reveal the members within these departments who are most likely to be interested in your research.
- Step into the shoes of a policymaker and frame your research. Think about what aspects of your research are most important for their work.
- Connect with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in your field of research. Many NGOs work with policymakers and offering your expertise may result in your research being shared with them indirectly.

Build trust

- Providing information without trust may lead to emails being unread or to outright rejection.
- However, anticipating a policymaker's need for information and providing it when needed can help you be seen as a valuable resource.
- Policymakers will often appreciate the opportunity to reach out to the public. Inviting them to present at an event can be a good opportunity to introduce yourself and your research.

Identify 'windows of opportunity'

- A 'window of opportunity' refers to a period of time when policymakers are willing to consider new research and initiate policy change.
 - A policy window may emerge due to mounting public pressure, the signing of an international treaty (such as the [Paris Climate Agreement](#)) or a new presidency.
 - Following policy news can help you find out when a window is about to open. The [EU Commission's Consultations](#) often indicate upcoming legislation proposals while the [EU Parliamentary Research Service Blog](#) is a good source for EU Parliamentary news.
 - Continue to build trust during closed windows. This can lead to incremental policy change and increase the likelihood of your research being considered during an open window.
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Communicate clearly

- Clear communication is key to both connecting with policymakers and sharing your research.
- Less is more: summarise what you want to say in bullet points if possible.
- Avoid academic jargon and practise communicating your science with people outside of academia.
- If you include graphics, make sure that they are clear; if needed, simplify the original visuals you may have produced.
- Don't try to be an advocate. Advocating for a specific action can be seen as biased and may result in policymakers distrusting your research.

Adapted from '[How to communicate effectively with policymakers: combine insights from psychology and policy studies](#)' and egu.eu/policy. For more information, please contact the EGU Policy Officer at policy@egu.eu.
