DAY OF ACTION COMMS GUIDE

DIGITAL

GO GREEN WEEK

SOLIDARITY ACROSS BORDERS: 22-26 FEB
So, your group’s running an action as part of our Day of Climate Action on Friday 26th February. Great! Now you might be wondering how to carry out a digital action that has impact and reach. In the online world of the pandemic, cutting through the digital noise will be key.

With this short guide, we hope to take you through how to get your action seen and heard, and support you with:

- Press Releases
- Media
- Social Media
CONTACTING THE MEDIA

There are a few different media outlets you could contact about your Go Green Week action. **Student and local media will be key to promoting your action:** university newspapers, magazines and radio, as well as local newspapers, TV and radio stations!

**A few things to think about**

**Who to contact:** You can usually find news outlets’ contact details with a quick Google or Twitter search. Look for email addresses beginning “news@”, “editor@”. Even better, try to find individual reporters’ addresses, especially if the outlet has an environmental correspondent!

**Assigning roles in your group:** Think about appointing a media spokesperson who can field phone calls, give interviews and respond to email inquiries.

**Phoning ahead:** If possible, it's best to contact the media initially by phone. For this year's Day of Action, phone ahead on **Monday 22nd Feb**. Introduce yourself, explain a little about your group and why you're taking action. **Ask them when it would be best to send a press release** (or let them know you'll be sending it on the morning of the action, Friday 26th.)

**Sending the press release:** Make sure your subject line is clear and concise: “PRESS RELEASE – Student campaigners call on [UNIVERSITY] to [YOUR DEMAND] as part of national Day of Climate Action.” Send the press release (and any images) as an attachment, but also copy and paste the text of your press release into the body of the email.

**Follow it up:** Always follow up your email with a **phone call the next day or the day after**. Pick a good time to contact journalists by avoiding newsrooms' busiest hours. Daily print journalists will usually be at their busiest just before the print deadline, between 2-4.30pm, and in the mornings from 10-11am, before editorial meetings are generally held. Avoid ringing a radio station at 10 to the hour. Broadcast media will also have editorial meetings at around 10am. So early morning, between 8.30am to 9.00am, is often a good time to catch journalists. Otherwise, aim for 11.30am to 12.30pm or after 4.30pm.
PRESS RELEASES

A press release is the best way to get your story in the media. Press releases are designed to inform journalists of something that is happening, and make it really easy for them to cover. A press release should be short and factual (all opinions should be kept within quotes) and written in the third person and convey all the key information you want to get across to the audience.

The idea is to make a journalist's job as easy as possible - you want them to be able to copy and adapt it easily into their article. Your press release should be full of sections that can be copied and pasted, and isn't supposed to read like a well-written article!

TIPS FOR PRESS RELEASES

- **Proof read** and **spell check** before sending!
- **Adapt** the press release to include different angles for specific media outlets.
- Use the **language and style** of the outlets you're sending your press release to.
- You can send a press release before or after an event takes place, or both. Send **hi-res photos** along with it. Photos that work well in the media are ones with **people**, are **dynamic** and **convey a message**.
- It's often useful to follow-up your press release with a **phone call** to the journalist you sent it to around 3 hours after you sent it.

Below is a handy Go Green Week press release template. Fill it in and adapt it to your group’s campaign and action!
GO GREEN WEEK ACTION PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date

Students from the [INSERT NAME] campaign are carrying out a [INSERT ACTION] as part of People & Planet’s National Day of Action on climate change, calling on [NAME OF UNIVERSITY] to [DEMAND].

[ONE PARAGRAPH DESCRIBING YOUR GROUP’S CAMPAIGN IN A NEUTRAL TONE (JUST STATE THE FACTS!). BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE ACTION BEING TAKEN AND DON’T FORGET TO MENTION WHERE THE CAMPAIGN IS TAKING PLACE.]

[GROUP’S ACTION] is part of a national day of action on the last day of Go Green Week (22nd – 26th February), a week of climate education and action organised by People & Planet to increase awareness around the links between climate and borders. It brings together People & Planet’s national climate and migrant justice campaigns: Fossil Free, Divest Barclays and Undoing Borders. As the impact of the climate crisis becomes more urgent, the world’s poorest countries are the worst affected, despite being responsible for only 1% of global emissions. Millions of people are being displaced by extreme weather events – and the border industry profits from it. This Go Green Week’s National Day of Action aims to campaign against and raise awareness about this injustice.

“[2-3 SENTENCE QUOTE FROM A STUDENT FROM YOUR GROUP]” Sentence 1: What are the campaign demands? Sentence 2: Why is this important? Sentence 3: How does this link to the national day of action?

“The pandemic has exposed deep inequalities here in the UK and globally. These inequalities are similarly exposed by the climate crisis – in who it is that is impacted first and worst. Both crises display to us how interconnected our world is and reaffirms why solidarity across borders is so fundamental in how we move through them. It’s imperative we use our power to take action against those profiting from ecological breakdown, in solidarity with and taking a lead from those marginalised groups and frontline and Indigenous communities experiencing the sharp end of climate and fossil fuel industry injustice. This day of action is an important moment for student campaigners to come together across the UK and send the clear message that climate action from our public institutions cannot wait.”

Natasha Ion, Campaigns & Movement Building Coordinator at People & Planet.

For more information please contact:

NAME
NUMBER
EMAIL

EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE from Friends of the Earth

This press release guide is partially adapted from Friends of the Earth’s useful resource in the link above – a big thanks to them!
Social media is an important part of any campaigners toolbox. Used effectively, it can make your campaign much more effective, and amplify your activism. This is particularly true of big events like Go Green Week’s Day of Action, where you’ll have to convey complex ideas and get people organised around them.

Here are a few tips for how to use social media to its biggest effect this Go Green Week.

**MAKING A STRATEGY FOR YOUR DIGITAL ACTION**

Don’t mistake posting a lot for a social media strategy. An effective social media strategy is one that takes account of all of your resources, and deploys them where they can be most effective. How do you do this?

**Things to do in the run up to the Day of Action**

Before Go Green Week, **go through your previous posts**. Have a look at which ones have done well in terms of likes and shares, and see if they have anything in common. Is there a time of day that gets more responses than usual? Are some types of post more popular than others?

Once you’ve done this research, **put together a timetable for posting**. Map out what you’re going to post on each day on each platform, and make sure someone is made responsible for posting it.

**Build momentum** around your action by **reaching out to other groups and students**. A couple of weeks before your action, let them know it’ll be happening. Ask them if they’d be willing to share posts around your action on the day. **Make it as low-effort as possible** for them to amplify your action - send them graphics, suggested captions and hashtags!

**Set up a broadcast chat.** This is a basic building block of online direct action. It’s basically just a massive group chat on Facebook/Whatsapp of everyone who supports the campaign, no matter how casual. The point of this chat is not strategising or planning (most casual supporters don’t have time for that), but rather for **giving people clear, simple instructions** - (ie, “everyone share this” “everyone send in this letter template” “everyone sign this petition.”) **MAKE SURE THAT ONLY THESE BASIC INSTRUCTIONS ARE BEING POSTED, THE BEST WAY OF PUTTING OFF NEW SUPPORTERS IS MAKING THEM READ THROUGH 150 MESSAGES TO FIGURE OUT WHAT’S GOING ON. There are also security implications of sharing too much with huge groups of people.

**Reach out to other groups doing the Day of Action.** That way you can amplify each other’s actions and be part of the national Day of Action narrative! If you want to be put in touch with other groups carrying out an action, email **natasha.ion@peopleandplanet.org**
It's good to have a bank of slogans that you can attach to your posts. Here’s a few ideas for this year’s Go Green Week:

- Climate justice is migrant justice
- No climate justice without migrant justice
- End the hostile environment
- Environmental justice is racial justice
- We can’t separate anti-racism from the fight against the climate crisis
- End The Hostile Environment. End climate chaos. End (insert uni’s name) role in both

Come up with a good hashtag! Make sure to put the Go Green Week hashtags in all your posts to make sure your action comes up as part of the national Day of Action!

#ggwdayofaction
#gogreenweek2021
#solidarityacrossborders

Create hashtags specific to your campaign, that you can encourage other students to use to increase visibility of your action. A hashtag is basically a budget replacement for a website, a way of giving people easy access to all the posts about a specific cause, campaign or action. As a result, it’s worthwhile picking something interesting and memorable for your hashtag. It should also be something people feel is worth interacting with and including their own posts for. If you want to be slightly sneaky and a bit more aggressive, you can try adapting, twisting or even parodying a hashtag or slogan used by the University so you can use something instantly recognisable. You can find more stuff about hashtags here.

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Make sure to keep in touch with us on the day. Send us any posts you want amplifying, and any local or university articles that get published. We’ll share them!

If you have any questions or would like any support with comms in the lead up to Go Green Week, get us on social media or send an email to natasha.ion@peopleandplanet.org