

Promoting Your Work to a Broad Audience

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Much of science communication happens online, where vast amounts of information are consumed and dialogues shift at lightning speeds. Engaging with this environment can feel intimidating, but the rewards are high: discover new audiences to discuss your work, find your unique voice among the masses, and increase your influence in your field. Whenever you have a new publication coming out, keep a few simple steps in mind to help you navigate the online environment, promote your work, and engage with a broader audience.

Increase accessibility to your work

Consider creating a collection of items that support an upcoming or newly published article—the data, the code, the protocols or methodologies, any presentations—and making those items available in [DigitalHub](#) (Northwestern Medicine’s open access repository) to accompany your published paper. DigitalHub makes your work more discoverable because it is indexed by major search engines, including Google, so your work will show up in search results. DigitalHub also gives each uploaded item a unique Digital Object Identifier (DOI) which makes it possible to properly cite and track use of your work.

Keep your online presence updated

The plethora of online profiles makes keeping them up-to-date incredibly time consuming. Instead, select a few that you use often and invest your energy in those. Once a new paper comes out, consider updating your [ORCID profile](#) and your Google Scholar profile. It also might be a good time to make sure your [FSM Faculty profile](#) has captured your new publication, or that your [LinkedIn profile](#) has all your correct information. Finally, consider updating any versions of your CV or biosketch that might be impacted by your new publication.

Share on social networks

Social media is interactive, fast-moving, and very brief in its character allowances, which makes it an appealing method of communication for some. Before discussing your publication on social media, consider writing a lay summary providing a short account of your research for non-specialized audiences. Lay summaries should answer the questions, “What is your research about?” and “Why is it important?”¹ in plain language (devoid of jargon or complicated terminology), and should be easy to read by most audiences. These summaries are a great format for sending out on Twitter, Facebook, or relevant listservs along with a link to your publication.

Engage in discussions

There are some topics worth expanding upon that don't easily lend themselves to the brevity required on social media. In those cases, blogging is a great option for communication. On your own blog (or as a guest on a highly-trafficked blog) you can write about your research findings, or discuss new directions in your field. Blogs are a great way to allow for comments and engage with your audience.

In addition, blogging will help you craft your elevator speech, a brief description of your research and why someone might be interested. There are many tip and tricks, but most often it helps to think about how you would talk about your work with a stranger sitting next to you.

Take advantage of FSM's resources

The FSM Office of Communications offers a wide array of resources, tips, and ideas. See their website on Media Relations and Training to share news with the FSM community and find tips for conducting a successful interview.

Keeping all of these ideas in mind, below is a short checklist of ways to promote your work to a broad audience.

Promoting your work: a checklist

1. Upload your scholarly outputs to DigitalHub.
2. Update your online profiles: ORCID, University, Google Scholar, LinkedIn.
3. Write a plain language summary and share any links to your work on Twitter or by email.
4. Write blog posts for your own blog or as a guest blogger on your research findings.
5. Practice an elevator speech to communicate your research with non-specialized audiences.

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