

Writing a public interest statement

Why they are important, and how to do it well



As an academic author, being able to demonstrate the impact of your work is crucial. There are lots of ways to do this within the academic environment, but what about the bigger picture?

Academic articles can go on to influence policy and practice at a wider level, but many of the people who could use your research in these areas are not academics or scientists. Getting the message out to these non-expert audiences can be difficult, especially in highly complex and technical fields.

This is where a well-written public interest statement can make all the difference, offering an easy way into the article and helping readers to quickly understand the wider relevance of your research.

So what makes a good public interest statement?

Follow our checklist to help you write an effective statement for your article.

1 Keep it short and simple

Make the focus of your article clear, using simple terms that can be understood by a non-expert audience.



2 Get the reader's attention

Think of the statement as an advert for your article – use active language to draw the reader in and state your main points early.

3 Highlight wider relevance

Be clear why this article has the potential to impact on a wider level, beyond the specialist academic area.



4 Conclude with relations to broader concepts and larger issues

Include any ways in which your article adds to broader conversations, particularly if they are outside your main area of focus – this will increase the potential for your research to reach a larger audience.

