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საერთაშორისო



“We see arts and science as means to improve life. All things will die eventually but an idea never will” – Ilia Chavchavadze

Guidelines for Science Communication

by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia



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1. Introduction

Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (hereinafter the Foundation) is a legal entity of public law under the governance of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, established according to the Law of Georgia on “Science, Technologies and its Development”. The Foundation implements grant calls, targeted programs, and projects, and is involved in international scientific networks and joint projects.

According to its mission and activities, the Foundation shall ensure the high quality of its formal institutional structure (that is, in relation to the Foundation itself) and science communication. With this in mind, the Foundation creates the following Guidelines on science communication. The Foundation expects all of its employees, as well as anyone working in accordance with the Foundation`s mandate, to comply with these standards governing the process and quality of science communication.

Researchers supported by the Foundation are required to comply with the Funding Regulations of the appropriate grant guiding the analysis, the use, the publishing, and the availability of research results.

2. Responsibilities

According to the Foundation structure, the responsibility for the science communications lies with the Office of Science Communication which works to ensure that science communication with the stakeholders is effective and that the Foundation activities are presented in an accurate way. The Office works under leadership of the Deputy Director General. The Office of Public Relations of Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (according to the order of the Director General of the Foundation # 36 of April 12, 2021), no longer functions as a separate structural subdivision and its functions are performed by the Office of Science Communication and two staff members of the Office of Public Relations that are directly subordinated to the Director General of the Foundation.

The Foundation draws up plans of activities with indication of the goals, content, volume, sequence and deadlines. The following are official spokespeople for the Foundation: Director General, two Deputy Directors General. Director General authorizes generation of ideas and determines the financial resources provided for the provision of science communication activities. Director General reports on the activities undertaken for science communication to the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

3. Guiding principles

Foundation adheres to the legal and ethical principles of science communication, therefore the Foundation:

- complies with the principles of the Constitution of Georgia (Article 18);
- acts in a coordinated manner and provides information to the internal audience within the framework of integrated communication. External persons or organizations directly

related to institutional or scientific information communicate according to the cooperation procedure;

- respects the existing international rules of ethics in science, including the five fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

3.1. In institutional communication, the Foundation

- operates in accordance with the principles of continuity, transparency, truth, accuracy, objectivity, consistency, reciprocity, and legality;
- acts based on expediency, in concert and mainly on its own initiative, without abuse of its authority;
- respectfully treats members of the public and scientists, refrains from biased propaganda, innuendo, manipulation, concealment, deception, and disinformation;
- provides information using objective arguments;
- in the field of science communication with the public, scientists and media acts professionally using best practice;
- supports communication on the Internet (web, Facebook, etc.) and publishes relevant institutional and scientific information (database on funded projects, new grant calls, and other ongoing business);
- maintains the website of the Foundation in Georgian and English;
- publishes statistics on research funding in its annual report and on its website, in accordance with data protection and privacy laws.

Any uses of the Foundation logo or name must follow clear guidelines for branding and corporate design and must be approved in advance by the Office of Science Communication.

3.2. In science communication with public, the Foundation

- encourages wide public discussion of scientific achievements and problems;
- promotes the exchange of knowledge between scientists and target groups and supports open access to research results;
- the published information is based on arguments and topical and well-confirmed scientific research;
- supports researchers in various means of communication: different media, publications, webpage, etc. The responsibility for the content of the results lies with the scientists who communicate on their behalf;
- supports and collaborates with popular science publishing houses to popularize scientific research for the community.
- the media should be invited to all events that are offered to inform the public;
- provides communication tools suitable for the target groups and meeting high professional standards;
- acts in the interests of freedom of scientific research;
- acts in accordance with the principles of ethics and integrity of scientists who conduct research;
- respects intellectual property and data protection rights.

3.3. In communication with media, the Foundation

In addition to the main provisions listed above, communication with the media must comply with the following provisions:

- the relevance and significance of the covered scientific research, their impact on the life of society, and their potential interest for the general public;
- correct presentation and transparency of information provided to journalists;
- before communicating with the media, all information should generally undergo peer review and be documented with available records (e.g., summary, report, scientific publication, etc.);
- high professional journalistic standards and ethics should be observed in the drafting and editing of press releases, press conferences, announcements, and other press material;
- for active communication, the principle of equal treatment of all media should be applied.
- The following social media channels are used for communication with different target groups:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SRNSFG>

LinkedIn: <https://ge.linkedin.com/company/shota-rustaveli-national-science-foundation-of-georgia-srnsfg>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCc04SkcZeSD5IEIkOGGUvNg>

The specialists in Public Relations handle the Foundation media relations.

3.4. In management of science communication activities, the Foundation

Management of science communication activities is carried out according to the principles of transparency, integrity, and trust:

- ensures management and administration of grant calls for science communication and promotion of outstanding research achievements;
- organizes and coordinates grant calls, scientific and educational programs, competitions, and targeted events for science communication and innovations/inventions development;
- administers "Selection of Georgian national team members for international training Olympiads, training and participation in international Olympiads" which is a sub-program within the "Successful Students Incentive Program" of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia;
- conducts dialogue with stakeholders, facilitates active involvement of the Foundation grantees in communication activities;
- provides advice to stakeholders in organisation of science communication events;
- creates concrete plans for science communication actions involving target groups;
- facilitates raising public awareness of the role and importance of science, technology, and innovation in line with the Foundation's goals and mission;
- advertising upcoming science communication events and published information on websites, flyers, brochures, etc.;

- analyzes the information about the Foundation spread through the mass media and received through internal communication channels and identifies trends, needs and challenges;

3.5. In planning science communications activities, the Foundation

Science communication planning is carried out according to the principles of continuity, flexibility, economy, and efficiency:

- conducts planning of science communication activities;
- plans and allocates science communication resources to support targeted science communication activities;
- plans science communication in both directions in science and business, attracting investors to implement the scientific projects, events, conferences, and grant calls;
- plans and implements training of personnel in the field of implementation of science communication activities;
- plans and implements awarding ceremonies, cultural and ceremonial events, press conferences, briefings, and other events of the Foundation in cooperation with the relevant structural units of the Foundation;
- coordinates the Foundation's relations with various state institutions, legal entities of public and private law, and non-governmental organizations, within its competence, in terms of planning and implementation of events;

3.6. In respect to the sustainable development, the Foundation

The Foundation considers the "social", "ecological" and "economic" dimensions at the same time so that both the Foundation along with its employees and the environment, on which we have an impact, develop sustainably. The Foundation takes into account the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals during the planning and implementation of Science Communication activities and is tackling to pave the way for a sustainable future.

4. Non-compliance with the above provisions

In case of non-compliance with the above Guidelines by grant holders, or the Foundation's employees or/and representatives, the Foundation will take all appropriate measures in accordance with the Grant Regulations or other legal procedures and means.

5. Contacts

Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia | 2, M. Aleksidze Str., turn 2. | 0193 Tbilisi | <https://rustaveli.org.ge/eng>

The Office of Science Communication is available to provide information about the Foundation science communication policy and activities and specialists in Public Relations are available to provide information about the Foundation communication policy and its activities to the media.