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## ACC Scientific Session Media and Communication Policies

The American College of Cardiology's 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Session, ACC.15, will be in San Diego March 14 – 16, 2015. ACC media and communications policies provide journalists, investigators and public relations representatives with information about the rules for promoting and covering the Annual Scientific Session. Questions about these policies may be directed to Media Relations Director Beth Casteel, [bcasteel@acc.org](mailto:bcasteel@acc.org).

### General Embargo Policy

Abstracts, featured research and late-breaking clinical trials accepted for presentation at the ACC Annual Scientific Session are embargoed until the start of the session in which they are presented for Late-Breaking Trials and Featured Research or until official publication in the meeting proceedings for Posters and Oral Presentations.\* Some abstracts may be held longer or released earlier to support additional media promotions. Lead authors of these abstracts will be notified in advance if this occurs, and lead authors are responsible for notifying all authors of the embargo time. Members of the media, investigators, organizations issuing press releases, and others with access to research accepted for presentation during the ACC Annual Scientific Session are required to abide by the embargo policies. Violation of ACC embargo policies can result in removal of the research from the scientific program, removal of individuals and/or companies from the meeting, revocation of media credentials, and/or withdrawal of embargo access for one year for journalists and/or news organizations.

\* New for 2015: abstracts for Posters and Oral Presentations will be posted approximately two weeks before the start of the meeting.

### Social Media

Communicating about the ACC Annual Scientific Session by way of social media is encouraged within embargo restrictions. The Twitter hashtag for the 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Session in San Diego, is #ACC15. Follow @ACCMediaCenter and @ACCinTouch for meeting updates.

## Communication Policies for Journalists

### Media Registration

Media registration for ACC.15 begins in the fall of 2014. Properly credentialed members of the media receive access to complimentary media registration, an embargoed press kit, daily press briefings, additional interview opportunities and access to the Media Center, which includes workspace, interview rooms and the Exhibitor Newsroom.

### Media Registration Qualifications and Required Documentation

**Journalists** who are employed by accredited news organizations attending the ACC Annual Scientific Session for the purpose of developing editorial news coverage of the meeting are eligible for media credentials. Registration at previous ACC meetings does not guarantee approval.



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To be eligible for media registration, journalists in all categories must be directly involved in the creation of news content for organizations that meet these criteria:

- Publish original editorial news coverage
- Have complete editorial freedom from advertisers, funders and/or sponsors
- If sponsored, the outlet must have multiple sponsors (no single-sponsor publications)
- Advertisers, sponsors and other funding sources must be clearly identified

To qualify, journalists must register and must be prepared to provide the following:

- Media identification (such as an international, accredited press pass or an official media-outlet-issued credential)
- Examples of the journalist's work, preferably with bylines, that represent the type of news coverage they expect to generate at the ACC Annual Scientific Session. (Scientific research studies, textbooks, textbook chapters and continuing medical education materials do not qualify as news coverage.) Journalists who received credentials for previous ACC meetings must submit bylined coverage of the previous meetings.

**Freelance journalists** must provide a letter of assignment from a qualified publication or media outlet in addition to the items listed above.

**Newsletter media** must submit three issues of the newsletter and copies of three bylined news articles. If a representative was registered as media at a previous ACC meeting, at least one of the newsletter issues submitted must include the resulting editorial coverage. Newsletter media that meet the above criteria may register one representative.

**Representatives from online trade media, medical publishing companies, health care association publications and university publications** must provide representative samples of past work. The publication/media outlet they represent must produce/publish original news coverage, have editorial freedom and, if sponsored, have multiple sponsors that are clearly identified (single-sponsor outlets are not eligible).

**Documentary film crews and video production companies** must submit a written request no less than three weeks prior to the start of the meeting that includes information about the company, the purpose of attending the meeting, a synopsis of film/video/documentary and information on the sources of financial support for the project.

#### **Who is NOT Qualified for Media Credentials?**

The following are not eligible for media credentials or access to the Media Center and embargoed media materials.

- Financial or industry analysts
- Industry representatives
- Staff or freelancers representing non-media websites and/or for-profit company websites that do not have independent editorial staff



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- Publishers, executive staff, sales representatives, advertising, marketing and public relations personnel associated with books, magazines, broadcast outlets, websites or other media outlets
- Writers, editors or contributors to single-sponsor publications, including in-house or industry publications or websites
- Personnel who work in their organization's exhibit (Individuals who work in the exposition must register as exhibitors. Dual registration is not allowed.)
- Representatives of organizations that produce publications, videos and/or other media intended for internal use, marketing, advertising, financial analysis or public relations purposes
- Representatives from medical education companies attending the ACC Annual Scientific Session for the purpose of creating continuing medical education or other commercial educational content
- Editors, writers and scientific advisory board members for journals that do not have editorial news sections (For journals with editorial news sections, only personnel directly involved in gathering and writing independent news coverage are eligible.)

### **On-site Guidelines for Journalists**

#### **Activities not allowed**

- Selling, marketing or representing a company for the purposes of obtaining advertising, subscriptions, selling video production, or other products or services from any registrant or exhibitor
- Misrepresentation of role or activities to obtain media registration
- Sharing or distributing embargoed media materials beyond those immediately involved in development of the news coverage prior to the end of the embargo

#### **Filming, Videotaping, Audio Recording and Photography**

- Registered media may photograph, videotape or audio record any ACC press conference
- Registered media may take photos (non-flash only) and audio record in the poster hall and in the session rooms with permission of the presenters
- Appropriately vetted and badged members of the media attending ACC.14 will be permitted to photograph and/or record video of the general exhibit hall. Media personnel must obtain prior permission from the specific exhibiting companies before taking photos or video of (or within) individual booths. In addition, media personnel must obtain prior permission from the ACC Expo Department and specific Learning Destination participants before taking photos or video of (or within) Learning Destinations.
- With a prominently displayed camera tag issued by an ACC media relations staff member, registered media may video record in other public areas of the convention center only with permission of participants whose images could be captured.

#### **Violation of ACC Policies**

By accepting a media registration for the ACC Annual Scientific Session or accepting ACC embargoed materials through email, fax, regular mail, from the ACC's media kit, thumb drive, or embargoed media newsroom website, journalists acknowledge the embargoed information is for their use in preparing media coverage and they will not distribute or publish the information while the embargo is in effect. The



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embargo policy also applies to news releases or other communications from outside organizations that include embargoed information scheduled for presentation at the ACC Annual Scientific Session.

The College reserves the right to bar from this and future Scientific Session events any registered media representative who attempts to obtain advertising or subscriptions from any exhibitor or registrant, who promotes the marketing objectives of a single company or institution, or who otherwise misuses media privileges to engage in activities other than journalistic pursuits.

By accepting a complimentary media registration, journalists agree to abide by ACC embargo policies related to studies scheduled for presentation during the Scientific Session. Violations of the embargo policy can result in expulsion from the meeting, revocation of media credentials for the current year and next year, and removal from access to embargoed ACC journal information.

## **Communication Policies for Industry**

### **Embargo Policy**

Each year a limited number of studies accepted for presentation during the ACC Annual Scientific Session are featured in the ACC press program. The ACC will notify lead investigators if their submission has been selected for inclusion in the official ACC press program. The ACC welcomes the participation of institutions in promoting research to be presented at the ACC Annual Scientific Session. All promotions must fall within the ACC Embargo Policy and the ACC's Communications Policies for Industry. For questions, please contact ACC Media Relations Director Beth Casteel, [bcasteel@acc.org](mailto:bcasteel@acc.org).

### **Promotional Media Activities**

Organizations with an interest in research being presented at ACC.15 may not conduct promotional media activities that disclose results of the research prior to the end of the embargo period or during the official program times of the ACC meeting. Promotional media activities refer to any activities that involve multiple news media outlets, including satellite media tours or corporate receptions.

If a member of the media breaks an embargo as a result of an organization sharing information or conducting an interview prior to the end of the embargo, the ACC may enforce sanctions against the reporter or media outlet and/or the researcher or organization that released information ahead of the embargo release.

### **Investigator Meetings**

Embargoed research can be discussed during closed investigator meetings for participants in the trial. These meetings must be held at the ACC Annual Scientific Session, provided they are held during the designated time slots as outlined in the Ancillary Event Guidelines and are approved through the Ancillary Event Request Website approval process. Only ACC.15 exhibitors, universities, and nonprofit organizations may request permission to hold investigator meetings (visit [www.expo.acc.org](http://www.expo.acc.org) for more information).

### **Required Disclosures**



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If a company believes that it is required for legal reasons to release information about a study prior to the end of the embargo, the company must notify the ACC Media Relations Department in advance in writing. The written notification must provide the legal rationale for requiring early disclosure. Notification must also include who would receive the information, how and when the information would be disclosed, and a description or copy of any press releases or other public statements that would be distributed. With appropriate advance notice, ACC can provide general advice about how such disclosures might impact its inclusion/continued inclusion in the ACC program. The ACC reserves the right to remove the presentation from the Late Breaking Clinical Trials program, to remove the study from consideration for a press release or other promotions, or to remove the study from the scientific program entirely.

### **Exhibitor Newsroom**

Exhibitors can register up to four staff members for access to the Exhibitor Newsroom, which includes workspace, Internet access and an area to display approved press releases related to the meeting as well as general background information and media kits.

### **Press Release Guidelines**

Press releases to be displayed in the Exhibitor Newsroom or announcing activities at the ACC Annual Scientific Session must meet the following guidelines:

- Include a reference to the ACC Annual Scientific Session in the body of the release, preferably in the first two paragraphs. Suggested language for identifying the meeting: “. . . presented at the American College of Cardiology 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Session.”
- Include presentation time and forum at the meeting for presentations referenced
- Abide by embargo policies (Press releases with embargoed information cannot be distributed until after the end of the embargo period.)
- Do not suggest an endorsement of a product or service by the American College of Cardiology
- Must not be scientifically misleading or ethically questionable

Releases must be submitted to [media@acc.org](mailto:media@acc.org) for review at least two weeks before the start of the meeting with “**ACC.15 Press Release for Review**” in the subject line.

### **Optional ACC boilerplates for press releases:**

The American College of Cardiology Annual Scientific Session brings together cardiologists and cardiovascular specialists from around the world each year to share the newest discoveries in treatment and prevention. Follow @ACCMediaCenter and #ACC15 for the latest news from the meeting.

The American College of Cardiology is a 47,000-member medical society that serves as the professional home for the entire cardiovascular care team. The mission of the College is to transform cardiovascular care and to improve heart health. The ACC leads in the formation of health policy, clinical standards and practice guidelines. The College operates national registries to measure and improve care. It also provides professional medical education, disseminates cardiovascular research and bestows credentials upon cardiovascular specialists who meet stringent qualifications. For more information, visit [acc.org](http://acc.org).



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## Media Registration Lists

The ACC Annual Scientific Session typically registers 250 to 300 medical, health, general news and business reporters from U.S. and international trade publications, newspapers, wire services, popular news outlets and health information websites. The College does not share, rent or sell current or past media registration lists.

## Access to Media Center

Public relations and industry representatives will not have access to the Media Center, except for the Exhibitor Newsroom with the appropriate registration. Company or product literature, statements or news releases may not be distributed in the adjacent hallways and areas around the Press Conference Room or Media Center and industry representatives are prohibited from soliciting media or loitering in those areas. See **Exhibitor Newsroom Registration** for information about including media materials in and gaining access to the Exhibitor Newsroom.

## Communication Policies for Investigators

### Embargo Policies

Abstracts accepted for presentation in poster sessions or as oral presentations are under embargo until they are published online in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, or presented at the ACC Annual Scientific Session, whichever comes first. Please note the new timing for release of abstracts in this category in 2015 — with a small number of exceptions, which will be noted, abstracts for poster sessions and oral presentations will be released approximately two weeks ahead of the meeting.

Abstracts accepted as Late-Breaking Clinical Trials or Featured Research remain under embargo until the scheduled start of the session in which they are to be presented. Contact the ACC Media Relations Department at [media@acc.org](mailto:media@acc.org), if you have questions about embargo times.

Abstracts accepted for presentation in any format at the ACC Annual Scientific Session may not be presented at other meetings or published in journals prior to the embargo time set by the ACC. See important instructions below for studies being considered for simultaneous publication.

Presentation or discussion of scientific research results at industry events or press conferences prior to the scheduled ACC Annual Scientific Session & Expo scientific presentation is considered an embargo break and strictly forbidden, except in closed investigator meetings that meet requirements outlined in Industry Event Guidelines.

### Abstracts

Abstracts accepted for poster or oral presentation at the ACC Annual Scientific Session will be published to coincide with the Session as a supplement to the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* (JACC) or a subspecialty ACC journal. Abstracts not accepted for presentation are not published and will not be disclosed outside of ACC and persons associated with the selection process.



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Responsibility for compliance with any disclosure or nondisclosure requirements resides with researchers and/or research sponsors.

### **Simultaneous Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication**

If an accepted work is being considered for publication in a peer-reviewed journal concurrent with the ACC Annual Scientific Session, it is the responsibility of the author or presenter to notify the ACC Media Relations Department immediately of the publication's name and a contact at the journal. Many journals have expedited online publication, which can move very quickly, so it is important to promptly communicate information about possible publication in order to avoid an embargo violation, which could result in the research being eliminated from the ACC Annual Scientific Session.

If your research is being considered for publication, immediately contact the ACC Media Relations Department at [media@acc.org](mailto:media@acc.org). The ACC will coordinate simultaneous release with the publication.

### **Promotion/Press Conferences**

A limited number of abstracts will be chosen for additional promotion by the ACC Media Relations Department. Promotion may include participation in a press conference and/or a press release or inclusion in tip sheets for the media. Investigators whose work is chosen for a press conference and/or press release will be contacted by the ACC Media Relations Department to assist in development of press materials and/or to plan participation in a press conference. Investigators whose abstracts are accepted are obligated to cooperate in these promotional activities if asked. Embargo release times for abstracts chosen for promotion may be different than other abstracts in the same category. ACC Media staff will communicate actual embargo information to the author identified in the submission process as the lead author. The author will be responsible for communicating embargo information to all other authors. These abstracts may also be withheld from the initial online posting of the meeting proceedings.

### **Press Briefings**

Investigators presenting research at an ACC press briefing are permitted to invite other authors named in the study plus one company or institutional representative to attend the briefing and must submit the names of these guests to ACC staff in advance. Guests of press briefing participants may not engage in promotional discussions during the briefings, inside the briefing room or immediately outside the briefing room.

*These policies were last updated August 20, 2014, and are subject to change. Please check with the ACC Media Relations Department for further updates.*