

Guidelines for non-discriminatory press and public relations

Stand: 18.09.2022

Summary

These guidelines are intended to promote anti-discriminatory awareness. They refer to forms of discrimination against BIPOC. They should be noted, known and respected by all members of Klimadelegation. They will be consulted in case of press enquiries and uncertainties, may be reflected upon and criticised at any time and should be done so regularly.

- **Transparency** in dealing with one's own role and background
- **Conscientiousness** before publishing
- **Carefulness and four eyes principle:** Posts are created in teams and it takes enough time to check them (min. 24h)
- **Speech ability:** Questioning whether we can/want to speak on a requested topic or better pass on requests – Sufficient capacity, expertise, background knowledge must be justified in advance
- **Careful imagery and choice of words** in social media and press relations

I. Principles of public relations

Introduction: We aim to fulfil these principles with every step we take in our media work. Below the principles we show guidelines that we intend to gradually integrate in our daily work.

- **Transparency:** Reflecting our role as an association with predominantly white, German and academic perspectives and making it transparent for the media [see Berliner Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag e.V. (2021), p. 3]
- **Respect:** Towards different cultures and views consistent with the UN Convention on Human Rights and Human Dignity [see OHCHR, International Bill of Human Rights]
- **Representation:** Consciously questioning and reflecting our own expertise and only commenting on topics when we can contribute our own knowledge
- **Whole picture:** Making multiple visions more visible
- **Scientific and source-based work:** Always knowing and being able to refer to our sources, communicating ambiguities and resolving them together conscientiously
- **Fairness:** Make it clear who we are and that our point of view is not universal. We limit our public relations statements to the global North, the European Union and Germany. This

explicitly means that we never speak for or about the Global South without direct relation to the Global North

Additional section: Cooperation in the transmission of interviews

Source e.g. Checkliste zur Vermeidung von Rassismen in der Öffentlichkeitsarbeit [see Berliner Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag e.V. (2021); Kartal, Bechert u. Dodo (2021)]

We want to make the perspectives of German youth heard and to open up larger or more spaces for marginalised groups, also from other regions of the globe, that would otherwise be more difficult for them to access. We want to offer them these opportunities without imposing ourselves. This includes an ongoing and reflective understanding of climate justice [see Black Earth Kollektiv (n.d.)].

We try to pass all press inquiries that directly affect BIPoC or people from the Global South, to them or, if preferred or not otherwise possible, to answer them together. If a representation is not possible by BIPoC or people from the Global South, the press team (ideally 2 persons) or, if it has not been determined, the press board will decide in individual cases whether we will still grant this request internally. Then we get acquainted with their thematic perspectives, at best through conversations and multifaceted research (in line with "Fairness" as above).

Special guidelines for EU and Europe: The procedure is generally consistent with all press inquiries. If an inquiry refers to Europe or the European Union (not Germany in it, but as a whole) and is published in English, the request will be forwarded to less strongly represented young climate activists from Europe or the European Union (especially Eastern Europe).

.. **for educational formats:** German-language educational formats (e. g. workshops and lectures) for children and young people are not subject to the above process, but the KD-internal decision regarding the spokesperson follows immediately. Where possible, perspectives of the Global South are shown.

... **for local requests:** Local requests are self-managed as before, communicated in the Slackchannel and updated in a table. The principles also apply, but not the process with other activists, as the local reference is very important here.

All requests that we wish to assign internally are assigned according to previously regulated internal procedures.

II. Objectives and messages of communication

- **Target group of our communication:** The public relations work of the climate delegation is aimed at reaching a predominantly German-speaking audience. Our educational

formats are aimed in particular at young people, while political communication is aimed at decision-makers.

- **Content:** The purpose of our external communication is to convey messages to the public that correspond to understanding of climate justice according to our self-image.

III. Requirements to interviews

The ability to speak publicly as a member of this association requires an introduction to our Guidelines for non-discriminatory Press and Public Relations as well as participation in at least one anti-racism workshop per year. Interview requests are generally posted and potential interviewees are searched in our internal channels if not indicated otherwise (see additional section: Cooperation in the transmission of interviews). By using the messaging platform Slack, members need to explain why they are able to speak on the subject. Personal requests are also shared and the ability to speak must be justified.

IV. Language and picture

Explanation: Behavioural norms that regulate which linguistic means or terminology we use and which ones we do not want to convey as well as which messages in pictures we do not want to convey.

In general: Words to use/avoid for non-discriminatory language: see Wording Guide

Language

Do

- Use self-denominations of people or groups with whom they identify themselves (if no personal contact, check correct spelling of the name) [see Neue deutsche Medienmacher, Glossary]
- Communicate with affected people and not about them – as far as possible let people speak for themselves e. g. by quotations. When speaking about people in the Global South, naming our role. [See Berliner Entwicklungspolitikscher Ratschlag e. V. (2021), p. 9 ff.]
- Use gender neutral language when communicating in a gendered language such as German (e.g. Studierende for students) and uniform gender with an asterisk (i.e. Student*in) [see scribbr. de, "Richtig Gendern"]
- Identify the perspectives which are being reported, e. g. white and western European [see Global e. V. (2013)]

Don't

- Avoid negative and derogatory associations instead of non-judgmental or value-neutral terminology (see Wording Guide)
- Generalize when making statements about regions, e. g. "In the Global South, people [. . .]"
- Reproduce and present terms which are negatively influenced by our perspective from Global North likes "development" as universally valid [see Berliner Entwicklungspolitikscher Ratschlag e. V. (2021)]
- Generalize sentences, sometimes just take a clear stand [see Glokal e. V. (2013)]
- Reproduce colonial language instead of addressing the consequences of post-colonialism when relevant – Avoid the following: presenting regions as exotic or worth discovering, aiming to arouse compassion, defining donations as an indulgence trade [see Glokal e. V. (2013)]
- Overdramatize stories or facts or take them out of context [see Glokal e. V. (2013)]

Images

Do

- Use free pictures from BIPoC photographers – clearly state the source
- Enter data (place, time) in captions including the names of the persons pictured [cf. Berliner Entwicklungspolitikscher Ratschlag e. V. (2021)] → if names are desired (possibly omit to protect identity), captions may also be formulated by BIPoC itself
- Use imagery that reflects balanced power relations (e.g. perspective at eye level) and images that portray BIPoC as active rather than passive or dependent people
- Show people how they want to be portrayed and ask what they perceive as discriminatory
- Represent the reality of life in all its diversity, using documentary images [see Berliner Entwicklungspolitikscher Ratschlag e. V. (2021)]

Don't

- Use images that contain reductive depictions of hardship, suffering and need for help, among others. Don't aestheticize suffering through light, frame, filter, photographing from above [cf. Berliner Entwicklungspolitikscher Ratschlag e. V. (2021)]
- Reproduce clichés, discriminatory and stereotypical representations of people [see Berliner Entwicklungspolitikscher Ratschlag e. V. (2021)]
- Tear photos out of context

Image rights / personal rights

- Have the persons pictured been asked for consent? (for children, their legal guardians) – In case of enquiries, indicate the purpose of use [see Berliner Entwicklungspolitikscher Ratschlag e. V. (2021)]
- Respect the General Data Protection Regulation [see European Union (2018)]

- Always pay attention to and indicate the source and copyright
- A "yes" to the photo rights is not a free ticket, the photo can still be racist

V. Special rules for Social Media

We use our social media to regularly point out channels of BIPOC and people from the Global South. We don't talk about individuals without their consent. We don't speak for people if they can speak for themselves. We give BIPOC the opportunity to "lend" our channel for so-called "take-overs".

We don't make any assessments or assumptions about the Global South, BIPOC or MAPA (Okay: Where are weather extremes increasing? Not okay: How does it feel for those affected elsewhere? Okay: If we quote them with consensus or if they take over our channels).

We focus on German audiences to raise awareness for climate-friendly policies. We try to translate or subtitle posts about discrimination or racism in English to invite criticism.

We work on content at least in pairs so that more than one person can research in-depth. These two research either in co-working or sequentially and divide up the work.

All posts are reviewed in PR channels for at least 24 hours (content, graphics, language, signature and sources). In case of doubt, we prioritize conscientiousness over our posting plan.

Sources

Citation style → [see surname/ organisation (year), p. 123]

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