MAKE A DIFFERENCE
GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMMUNICATIONS
WHAT IS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY?

Social responsibility describes the way we are making a difference to the social, economic and environmental well-being of our communities through our teaching, research, and public events and activities.

Social responsibility is one of the three core strategic goals in our Manchester 2020 strategy (PDF document, 105KB), sitting equally alongside our commitments to world-class research, and outstanding learning and student experience.

WHAT IS ‘MAKING A DIFFERENCE’?

Our staff, students and alumni have a positive impact on society and the environment. They make a measurable difference to real lives through teaching, research, public events and activities.

As a socially responsible institution, we’re proud of these contributions. We’re able to demonstrate our commitment to social responsibility by showing how individuals, teams and the University as a whole are making a difference.

By communicating this in a compelling way, we can inspire others to get involved or raise awareness in order to enhance the impact of our work.

IDENTIFYING A ‘MAKING A DIFFERENCE’ STORY AND ITS AUDIENCE

Our students, staff and alumni are making a difference in many ways. For example, they could be:

• visiting schools to communicate their research and inspire local children to consider higher education;

• helping unemployed people back into work by devising and implementing a new apprenticeship scheme;

• volunteering with an environmental charity, helping to ensure the survival of endangered species.

If you know of a person, activity or initiative at the University that is helping to make things better, and the benefits can be plainly demonstrated, then we can use that story to inspire others and raise awareness.

It may be that you only need to communicate the story to staff or students. On the other hand, it could be a piece of research that could transform the world. As with any communication, you should tailor your content to suit the audience.

You can communicate the story in one or more of the following ways:

• to students, through various My Manchester communications channels and School and Faculty channels, or to prospective students through the University website and publications such as the prospectus;

• to staff, through the StaffNet website or the UniLife publication;

• to alumni, through the Your Manchester website and magazine;

• to the public, via School and Faculty websites and blogs, or through departmental or central websites, video and social media;

• through the specific social responsibility communication channels such as the Social Responsibility newsletter, website or social media.

However, the significance of that work remains the same, regardless of who you’re communicating to. We want to be consistent in how we present the impact that our people are making.
HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE IT?

People are inspired by stories. A ‘make a difference’ story should show how a person associated with the University has improved the world or the lives of others. It can inspire colleagues by raising awareness or, where appropriate, it can encourage others to get involved.

We want to make a personal and emotional connection with people so that readers can share pride in our achievements and in the University community.

It should have a compelling narrative. It should:
- show quickly what has happened;
- place the focus on the individuals involved;
- provide clear examples of the benefits;
- give the audience the chance to learn more or get involved.

To help you do this, use the following steps as a checklist:
1. ‘Making a difference’ – describe the significance
2. Put people at the centre
3. Give the evidence, explain the benefits
4. ‘Find out more’ or ‘Get involved’ – a call to action

‘MAKING A DIFFERENCE’ – DESCRIBE THE SIGNIFICANCE

Use the phrase ‘making a difference’ or ‘make a difference’ as early as possible in your content and in any accompanying descriptions. This will help the audience identify that the significance of the communication relates to social responsibility straight away. Generally ‘make a difference’ should be used as a call to action and ‘making a difference’ is more descriptive and should be used when writing about an ongoing activity or reporting on a story.

PUT PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE

People respond to people. While a piece of voluntary work may have improved a process, an audience will identify more with the people who undertook the work and with those who are benefiting from it. Place the people at the heart of the content – let them tell the story.

1. Staff at the Division of Communications and Marketing made a difference by helping ground staff at Heaton Park restore a pathway to its former glory.

2. Dr Rebecca O’Loughlin commits 160 hours of her own time a year to volunteering with the Samaritans.

3. Chris Livingstone from Whalley Range became the 1,000th person assisted by the University’s back-to-work scheme. “I am absolutely delighted. My friends and family have noticed a real difference in me and they’re really happy for me,” he said.
3. GIVE THE EVIDENCE, EXPLAIN THE BENEFITS

It’s not enough to simply say that somebody has made a difference – prove it. Say exactly what it is they’ve done, and how it has or is having a positive impact. The details will speak louder than any emotive language can.

Across all of our operations, our teams recycle all the waste oil, cardboard, cans, paper, glass, batteries and plastics used on a daily basis.

The Manchester Leadership Programme not only equips students with skills that ready them for the challenges of working life – it also benefits society. Last year, students on the programme created £266,611 of economic value through volunteering in the local community.

4. ‘FIND OUT MORE’ OR ‘GET INVOLVED’ – A CALL TO ACTION

If you’ve told a compelling story, placing people at the centre, backing up claims with evidence and demonstrating the benefits, you’ll hopefully have inspired the reader to learn more – or even do more.

Include a snappy ‘call to action’ with an imperative verb (‘find’, ‘discover’, ‘learn’, ‘visit’, ‘become’, ‘help’, ‘give’ etc) and the relevant details for those who don’t want the story to end. This could be the address of a specific website for finding out more information, or booking/sign-up details for an event or initiative.

You might also use the term ‘make a difference’ in your call to action to underline the impact that the audience can have by following the call to action.

Become a Dementia Friend at www.dementiafriends.org.uk

You too can cycle to work and make a difference to the environment. Find out more at www.cyclescheme.co.uk
TONE OF VOICE

As well as through following the steps above, you can make your piece more compelling by choosing the right tone of voice.

1. MAKE YOUR COMMUNICATION PERSONAL

An open, welcoming tone is more likely to make a connection than a distant, overly formal one.

Use the first and second person, and use active rather passive forms where possible.

2. AVOID JARGON AND INTERNAL TERMINOLOGY

Use of the term ‘social responsibility’ is becoming increasingly common, but the things that it stands for are much more recognisable. You don’t necessarily have to use the term ‘social responsibility’ when communicating to an external or non-education audience; however, using the term alongside ‘making a difference’ will encourage the reader the make a connection between the two. Ensure that you also talk about the benefits that it brings – how is the person or activity making a difference to society, the economy or the environment?

While social responsibility is a core goal of the University, we don’t need to state that it is – avoid internal language such as ‘goal 3’. and while there are strategic priorities behind our social responsibility activities (e.g. research with impact), don’t refer to them by name.

SIGNATURE PROGRAMMES

If you’re writing about any of the University’s signature programmes, bear in mind that the audience is unlikely to be familiar with what these are. Use the following descriptions to explain their significance.

Addressing inequalities – research addressing society’s most pressing issues of fairness, from education to ethnicity.

Ethical grand challenges – opportunities for our undergraduate students to learn how to exercise important ethical, social and environmental responsibilities.

School governors initiative – our partnership with the national SGOSs charity to recruit staff and alumni as volunteer school governors at local state schools where their skills are most needed.

Cultural access – inspiring children at the least advantaged local primary schools by introducing them to the resources of our cultural institutions.

Manchester Works – giving opportunities for local unemployed people to prepare for and return to work, either with the University or with local employers.

Make a Difference: Think Sustainability – providing every member of our staff with opportunities to enhance their positive – and reduce their negative – environmental impact in the workplace.

For tips on these and more, download the University’s tone of voice guidelines at www.brand.manchester.ac.uk/written-word.
USE OF THE DEVICE

Use of the round device should be limited to the institution-wide usages: currently Make or Making a Difference

ROUND DEVICE

• The round device MUST be used on all communications that are referring to signature programmes or a Social Responsibility flagship programme (eg: Dementia Friends or Workplace Giving). However we encourage the use on ALL communications referring to Social Responsibility.

• ‘Make a Difference’ should be used as a call to action and ‘Making a Difference’ is more descriptive and should be used when writing about an ongoing activity or reporting on a story.

• The main title, here Make or Making a must always be effra light and difference effra medium range left in the device and always be white on a purple (P2602 hex #) background.

• All of the descriptor words must relate to where the device is being used and must always be in effra light, the same point size as the main title.

• Whereas the University tab logo must always appear top left (unless on merchandise, the round device can be placed within the best area of the design. (See examples on following pages).

• No new logos, marques or brand signifiers are to be developed.

• This visual device ensures an integrated and consistent visual identity.
USE OF THE DEVICE

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

MAKE A CHANGE

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

✓

Don’t change the words

✗

Don’t change the colour
USE OF THE DEVICE

Using the device on an image without a white keyline

- Solid purple without a keyline on an image.
- 85% or more opacity purple without a keyline on an image.
- Too light.
USE OF THE DEVICE

Using the device on an image with a white keyline

- Solid purple with a keyline on an image.
- 85% or more opacity purple with a keyline on an image.
- Too light.
USE OF THE DEVICE

Using the device on a coloured background

- Solid purple on a colour.
- Can’t be used on purple unless it has a white keyline.
- Can’t be used on purple unless it has a white keyline.
USE OF THE DEVICE

Using the device alongside The University of Manchester logo
USE OF THE DEVICE

Using the device alongside The University of Manchester logo

MAKE A DIFFERENCE:
RESEARCH WITH IMPACT

MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

MAKE A DIFFERENCE:
RESEARCH WITH IMPACT

Don’t change the colour of the device

Don’t change the colour of the device
USE OF THE DEVICE

Examples on leaflet covers
USE OF THE DEVICE

How to position within stories in newsletters or brochures
MAKE A DIFFERENCE: BECOME A DEMENTIA CHAMPION
WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO HELP CREATE DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

- There are 800,000 people with Dementia in the UK with numbers set to rise to 1.7 million by 2050.
- One in three people over 65 will die with Dementia.
- There are over 17,000 people under 65 with dementia in the UK.
- Symptoms of Dementia include memory loss, confusion and problems with speech and understanding. Dementia is a terminal condition.

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How to position on the web banners
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How to position on the web banners

Get involved in our social responsibility activities »
Get involved in our social responsibility activities »
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USE OF THE DEVICE

Examples of the device on clothing

The University logo must appear on the clothing too.