

## **DRPR Guideline PR and Journalism**

### **Fundamentals**

Journalism and PR pursue different goals and interact in a number of different ways. PR represents the interests of organisations. One of its original tasks is to inform the public and provide the media with editorial content and topics. Journalists have an information mandate towards the public or its sub-publics. They select topics and content, check and research them and decide on the type and scope of their publication.

The independence of journalism must not be undermined by pressure, financial or other incentives. Due to economic developments and the resulting economic pressure, more and more journalists, especially freelance journalists, are taking on PR assignments at the same time as journalistic assignments. Transparency and a visible separation of roles are essential here - towards the editorial offices or principals, as well as to the public and the relevant sub-publics.

### **I. PR assignments**

1. If permanent or freelance journalists take on PR assignments on certain topics, they cannot work on the same topic at the same time in their role as journalists. Principals, i.e. PR agencies, companies, etc., may neither initiate nor honour or even tolerate this.
2. No payment may be offered or provided for editorial publications in journalistic media.
3. Journalistic publishers, broadcasters or web platforms of any kind must inform their readers or viewers/listeners about special editorial services paid for in full or in part by third parties in a suitable and transparent manner: It must be immediately and unambiguously recognisable to the user if the contribution is sponsored.

### **II. Press gifts**

1. In PR work, no gifts or benefits of any kind are to be granted that are suitable or aimed at impairing the freedom of decision in the reporting of editorial offices or the respective journalist.
2. Where invitations are extended or gifts are given, their value must not exceed the usual social limits.

3. The offer and acceptance of promotional items and other low-value items, such as writing pads, appropriate writing materials or USB sticks, etc. is unobjectionable.
4. Products and services offered for testing must be applied moderately and must not themselves be understood as incentives or be supplemented with incentives. No accompanying payments or sponsorships may be associated with test products.

### **III. Invitations, press workshops, press trips**

1. Invitations to events, especially press trips, must be in a comprehensible relationship to the information purpose. They must not be linked to an explicit expectation of a positive report and certainly not be associated with benefits of any kind.
2. Journalists and other editorial representatives may not be paid a fee for attending press events.
3. Accommodation, transport, meals and the organisation of the trip must always be within the usual social framework, so that there is no improper incentivisation.
4. The free carriage of friends or family members as well as the invitation of journalists to first-class flights are generally not permitted.
5. The programme of the trip must be defined in advance and must be related to the reason for the trip. The editorial offices must be informed of the programme in advance.
6. Reimbursement of travelling expenses is only allowed if they can't be covered by the respective editorial offices of the employer and only in this way can reasonably broad coverage be achieved.
7. Personal expenses incurred by the journalist while travelling may not be covered.

Berlin, October 2013