**Media Attendance at HFMA Chapter and Regional Meetings  
FAQ for Meeting Organizers**

**Should we allow media to attend our chapter or regional meeting?**

Chapter leaders and meeting organizers should consider the pros and cons of media attendance before making a decision about this. Media coverage, especially by the trade press, can raise awareness of a meeting and generate interest in future meetings. However, in some cases, such as sessions with a small-group discussion format or sessions that cover sensitive topics, the meeting organizers or the speakers may prefer not to have media present.

**What criteria should we use to determine if a journalist is qualified to attend?**

In general, access should be limited toworking press who can show evidence—such as articles they have written about other conferences—that their attendance is likely to result in coverage of the meeting in the print, broadcast, or online media. You may receive requests from others. In general, HFMA does *not* recommend providing press credentials to the following:

* Advertising, marketing, or publishing staff or administrative personnel of publications
* Communications/public relations staff persons from (or representing) a for-profit company
* Organizations that primarily produce audio/video continuing education resources
* Exhibitors

Journalists who receive complimentary access to the meeting, often referred to as a “press pass” should wear a badge that clearly identifies their name, media outlet, and their “Press” status at all times while on site at the meeting.

**Should we ask faculty/speakers to sign a media release form?**

Although HFMA has no requirements related to media release forms, it’s a good practice to ask faculty to sign a media release, preferably when they complete other speaker forms. This allows meeting organizers to know in advance if a speaker prefers not to have media in attendance. A sample [media coverage permission form](https://www.hfma.org/content/dam/hfma/chapter-resource-center/chapter-resources/documents/media-coverage-permission-form.docx) is provided for meeting organizers’ use. This form, which incorporates the media guidelines described below, is provided in Word format so it can be modified to suit meeting organizers’ needs. If one or more faculty members decline to have media at their session(s), it is up to the meeting organizers whether to give a journalist selective access to other sessions at the meeting.

**What guidelines should we set for media who attend?**

Meeting organizers may or may not wish to allow any or all of the following activities by journalists:

* Non-flash photography of presenters, providing that it does not interfere with the session
* Use of hand-held devices to make audio recordings for a journalist’s use in developing session coverage—not for distribution
* Interaction with faculty and attendees before and after the session

HFMA does not recommend allowing media to do any filming, live broadcasting, or any type of video recording.

Having the same guidelines for all sessions—and communicating these guidelines to media in advance—simplifies on-site oversight of media and reduces the risk of misunderstandings. Journalists who don’t follow the guidelines you provide them may forfeit their press credentials for the meeting.

Journalists should also be advised that information presented at the meeting is the responsibility of the presenters and does not represent the views, policies, or positions of HFMA.

**Where can I get answers to media-related questions that are not addressed here?**

Write to media@hfma.org