

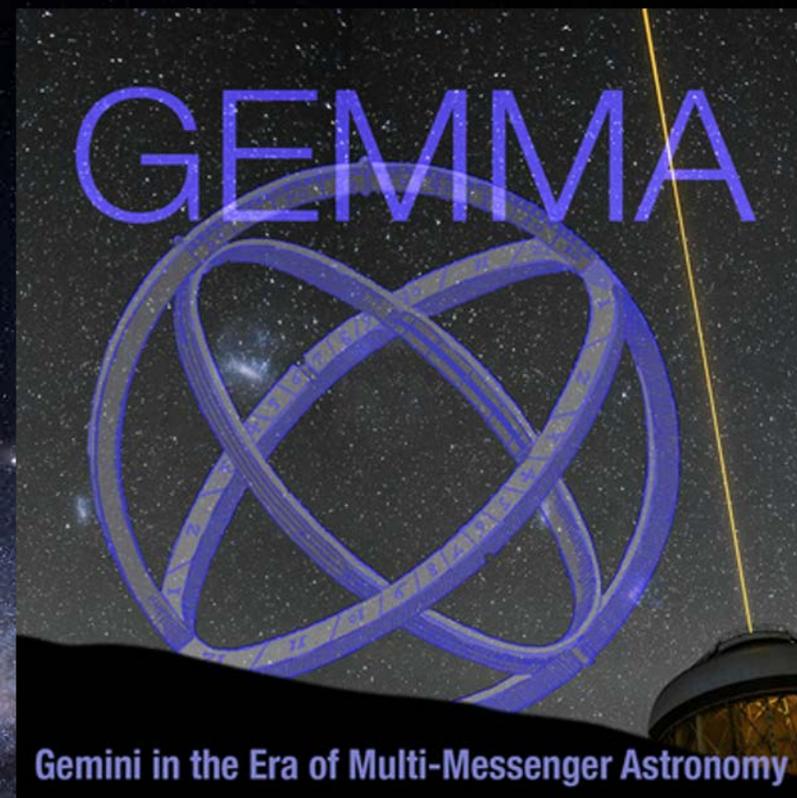


Best Media Practices for Multi-institutional Science Collaborations

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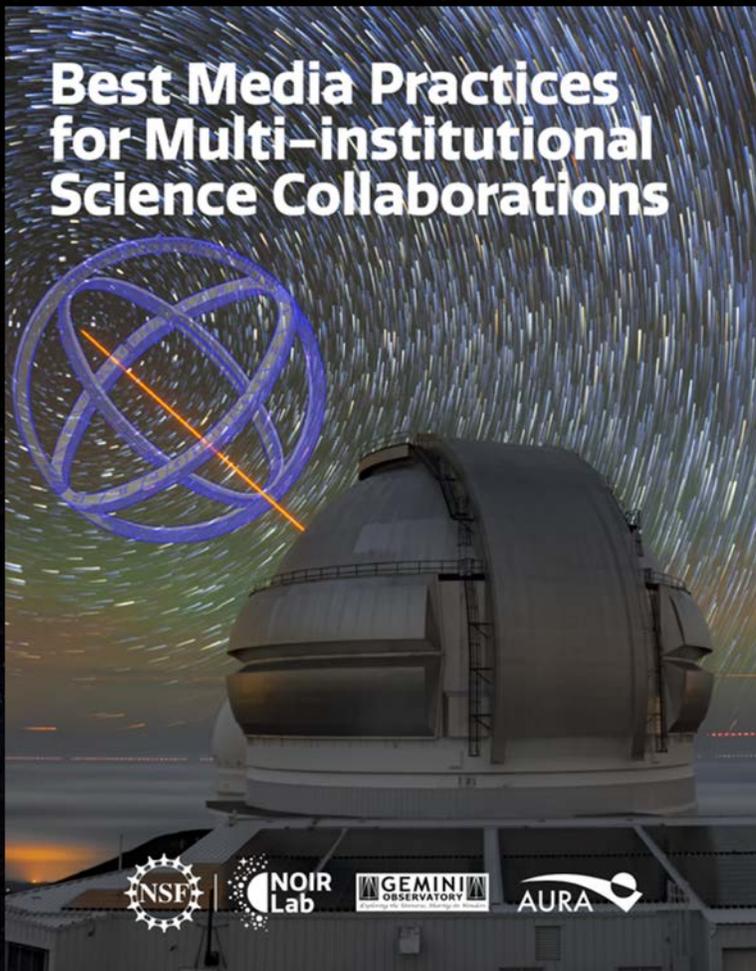


History: November 2019





White Paper Release



- Coordinating media campaigns for large international collaborations involving dozens and more institutions, such as EHT and LIGO, can be a challenge.
- 32 media professionals gathered to discuss this and related topics at an NSF-sponsored summit on MMA/TDA communications. One product to come out of the workshop is a best practices white paper to be released soon.

Overwhelming Number of Institutions

- Who is in charge? Establish clear hierarchy of PIOs who will work closely with science teams. We recommend one lead PIO for collaboration when possible. It is also good to establish tools for communicating and sharing materials.

Magnitude of Results

- Leaks are likely given today's social media-driven world; rumors can generate buzz but science teams need to be coached to not spread news.

Writing of news releases

- Developing one joint release not ideal. We recommend coordinated releases amongst institutions. Ongoing question: How do you not overwhelm journalists with too many news releases?

Identifying Panelists for Press Conferences

- It is very hard to narrow down panelists for big announcements! Politics come into play, naturally. We recommend one diverse panel with no more than five speakers.
- Press conferences are streamed to large audiences who watch live and again after event (EHT press conference viewed more than 1 million times!). The idea is to put on a good show for reporters and large, general audiences, not for other collaborators. Interest has been shown to taper off after 30-45 minutes, so keep talks concise.



Embargoes

- Sending reporters materials ahead of a journal or event embargo helps them prepare better stories and helps amplify coverage.
- However, preventing leaks for big news items from large international collaborations is very hard to do.
- We recommend an “all or nothing” approach: either all journalists receive the news ahead of time or none. This means that for typical news releases, all trusted reporters receive the news; for the big items, nobody receives the news ahead of time.