

Pitching Habits Survey

The Open Notebook is investigating science, health, and environmental journalists' pitching behavior. If you've pitched or written stories in one of these fields within the past several years, please share your experiences and thoughts here!

All responses are anonymous.

Roughly how many pitches do you typically send out in a month?

- None
- 1-3
- 4-9
- 10-19
- 20+

On average, how much time do you typically spend on each feature pitch?

(This includes any background research or pre-interviews you usually do, in addition to actually writing the pitch.)

- Less than an hour
- 1-3 hours
- 4-8 hours
- 8 to 15 hours
- More than 15 hours
- N/A – I don't pitch features

On average, how much time do you typically spend on news pitches?

(This includes any background research or pre-interviews you usually do, in addition to actually writing the pitch.)

- Less than an hour
- 1-3 hours
- 4-8 hours
- 8 to 15 hours
- More than 15 hours
- N/A – I don't pitch news articles

How often do you email editors you don't know or haven't worked with before, to introduce yourself and/or solicit assignments?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Very frequently

Which of these options are part of your pitching strategy?

- I prioritize quantity: I don't spend a lot of time on each pitch, but I send out as many pitches as I can.
- I prioritize quality: I put in a lot of effort on pitches, but I only send out only a few every year.
- I only approach editors or publications that I know well.
- I cold pitch editors and pubs I've never worked for.
- I send the same pitch to multiple publications sequentially.
- I send the same pitch to multiple publications simultaneously.
- I always pre-pitch by sending a quick paragraph in an email to gauge interest first.
- Other:

When an editor declines an idea you've pitched, what is your most typical response?

- I don't write back after a pitch is rejected. I just move on.
- I thank the editor for his/her consideration and move on.
- I thank the editor for his/her consideration, then pitch them a different idea later.
- I respond with a suggestion for an alternative approach to the story, a related idea, or a totally different idea.
- Other/Comments:

If you have a pitch rejected by one publication, how many more times do you pitch that same story to other publications before you give up on the idea?

- None
- Once
- Twice
- 3 times
- 4-10 times
- More than 10 times

If you pitch a feature story to an editor and don't hear back from them, how long do you typically wait to follow up?

- Less than a week
- A week
- 1-2 weeks
- 2-4 weeks
- More than a month
- I don't typically follow up with editors if they don't respond to my pitches
- Other:

How often have you followed up on a rejected pitch by continuing to try to sell the same idea, or a variation on it, to the same editor?

- Never (*if user answers this, it skips the next 2 questions about challenging rejections*)
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Almost always or Always
- Other:

Following up on rejected pitches

When you've followed up on a rejected pitch, how do you typically appeal to the editor? (List any strategies you've tried, e.g. pointing out reasons the original pitch was a good idea, trying a different angle, etc.)

- Pointing out reasons the original pitch was a strong idea
- Adding details to the pitch that the editor might find compelling
- Proposing a different angle on the same story idea
- Pivoting to pitch a substantially different feature idea to the same editor
- Asking the editor to suggest different feature assignments you could pursue
- Asking the editor to recommend other outlets for your original idea
- Asking the editor to introduce you to editors at the same or other outlets where your pitch(es) might be successful
- Other:

When you appeal an editor's rejection, how often does this result in a story assignment for you (even if it is not the story you initially pitched)?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Almost always or Always
- Other:

Demographics

How do you describe your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Do not identify as female, male, or transgender

Which best describes your ethnicity?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other:

How long have you been a science journalist?

- Less than a year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16+ years

How many hours a week do you work as a science journalist?

- Fewer than half time
- 20-29 hours
- 30-39 hours
- 40-49 hours
- 50-59 hours
- 60-69 hours
- 70+ hours

What was your approximate gross income from science journalism last year?

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,001 - \$29,999
- \$30,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$69,999
- \$70,000 - \$89,999
- \$90,000 - \$109,99
- \$110,000 - \$129,999
- \$130,000 - \$149,999
- More than \$150,000

Do you have any other information you'd like to share about your pitching habits?

[response box here]

Do you keep a record of your pitching endeavors that you'd be willing to share with me?

(All info will be anonymized.)

- Yes (*this option prompts user to enter name & email*)
- No (*if user selects this, survey ends here*)