Swarnalata Bhattacharjee

Communications and Media Relations

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Profile

Communications and media relations professional with 11+ years across broadcast journalism and institutional communications in Canada and India. As Media Relations Officer at the University of Manitoba, I manage daily media requests, including urgent and sensitive ones, and have secured 200+ earned-media placements. Before moving into communications, I spent a decade in TV newsrooms, including three years producing CTV Morning Live in Winnipeg, so I know how stories get chosen and what reporters need to say yes.

Experience

Media Relations Officer

Aug 2025 – Present

University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB

- **Desk management:** Run the media relations desk day to day as UM's only media relations officer, and take full responsibility for it when the Director is away
- **Media inquiries:** Field a high volume of journalist requests daily, including urgent, high-pressure and sensitive inquiries; develop timely responses, match reporters with the right experts and escalate to leadership when needed
- **Pitching and placements:** Pitch research, expertise and university stories to local, national and international outlets, securing 200+ placements in outlets including BBC, CBC National, The Globe and Mail and CTV National News
- **Writing:** Draft and distribute news releases, media advisories, backgrounders, key messages, Q&As and op-eds
- **Spokesperson preparation and media training:** Prepare faculty experts and senior leaders for interviews with briefing notes and one-on-one coaching; co-develop and co-deliver media training with the Director of Media Relations
- **Strategy and stakeholder relations:** Develop media strategy around research announcements, policy issues and events; work with faculties and external stakeholders, including federal and provincial governments, on messaging and timing
- **Measurement and reporting:** Build Cision and Power BI reports on pitches, placements and audience reach for senior leadership and the Board of Governors; produce a daily coverage roundup for 500+ internal stakeholders
- **Video:** Shoot and edit video for media and social channels, including footage aired on CTV National News

Skills

Media relations

Daily media management
Urgent and sensitive inquiries
Strategic media pitching
Interview coordination
Event and announcement support

Writing and counsel

Releases, advisories and backgrounders
Key messages, Q&As and briefing notes
Communication planning
Spokesperson and executive preparation
Media training
Government and stakeholder relations

Storytelling and production

Health, science and business storytelling
Earned-media monitoring and measurement
Newsletters and internal reporting
Social media and WordPress
Live TV production
Video shooting and editing

Experience, continued

Producer, News and Sales, CTV Morning Live
Aug 2022 – Aug 2025

CTV News, Winnipeg, MB

- Produced daily live morning programming, managing the show lineup and making real-time editorial calls on tight deadlines
- Worked with reporters, anchors and crews to build and deliver segments on air
- Developed story ideas, booked guests and reviewed incoming pitches, learning first-hand which stories newsrooms accept and why
- Worked with Premier Wab Kinew's team and Mayor Scott Gillingham's team on their monthly segments
- Developed segments with local businesses, organizations and community partners, building a wide Winnipeg network

Writer, Editor and Podcast Host
Apr 2022 – Aug 2022

Next Big Thing Canada, Toronto, ON (remote)

- Wrote and edited stories for a digital publication
- Researched, conducted and hosted interviews for the podcast

Journalist and News Editor
Jul 2016 – Feb 2022

NDTV 24x7, New Delhi, India

- Edited and produced news for prime-time programming, including business, economic and policy stories
- Led breaking-news coverage in a fast-paced national newsroom, making quick editorial decisions under deadline pressure

Desk and Show Producer
Apr 2015 – Feb 2016

Times Now (The Times Group), Mumbai, India

- Produced live broadcast segments for one of India's leading English-language news channels
- Worked on the news desk, preparing scripts and rundowns for live shows

Education

Master of Mass Communication (Journalism)
Symbiosis International University, India
2013 – 2015

BA, Journalism, English Literature and Psychology
Loyola Academy, Hyderabad, India
2010 – 2013

Certification

Public Relations Knowledge (PRK) Exam
Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS)
2026

Tools

Media and analytics

Cision, Muck Rack, Power BI

Content and distribution

Microsoft 365, Microsoft Copilot, Mailchimp, WordPress, Drupal

Video, design and social

Adobe Premiere Pro, Photoshop, social media video

Languages

English and Hindi (fluent)