

Press – science journalists

Situation, June 7th

Early in the morning, activists have occupied biobank X. Approximately 50 people have entered the wing of the hospital where biobank participants are examined.

They have blocked the doors for visitors, replaced sign posts referring to the biobank by their own texts. There are banners all over the place, including one huge banner which covers part of the building. Texts include: 'Give us back our DNA', 'NOT in our genes' and 'Bank holiday!'. Personnel are requested to leave the building. The activists have cameras and report online. In front of the building, ten of them call for 'Biobank crash' and hand out leaflets. The activists have brought sleeping bags and food and have indicated they are here to stay until the biobank is closed. Police and security are already at the scene, but they have not yet intervened.

You

You are journalists at the scene. A first article that has appeared on the website of De Volkskrant, is in your possession. Your editor needs your article, with backgrounds and quotes by the main players, to be published online today and in tomorrow's newspaper. Although your knowledge of biobanks in general is limited, you have written about biobanks before. What do you want to know? What is your lead? Where is the news?

You are a typical science journalist. You are especially interested in scientific or medical information that needs to be well-substantiated. A scientist is almost a colleague.

1. Decide who is going to focus on:

- the activists,
- biobank staff

2. Make a quick analysis:

- What is the situation? How will the situation develop?
- Where is the news? What is the scope? What would be the perfect headline?
- What are the issues at stake? Where is the heart of the controversy?
- What about the benefits of biobanks; do you want add any background?

3. Prepare for action:

- Decide about the right order of the questions.
- if you have some time left, practice your interview with your colleagues.