

Best Practices in Communication

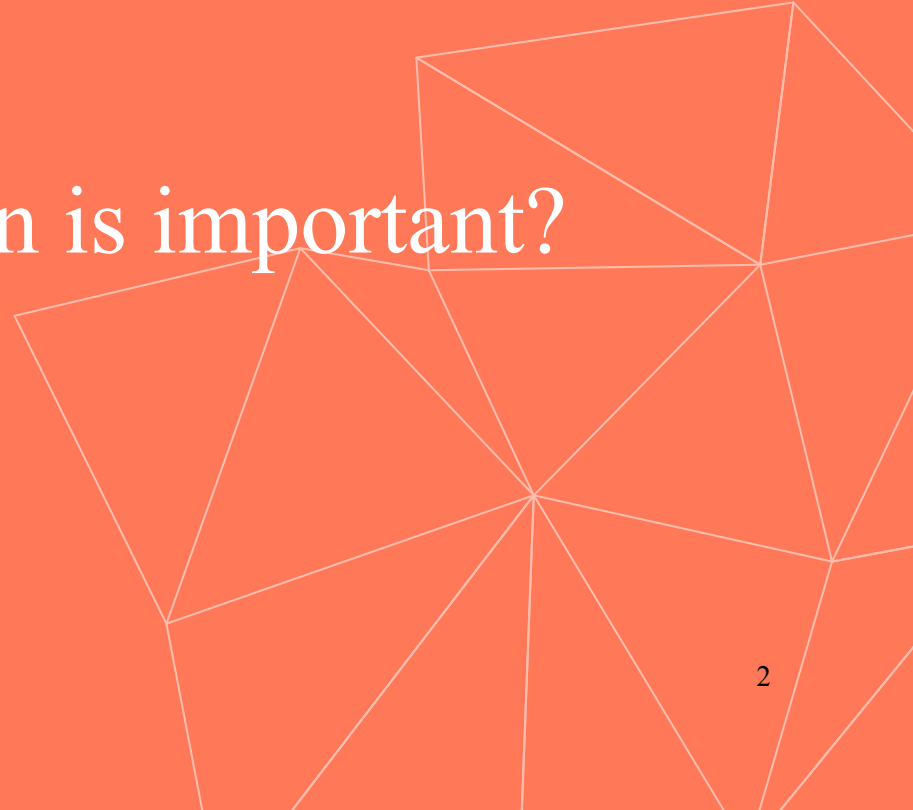
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Senior Communication Officer

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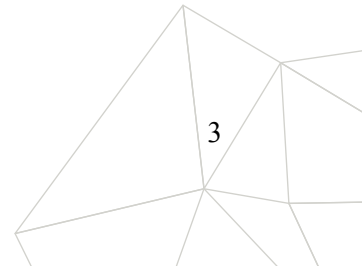
Why communication is important?





“Nothing in science has any value to society if it is not communicated, and scientists are beginning to learn their social obligations”

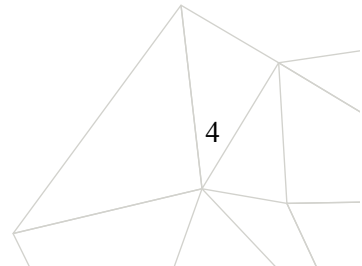
Anne Roe in The Making of Science (1953)





Why?

- To **reach audiences** from research community, opinion formers, policy makers, funders, students to people (end users) and make your content relevant to them.
- To give **visibility to your Action/project** and to increase it during the lifetime of your Action. To **enhance your reputation and gain support**.
- To stimulate and **justify funding**. It may lead to new funding or business opportunities!
- To explain how your project successfully **tackles current issues and challenges**.
- To demonstrate the **value of universities, research institutes & organisations** and the added value belonging to a multidisciplinary network involving numerous countries, helping young researchers.
- To **spark new collaborations** and spread networks and excellence.
- To inspire the **next generation of researchers**.



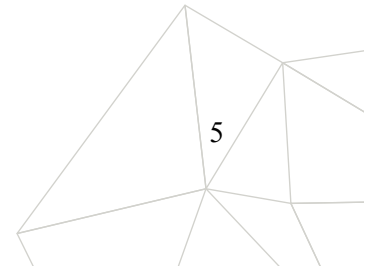
Science is no longer confined to laboratories but is being integrated into society, with the help of effective communication!

Your strategy is **therefore a plan of actions designated to achieve the goals you have fixed.**

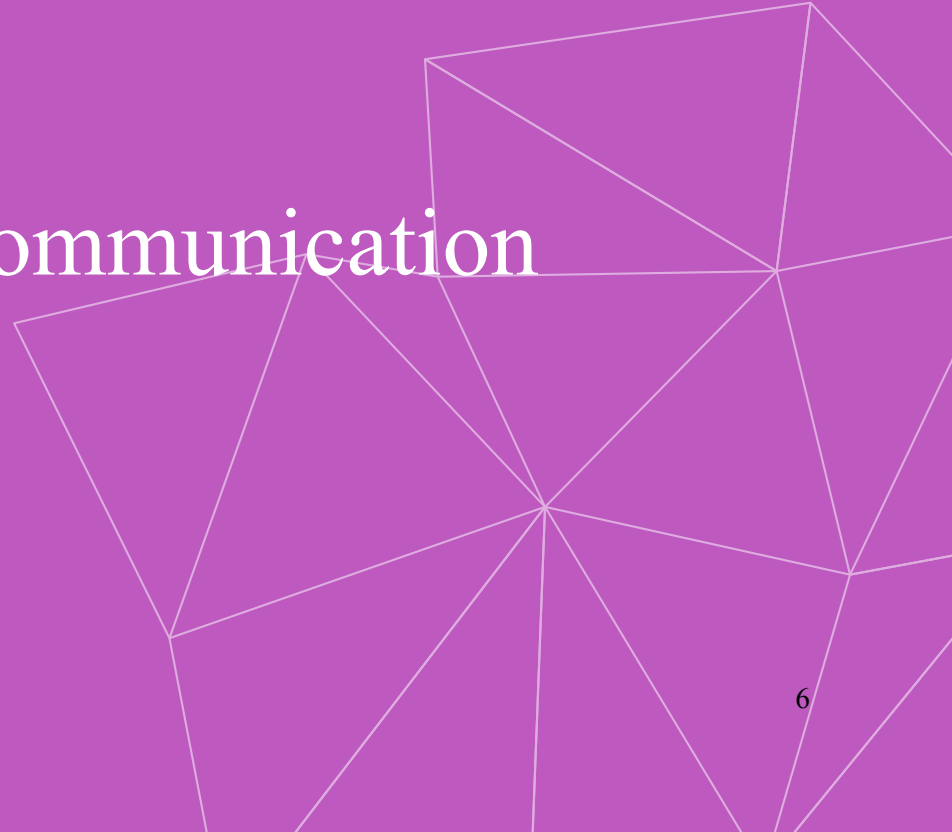
In today's **overconnected world**, having a communication strategy using only traditional means of communication is no longer enough.

You may miss valuable opportunities **to engage with wider audiences**, and they are multiple in your case (citizens, academia, institutions, governments).

This means integrating **the digital factor** to engage with the audiences which is at the heart of all our interactions and should be taken into account in your next move.

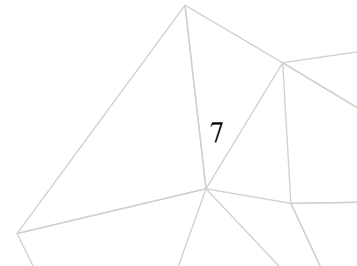


Dissemination vs Communication





- **Dissemination targets specific audiences to bring knowledge and expertise on specific topics**



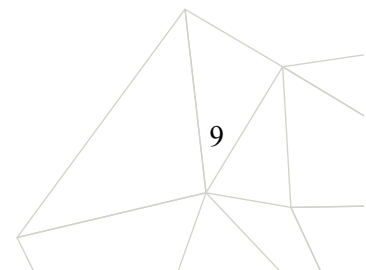


- **Communication engages with a wider audience via mainstream channels**





	DISSEMINATION	COMMUNICATION
Objectives	Public disclosure of results	Promotion of the project and its results
Audience	Target groups: research communities, authorities, stakeholders, policy makers	General public and end-users, civil society and mass media
Language	Scientific specialist language	Non scientific language
Channel	Peer-review, scientific conferences, online repository results	TV and web channels, radio, newspapers, magazines, websites, public space, local authorities platforms or channel





Although **communication, dissemination and exploitation** are obviously connected in one way or another, and may overlap, some of you may still be confused.

This is central to **evaluate the impact** and the difference between them not very clear sometimes among our research community.



COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION WHY THEY ALL MATTER AND WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

Communication: Promote your action and results

Inform, promote and communicate your activities and results

 **Reaching multiple audiences**
Citizens, the media, stakeholders

How?

- Having a well-designed strategy
- Conveying clear messages
- Using the right media channels

When?

From the start of the action until the end

Why?

- Engage with stakeholders
- Attract the best experts to your team
- Generate market demand
- Raise awareness of how public money is spent
- Show the success of European collaboration

Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement

Dissemination: Make your results public

Open Science: knowledge and results (free of charge) for others to use

 **Only to scientists?**

Not only but also to others that can learn from the results: authorities, industry, policymakers, sectors of interest, civil society

How?

Publishing your results on:

- Scientific magazines
- Scientific and/or targeted conferences
- Databases

When?

At any time, and as soon as the action has results


Why?

- Maximise results' impact
- Allow other researchers to go a step forward
- Contribute to the advancement of the state of the art
- Make scientific results a common good

Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement

Exploitation: Make concrete use of results

Commercial, Societal, Political Purposes

 **Only by researchers?**

Not only, but also:

- Industry including SMEs
- Those that can make good use of them: authorities, industrial authorities, policymakers, sectors of interest, civil society

How?

- Creating roadmaps, prototypes, softwares
- Sharing knowledge, skills, data

When?

Towards the end and beyond, as soon as the action has exploitable results

Why?

- Lead to new legislation or recommendations
- For the benefit of innovation, the economy and the society
- Help to tackle a problem and respond to an existing demand

Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement



The **dissemination plan** aims to make sure scientific results created during the project **are being published and disseminated among the research community.**

Various means can be used and should be defined at the **very beginning of the project.** Here is the list of the most important actions your dissemination plan should include



- 1. Publication of scientific articles:** **Scientific articles are the cornerstone of dissemination.** Obviously, the number of articles published will depend on the amount of research activities performed during the project and on the field of research.
- 2. Oral presentations:** Presenting the results of your research activity during a congress can also have a significant impact. Target the appropriate conferences according to topic, target, and outreach. Try to make your presentations more **visual by incorporating graphs, charts, and infographics.**
- 3. Presentation of posters:** Posters are usually easier to create and publish than oral presentations or articles. **Select the most appropriate events where you will maximise the impact and make sure you will reach the largest and most appropriate audience.** For posters, the support of a designer can significantly improve the aspect and thus the understanding. **Diagrams are a good way to simplify the information visualisation.**

4. **Patents:** Being able to patent a process or a technology is a high point in research. This points out that your research distinguishes itself from others, that it shows real excellence and a strong market potential. Patents are difficult to obtain but **they are the best element to make sure the project will continue and lead to further tangible economic and scientific results.**



5. **Organisation of events:** To convey **a strong message** and to make sure your audience receives it and understands it well, events with **face-to-face discussions have a much stronger impact.** They often allow you to establish long term relationships with future partners, customers, or providers and to learn insightful information about the field. Furthermore, **such events provide attractive content for your communication channels.**

6. **Networking with other projects:** Synergies is important and recommended to **develop joint activities.** There are often other projects developing fairly similar knowledge with whom certain synergies might appear. Although most of the work is confidential, common activities can be organising such as **public workshops or conferences** that could reach a critical size much easier and thus have a far **larger impact.**



The communication plan - Should include a basic communication toolbox that will support researchers in their daily work, **foster the identification** with the project and create an **external brand awareness**.

This toolbox comprises the following items:

1. **Logo:** it should not only be visually appealing but also have a strong meaning behind it. Explain why you choose this font, this colour, this icon, this shape, this visual effect, etc. The logo should reflect what the project is about but also **the story and the meaning that goes with it.**
2. **Templates:** Based on this logo and respecting the **visual identity** defined with it, the main communication tool will be document templates such as presentations, deliverables, and posters. Although this might sound surprising, researchers and project managers will spend a lot of time on these documents and many people will read or see them. Hence, put efforts into these templates!
3. **Website:** As a main information portal in the digital age, a website is essential. Get a domain that includes the acronym of the project with a top-level domain .eu if it is funded by European funds. It should be responsive, optimised for search engines, be **visually attractive including various images or videos.** Basic sections include extensive project description, consortium presentation, news, and contact section. The website should be updated regularly and publish as many news items as possible related to the project activities.





4. **Leaflet:** A handy and old-school material that still has utility is the leaflet. 4-8 pages are usually enough to present what the project is about. Make sure to put **attractive headlines**, limit the amount of text and use **visually appealing pictures or infographics**. Icons are also very helpful.

5. **Infographics:** They are **extremely useful** in order to represent a in a simple and beautiful way the project as a whole or a specific process/activity. They can then be used on the website, leaflet, presentations and more. This is key item between a standard communication and an outstanding one!

6. **Roll-up:** When going to fairs, conferences or other promotion events, a roll up is very useful. Put the **project logo, an infographic**, contact details, and funding sources. **The objective is to understand in 5 seconds what the project is about.**



7. **Video/Animation** : A video is also a very **good way to present the project**. Here there are two possibilities: make it at the beginning to raise awareness around the project presenting the objectives, or at the end to present the project results and achievements. Animation or filmed, both options are good, depending on the topic. But keep it short and condensed! **Punchy!**
8. **Press release and conference**: For the kick-off or when you have a big result a press release sent directly to journalists (especially local ones) is a very good way to get media coverage. If the content is exceptional, a press conference can be organised.
9. **Social media**: A must in the 21st century, social media are a **powerful amplification channel**. You can reach news audiences, interact, and convey simple and informal messages. However, limiting activity to Twitter and LinkedIn might be sufficient in order to avoid the risk of leaving accounts empty. They are the most important for the professional environment.



"How to create a plan for distribution of material in your country" and reach local media.
Here we are in the communication

The 5 Ws →

WHY do you want to communicate about your Action? Zoosporic parasites' research has been scattered across Europe. Urgent need for a coordinated and joint effort to build a collaborative platform linking science, industry and management.

WHAT is the key message? ParAqua aims at compiling and making available all information on the occurrence of zoosporic parasites and their relationship with hosts, elucidate drivers and evaluate impacts of parasitism in natural and man-made aquatic environments. Network to improve, promote and disseminate new knowledge and strategies that can be used for better ecosystem governance.

WHO is your target audience? Scientific community, Scientists, Algal Biotech and Water Management companies; industry; NGOs; Policy makers...

WHERE do you want to communicate? Use **tools and channels** accordingly 78 specialists from 32 countries. Target per country the stakeholders; local press; local policy makers & at EU level

WHEN do you want to communicate? Think of timeliness – key moments - not only at the end of the Action. Planning is key

The moment you have something new, an activity, an information ready to released, you can communicate while dissemination, you'll release something through the dissemination channels when evidence based information is ready. But in the meantime, you can start.

The visibility that COST gives
you!





The visibility that COST gives you!

We share news on COST website and in press service providers

The screenshot displays a grid of news articles on the COST website. Each article includes a thumbnail image, a 'News' tag, a headline, a brief description, and a date. The articles cover topics such as gender equality in research, internet addiction, marine connectivity, nutrition, citizen science, and atmospheric electricity. At the bottom, there are sections for 'COST Action blog' and 'COST AT ICTs and Older persons' workshop.

Image	News	Headline	Date
	News	First ever COST Connect on advancing gender equality in research and innovation discusses how to accelerate progress	April 29, 2021
	News	Internet addiction, a growing challenge for everyone's health	April 29, 2021
	News	Advancing knowledge on marine connectivity is key to support transition to a sustainable blue economy	April 28, 2021
	News	COST Action EUROAROTEX produces the most cited article in the top nutrition and dietetic journals	April 23, 2021
	News	Highlighting Citizen Science on Earth Day	April 22, 2021
	Success stories	Citizens get the science bug	April 22, 2021
	COST Action blog	Atmospheric electricity and the biosphere	April 20, 2021
	News	COST AT ICTs and Older persons' workshop	April 20, 2021
	News	COST ACTIONS tackling 'fake news'	April 11, 2021

cost
EUROPEAN COOPERATION
IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Press review
COST Actions in the news

Newsletter

News

COST Newsletter June 2021

July 2, 2021

Supporting Tools

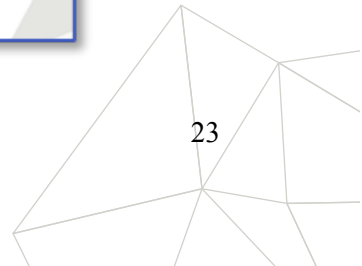




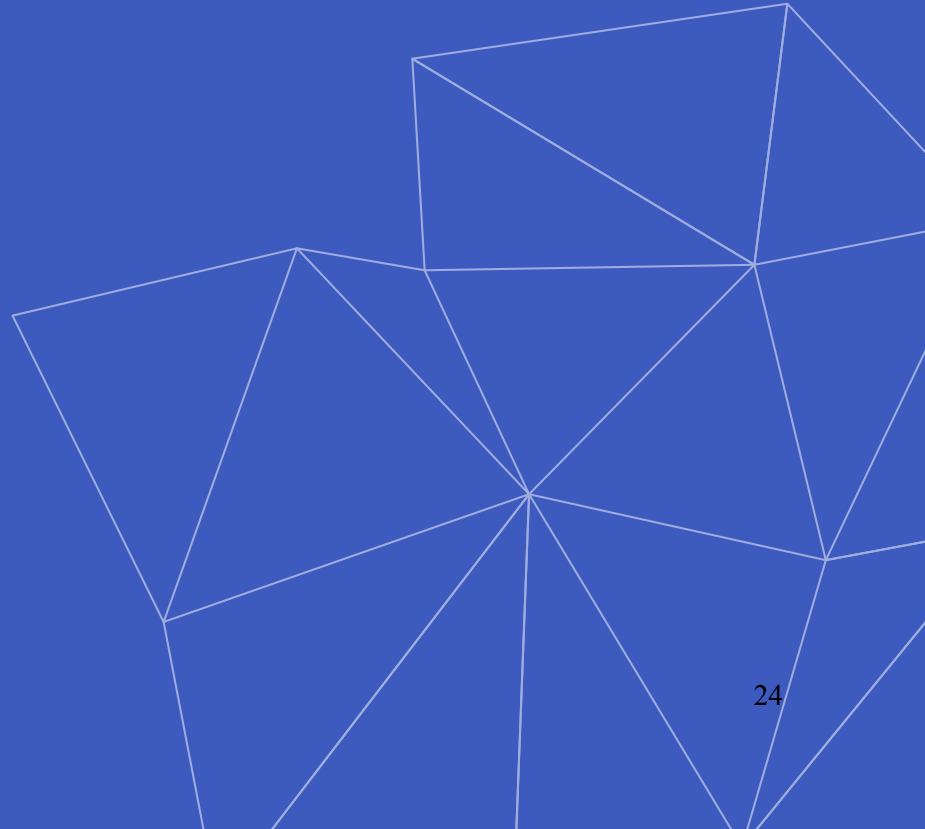
Supporting Tools

- Eligible costs - [Vademecum](#) & [Annotated Rules](#) from 1st November 2021
- [Guidelines](#) on how to acknowledge COST funding
- Dissemination and Exploitation of COST Action results in the [Annotated Rules](#)
- [Toolbox](#) for Science Communication Coordinators

All elements can be **downloaded** on this page:
[Visual identity - COST](#)



Questions ?



CONTACT



Stay in touch with the Communications Unit!

Sources & further reading :

- [Communicating Your Project - H2020 Online Manual \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)
- Quick guide and tools for Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation in Horizon 2020 : [quick-guide_diss-expl_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)
- [Share Your Research. A hands-on guide to successful science communication](#)
- [ANNOTATED RULES FOR COST ACTIONS. Page 53 - Communication, Dissemination and Valorisation of the COST Action results; Open Science and Open Access; Intellectual property rights](#)

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Join our community!

