EIT RawMaterials Communication and Dissemination Guidance

Communicating EU science innovation and research

Communication and dissemination of a Horizon Europe project (EIT RawMaterials KAVA project) is an integral part of bringing the research and innovation to as many relevant people as possible. Europe's future economic growth and jobs will increasingly have to come from innovation in products, services, and business models. With this in mind, communication about European innovation and research projects should aim to demonstrate the ways in which innovation and research is contributing to a European society. Projects should be able to account for public spending by providing tangible proof that collaborative, knowledge-triangle integration (connecting industry, research and education) adds value by:

- Showing how EIT RawMaterials partnership has achieved more than would have otherwise not been possible, notably in achieving scientific excellence, contributing to industrial competitiveness, innovation capacity and human capital, and directly contributing to the economic and societal challenges in Europe.
- Showcasing 'success stories' and how the outcomes/impact of the projects are relevant to our everyday lives; introducing new technologies, creating jobs, designing solutions for materials innovation, products and processes, demonstrating a radical shift from linear to circular thinking (transition to a circular society, integrated cities and green energy transition in Europe).
- Making better use of the results by making sure they are taken up by relevant decision makers to influence policy-making, and by industry and the scientific community to ensure follow-up.

Developing a successful communications project plan

It's all about having a clear and concrete plan. To communicate effectively, you need a well-thought out plan with clear objectives. It is highly likely that you will have various strategies to reach your different target groups or audiences. A successful project plan has the following elements:

- Why you are communicating
- What outcomes/impact do you expect the project will have
- The audience to whom you are communicating
- Their level of understanding about what you wish to communicate
- The response you wish to have from the innovation community, as well as from external stakeholders and EU citizens

> Your Communication Plan is as important as any other aspect of your project!

Effective communication *directly increases the impact* of research and innovation.

Making an impact

The way in which projects define their approach towards communication and dissemination activities varies depending on the project, and so a one-fits-all solution is neither reasonable nor desirable. Project teams aiming for a successful EIT RawMaterials project need to reflect and address communication and dissemination through an integrated approach that strategically targets these activities and which is fully embedded in the project's overall work plan.

Effective plans for communication and dissemination are important for successful project evaluation; particularly given the increased focus that the EIT RawMaterials programmes places on activities which demonstrate and maximise the societal and economic impact of Research & Innovation (R&I) funding and the Horizon Europe Framework Programme.

Communication activities to promote the project itself and its success, as well as the dissemination of results should thus be key components of every EIT RawMaterials KAVA project. Their successful implementation will bring EU-funded research and its results to the attention of multiple audiences, thus helping to drive competitiveness and growth in Europe and address societal challenges.

An increased awareness of EIT/EU-funded activities and project results will directly and indirectly provide many benefits; for example, by helping to secure or increase research and innovation funding, establish new research possibilities and ultimately make Europe more competitive and economically strong.

General steps in developing the work package: Communication and Dissemination

Your work package should define your key objectives and describe the results you want to achieve through your communication and dissemination activities. Communication should begin at the very start of your project and should be an integral part of your project plan.

When you communicate, you should do so with a particular purpose in mind. That is why we distinguish between general communication and dissemination. Dissemination is generally more familiar to researchers, but communication and dissemination have different purposes and audiences.

	Communication	Dissemination
Definition	A strategically planned process that starts at the outset of the project and continues throughout its entire lifetime, aimed at promoting the project and its results.	The public disclosure of the results by any appropriate means including by scientific publications in any medium.
Objective	Reach out to society and demonstrate the impact and benefits of EU activities, e.g.	Transfer knowledge and results with the aim to enable others to use and

	by addressing and providing possible solutions to fundamental societal challenges.	take up results, thus maximising the impact of EU-funded research.
Focus	Inform about and promote the project and its results/success.	Describe and ensure results available for others to USE → with a focus on results only!
Target Audience	Multiple audiences beyond the project's own community, incl. media and the broad public.	Audiences that may take an interest in the (potential) USE of the results (e.g. scientific community, industrial partner, policymakers).
Questions to ask	1. Why is this project important? 2. How is this project new/innovative? 3. What are the possible impacts or benefits to society? 4. What and whom was involved? 5. What are the best ways to reach out with this information?	1. Where does this project fit in with other initiatives or research? 2. How could this work be expanded upon? 3. What are the best ways to reach out with this information?

Source: EU-IPR- Boosting-Impact 2016

While communication activities should start at the beginning of your project and continue until the end (and even afterwards), dissemination might also be spread throughout the lifecycle of your project. For instance, you might want to share interim results with a particular community of experts in order to garner feedback, which then gets fed back into the project. Be open to, and aware of, opportunities therefore to share even interim results.

Reccomended budet for Project Communication and Dissemination

Consider the budget of 10% of the total project funding. When applied to the 'average' budget of projects across all segments, this translates into 100 -150K €. The figure of 150K € may be used as a reasonable cap for large projects. Small projects may consider allocating 15% of the total funding. The budget can be used to hire a part/time or for the duration of the project: Communications Project Manager, Communications freelance professional or a Communications design agency.

Define your key target audiences

Bringing research and its outcomes to the attention of non-scientific audiences, scientific peers, potential business partners or policymakers fosters collaboration and innovation. Communicating outside of your regular core audience(s) not only promotes EU-funded research and innovation, but also opens the possibility for further inquiry and possible collaboration beyond that initially imagined. One of the exciting aspects of EU-funded cross-collaborations is the true innovation that is possible when diverse fields of expertise come together. In EIT terms, the knowledge triangle integration connecting industry, research and education.

When communicating to audiences that are not peers, it is important to formulate key messages in simple, understandable terms. Accessibility to your work and its results is paramount. It is highly likely that your key messages for non-scientific audiences will be different than for those of your scientific or commercial peer groups. Key messages, therefore, should be adapted to each of your main target audiences.

Plan concrete activities on how you will share your project and its expected impact

Today, more than ever, there are a multitude of channels to reach out to people. Which ones you choose will be dependent on the expertise available to your team (internally or externally sourced), budget, and – most importantly – which channels are the ones most likely to reach your intended audiences. An overview of the three main types of channels are outlined below.

1. **Print** (e.g., brochure, poster, corporate presentation, scientific paper)
    Print remains an effective way of sharing your project and its results. For instance, you might write (or commission) a magazine article highlighting the project's work and achievements. Although written for communication purposes, it could end up in the hands of potential stakeholders outside the project and trigger interest in using some of the results.

2. **Digital** (e.g., photos, videos & infographics, website)
    It is customary to set up project website (following EIT web guidelines), outlining your project and sharing photos, videos and an infographic or animation that explains the impact your project will have. Other teams have produced mini-documentaries and photo or video diaries to track and share their project's progress and results. An online platform (website or social media) can be an excellent way of not only communicating or disseminating results, especially amongst geographically distributed audiences. Good quality visual material, like photos, is particularly important when trying to attract the attention of the media.

3. **Events** (e.g., match-making /networking, roundtables, workshops, conferences or online webinars).
    Events are an excellent forum for two-way or interactive communication. They allow for in-depth exploration of your project and results, extensive Q&A exchange which offer the potential for further development. Today, many in-person events are supplemented by, or even replaced by, online conferences or webinars which offer a low-cost way of sharing ideas amongst a group of geographically distributed experts.

Most projects will employ a mix of all three of these types of channels, each one augmenting and supporting the others. What is important is that you consider all three and plan activities and set aside sufficient resources in your proposal.

Communicating with purpose: the role of storytelling

Stories can be a very effective tool in communicating your project and its results. Stories paint a picture and help make it understandable and concrete for non experts and younger audiences (future talent pool and

the tax payers of Europe). Stories are particularly effective in making it easier for other people to share and amplify the message. A good story enables people to relate with the project content. Sharing your project in a story format allows your key message(s) to be conveyed through shared values that can touch people and stimulate an emotional response. Stories are great for getting people to not only understand your project, but also to *care* about it.

Telling an effective story:
- Telling a story is probably the most effective way to communicate science to non-experts (which could includes policy and decision makers)
- Keep it to the essentials, but don't focus only on the (scientific) facts; it is more than a list of results achieved
- Have a clear beginning, middle and an end
- Concentrate on the why, not only the how
- Don't over-complicate: make sure children and/or grandparents could understand it
- Dare to be creative

Timeline and milestones
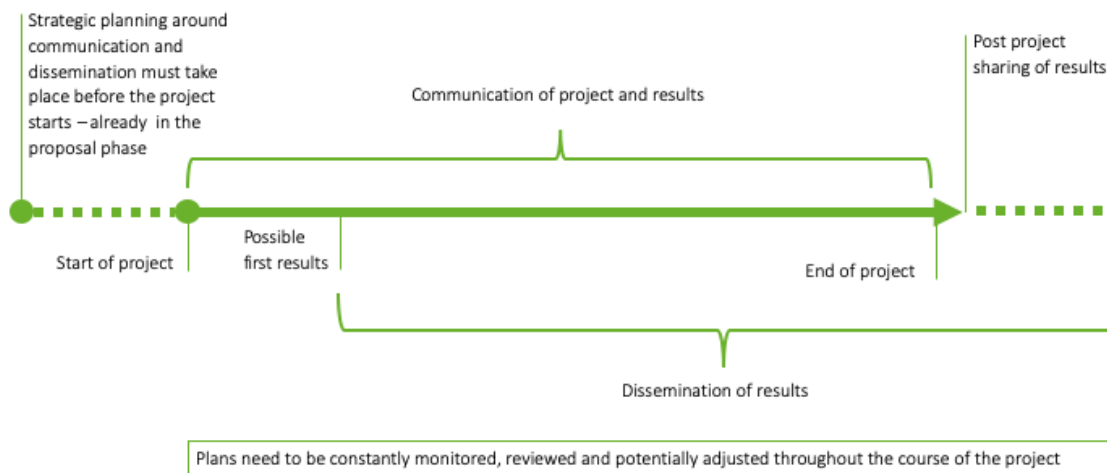
Summary of main points

Communication

- Set well defined goals, pick your audiences, choose your messages and adequate communication tools and channels. You cannot reach out to everyone. It is far better to make a selection and concentrate on doing that well.
- Highlight the benefits of your project for society, for example by showing the impact of your project on everyday lives, e.g. with better quality products or because the specific research is improving lifestyles.
- Tell a story, don't just list facts. Tell a simple enough story that can be understood by your neighbour, or your ten-year-old; in short, a story that relates to the interests of the target audience you want to reach.
- Use existing resources in your consortium to increase outreach on international, national, and regional levels – for example rely on your project partners' already existing contacts and networks, turn to the institutions' communication and marketing departments, involve your consortium's business partners who may have more experience in pitching themselves and their products. **Good communication is a collaborative effort!**
- Regularly monitor and update the communication strategy and activity plan when required:
  - Have you chosen the right message and communication channel(s) for a specific audience?
  - Do you systematically monitor feedback to measure the effectiveness of communication activities and adapt accordingly?
  - Are you able to visualise and make complex data/information attractive and more 'digestible' for the general public/layman audience?
  - Have you been able to reach your communication objectives? What lessons have been learned and/or what could be improved?
- Document and demonstrate communication activities and outcomes in periodic reports.

Dissemination

- Disseminate results that emerge throughout the project in a targeted manner through effective dissemination channels/platforms according to the information needs of the envisaged user group – for example, through:
  - Scientific publications/posters
  - Open Access/Data repositories
  - User workshops
  - Training and teaching materials
  - Cluster meetings
  - Conferences
  - Brokerage events
- Constantly monitor, evaluate and potentially adjust the dissemination plan:
  - Do the actual results still meet the initially anticipated needs of a specific target group? Are there 'new' stakeholders that need to be taken into account?
  - Have you picked the right measures for the right audiences?
  - What have been concrete follow-up actions/results of certain dissemination measures?

- o Have novel or unexpected results emerged? How can these be effectively disseminated?
- Document and demonstrate dissemination activities and achievements in periodic reports.

EIT RawMaterials – amplifying the effectiveness of your project communications

Effective communication is a collaborative effort and the EIT RawMaterials Corporate Communication function will amplify the impact of your project communications. Communications team is also available to provide guidelines, format and advise once the project funding is allocated. There are multiple Communications and Branding guidelines available for all partner at EIT RawMaterials InfoCenter – the digital collaboration platform. By making use of EIT RawMaterials available channels, you can amplify your communication reach. In your planning, consider the use of our various channels:

- Extensive partner network
- Networking events
- Workshops
- EIT RawMaterials website/InfoCenter (news, events submission functionality)
- Joint press releases

EIT/EU branding compliance and contractual obligations

As an EIT RawMaterials partner, it is important that all your communication efforts follow the EIT Community and EIT RawMaterials Branding guidelines, especially the use of the EIT RawMaterials and EU logos (and EU Horizon Europe funding text) on all communication channels, printed and video materials, that

- Always use the EIT RawMaterials logos according to the guidelines (colours, resolution, positioning, font, templates, use with other logos, etc.)
- Always display the EIT RawMaterials logo with the EU emblem (equal width for the EIT RawMaterials brandmark and the EU flag)
- Always accompany the EIT RawMaterials logo with the EU flag and following text:
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APPENDIX I:

There are clear benefits to creating an effective communication plan, just as there are clear risks for not doing so. The main benefits/risks are outlined in the table below.

Benefits ✔ (If effective communication/dissemination plan is in place)	Risks ✖ (If effective communication/dissemination plan is missing)
Improve your proposal's **chance of success**.	**Lower prospects for success** for your project.
Increase the visibility of your research, enhance your reputation and help your efforts **gain understanding and support** (also financially), by presenting your work and its results not only to the scientific community, but also to potential industrial partners, policymakers and society at large.	**Recognition and reputation of your work remains limited** to a small circle of experts. Advancing your field of research has less traction.
Sharpen your profile within the scientific community and attract talented scientists/ students for your own or partner institution(s).	**Needless duplication of your resources** and spending of public funds (i.e., limited 'return on investment' of public funding).
Tap into additional funding sources by illustrating how your project successfully tackles current issues and challenges, and how this positively affects our daily lives (e.g., by creating new jobs, improving public knowledge, or influencing a change in policy).	**Little awareness of the needs and significance of your research** on policy level, potentially resulting in limited public funding/investment.
Discover novel approaches and solutions by promoting the exchange of knowledge on all levels – cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary.	**Untapped potential of your project results and data**. New knowledge and insights, which could lead to whole new fields of application, are lost.
Attract potential users of the project results – including business partners for commercial exploitation, but also other users such as researchers, educators, policymakers, etc.	**Difficulties to find partners** who might take an interest in (commercially) exploiting your results, leading to missed opportunities for commercialisation of project results.
Help strengthen the research and innovation	Europe's full innovation potential remains **untapped**.

landscape in Europe by ensuring knowledge transfer, uptake and commercialisation of novel technologies and results by industry, decision makers and the scientific community.	
Spread knowledge and allow that knowledge to be built upon by making your project results openly available and searchable under fair conditions.	**Uphold barriers** that prevent others from gaining access to research publications and data they can check and re-use.

Source: EU-IPR -Boosting-Impact 2017

Appendix II:

Below are two examples of the steps you need to follow in order to communicate and promote your project and its results (Example 1), and disseminate the results of your project effectively (Example 2).

Example 1: **Communication** / Goal: Promote your project to the general public/ Eu citizens engagement

- Define clear (measurable) communication objectives
    - Know what you want to do and why
    - Have some idea of how you can measure when you're successful (can be qualitative or quantitative); for instance, we're successful in our outreach when our story is picked up in a major newspaper, or we're successful in our outreach when we reach x-number of followers via social media.
- Define the audiences you wish to reach
    - Even with a strategy aimed at the general public, the more you can specify to whom you are "talking", the better. For instance, is it a certain group that you want to reach? Specifying the audience(s) will help you formulate better both your key messages, as well as the appropriate media to reach your audience(s).
- Choose the appropriate medium to reach out to them
    - Today, there is a wide variety of channels to reach out to people; you will want to choose the channel(s)/mix that fits your audience, type of messaging, budget and other resources. For instance:
        i. A social media outreach can be a great way of building awareness and support with specific groups, but requires regular engagement and active participation on the part of your team.
- Demonstrate how EU funding tackles societal challenges
    - Share how your collaborative project (that is EU-funded) is helping make societies better in some way (i.e., positively contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals , addresses resource efficienct, sustainability, climate change, develops more environmentally friendly process, do mention EIT RM Lighhouse programme)

- Include specific timelines and deadlines for concrete activities
- Define how you will manage and monitor communication throughout the project
    - It's a good idea to create a simple communication matrix (listing elements like audience, channel, activity owner, frequency, goal, etc..) to keep track of activities and maintain an overview; this single overview can be shared with everyone and adjusted as necessary.

Example 2: **Dissemination** / Goal: Reach audiences that could use the project results

- Analyse, select, and describe the key project results
- Choose audience-specific relevant tools to disseminate your results
    - Explore what the most effective channels are to reach your intended audience(s)
- Consider how to ensure active stakeholder involvement
    - This will likely require more on-going involvement from your side; take care to assign specific roles and sufficient resources for this.
- Describe how you will manage & monitor dissemination activities
    - Like with any aspect of your project, it is important to have a structured overview.
    - What have been concrete follow-up actions/results of certain dissemination measures?