

Project Title

European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Project **Communications Strategy**

Version:

Date:

Authors:

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Purpose..... | 3 |
| 2. Background | 3 |
| 3. Communications Objectives (What) | 4 |
| a) Public Outreach & Engagement..... | 4 |
| b) Collaboration & Networking | 4 |
| c) Education & Knowledge Sharing | 4 |
| 4. Target Audience (Who) | 5 |
| 5. How (Channels) | 7 |
| 6. How (Materials)..... | 9 |
| Note on Imagery | 9 |
| 7. Who is Responsible (Roles) | 9 |
| 8. Processes for Implementing Strategy (How) | 12 |
| a) Creation of a major communications output (e.g. publication, infographic, video) | 12 |
| b) Hosting events | 12 |
| ANNEX 1: Project Title Social Media Strategy..... | 14 |
| Platforms | 14 |
| Objectives..... | 14 |
| Content | 14 |
| ANNEX 2: Template for Creating Communications Assets | 15 |
| Questions to address | 15 |

1. Purpose

This Communications Strategy has been developed as a reference document for the **Project Title** team. The primary purpose of this Strategy is to ensure that there is a common understanding within the team of the overall vision and strategy for promoting the work of the Project.

This strategy will also be shared with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) to ensure that the Project's plans align with DAFM's strategic goals and expectations. It is a living document and any feedback from DAFM, funding partners or through other experiences as the project progresses will be incorporated into future versions.

The strategy is supported by a detailed, internal operational document that outlines the specific processes involved in creating communications assets and implementing activities, as well as the roles and responsibilities across the team.

2. Background

The **Project Title** EIP is a **X-year** project, which will run from **202X to 202X**. The project is funded through the [European Innovation Partnership \(EIP\)](#) scheme, which is co-funded by the European Commission and the Irish Government's Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

The project partners are:.....

The project has the following objectives:

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)
- (v)

A detailed Work Plan has been developed across the project as a whole and within each Work Package (WP) are included objectives, tasks and sub-tasks, key outputs and delivery schedule.

As an overview:

- WP1: **Title & Brief Description** e.g. *Research*
- WP2: **Title & Brief Description** e.g. *Communication & Networking*

- WP3: **Title & Brief Description** e.g. *Management & Implementation*
- WP4: **Title & Brief Description** e.g. *Evaluation & Reporting*
- This document outlines the overarching communications strategy to support the delivery of the project's activities. It will be a living document that will be reviewed and updated during implementation.

3. Communications Objectives (What)

The strategic long-term goal of **Project Title EIP** is to

The Communications Strategy is underpinned by three pillars: **(edit below as appropriate)**

a) Public Outreach & Engagement

- *Contribute to the dissemination of information about the project to a broad base of stakeholders and the wider public.*
- *Enhance awareness through outreach activities and creative communications.*
- *Build relationships with local and national media for the dissemination of project updates, case studies & success stories & project results.*
- *Build a strong project membership base and maintain high visibility across a range of social media platforms using engaging and educational content creation.*

b) Collaboration & Networking

- *Build a project membership database to ensure a broad reach.*
- *Build relationships and facilitate co-creation activities among stakeholders interested in collaborating to support the project.*
- *Develop relationships with media and get their support to showcasing the project's initiatives and impacts.*

c) Education & Knowledge Sharing

- *Share innovative project knowledge with key stakeholders to encourage a better understanding of the project, and its outcomes*
- *Identify pathways to impact for promising knowledge and enable knowledge transfer activities to support this.*
- *Support peer to peer learning and knowledge exchange.*

By implementing these communications objectives, the following impacts will be achieved:

- **Scientific:** **briefly describe the impacts....**
- **Environmental:**
- **Educational:**
- **Economic:**
- **Societal:**

4. Target Audience (Who)

The **Project Title's** activities are of interest to stakeholders and the wider public within Ireland interested in agriculture and rural innovation. Table 5.1 below outlines the specific target groups, perceived needs and expected outcomes of engaging with the project. **Edit below as appropriate**

| Table 5.1. Target groups, outcomes, and impacts | | |
|---|--|---|
| TARGET GROUPS | NEEDS | EXPECTED OUTCOMES |
| The Client Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) | E.g. Evidence of successful project implementation and outcomes. Positive media and public perception of the project Dissemination of new knowledge pertinent to the project and its objectives. Organising networking, training and collaboration events, notifying key personnel and sharing event communications Attendance at meetings as and when required. | E.g. DAFM will be provided with quantitative and qualitative information to help assess implementation. Project updates will help highlight effective implementation on the ground. Feedback collected from practitioners implementing activities will help inform future policy. Events will help to engage and inform relevant stakeholders. |
| Practitioners e.g., agricultural organisations, industry, farm advisers, individual farmers and farm families, rural communities, those involved in the implementation of biodiversity, environmental and climate change projects. | Clear, jargon-free accessible communications Awareness of relevant events and activities of interest. Awareness of potential funding opportunities. Assistance and advice in relation to project opportunities New knowledge and capacity building opportunities that can support transition. Awareness of national and European good practices. | Practitioners will receive curated information and news of direct relevance to their activities. They will be made aware of and support to pursue relevant opportunities. By being part of a network, it is expected that there will be an increase in engagement between different actors and peer-to-peer. |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Representative Organisations e.g., CAP Network Ireland, Farming Organisations etc</p> | <p>Clear, jargon-free overview of Project objectives & results.</p> | <p>Representative Organisations will be provided with details of the project and its importance for their organisations as well as guidelines on how those organisations can collaborate to help project outcomes</p> |
| <p>European Networks and Bodies e.g., European CAP Network,</p> | <p>Good practice examples to share.</p> <p>Direct input (i.e. presentations, participation on discussions panels etc.) at online and in-person events.</p> <p>Assistance with monitoring and evaluation in Ireland as part of EU wide monitoring.</p> | <p>European Networks and Bodies will be provided with examples and case studies from the projects, along with details that establish the replicability of these practices in other locations and contexts.</p> |
| <p>Enterprise and Innovation Bodies E.g., Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), Western Development Commission, Irish Co-operative Organisation Society (ICOS), Teagasc, Educational Training Boards, Business and Innovation Centres, Third level institutions, Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia.</p> | <p>Details of project objectives and outcomes</p> | <p>Enterprise and Innovation Bodies will be provided with information on the project and on the potential for rural enterprise and innovation.</p> |
| <p>Policy Makers e.g., TDs, Senators and Senior Officials in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Department of Rural and Community Development, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, other relevant departments e.g., DPER, DETE.</p> | <p>Informed project information</p> <p>Positive media and public perception</p> | <p>Policy Makers may use the information provided to highlight the project and its objectives, as well as review results for informing future policy</p> |
| <p>The Media e.g., The National Media including farming and rural affairs correspondents working in national print and broadcast media, sectoral specific print media (e.g., Irish Farmer’s Journal, Agriland.ie, local newspapers), local or community radio stations under the umbrella of CRAOL with farming/ rural affairs focus.</p> | <p>Positive stories, projects information, opportunities, events & results.</p> | <p>The Media will be provided with regular, accurate and up-to-date information that aligns with the overall goals of the project to communicate with the various target stakeholders. Relationships will be cultivated with different media representatives to facilitate the development of channels to celebrate the activities, milestones, opportunities, and results of the project.</p> |
| <p>The General Public</p> | <p>Insights into the project: what it means for them and their communities. Opportunities for involvement, events, project milestones, good practice examples etc.</p> | <p>The General Public will be provided with key messages relating to the project and any opportunities, challenges for rural communities, as well as good practice examples.</p> |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Target: X new followers over each channel in first year.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Publicity and content dissemination: The Project title will build good relationships with different agri-media industry communication channels and bodies and local print and broadcast media will be leveraged to facilitate the transmission of information to target audiences. A media monitoring service will be employed to collate pertinent media coverage in the national and regional print media. Types of publicity and content dissemination that will be exploited include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases: to promote successes and news-worthy milestones of the project to national and local media. • Community notices: Relevant notices will be placed in local press on an ongoing basis. • Features and interviews: In agri-trade media, farming supplements, specialised publications, local and national radio. • Community radio: Liaise with community radio stations to promote good practice at a local level. • Printed materials: Information will also be provided in printed formats; leaflets, newsletters and posters. <p>Target: Min. of X such activities annually.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Network events, meetups, and exhibitions: The Project Title will organise regular events that will provide community information and allow for the sharing of ideas, discussion of issues and sharing of knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences, meetings, workshops will be hosted for appropriate stakeholders to facilitate networking between target groups, and to demonstrate results and good practice examples. Target: X number of events annually. | | | | | | | | |

6. How (Materials)

All communication assets will follow the **Project Title** branding and will be published on the **Project Title** website. To encourage wide, sustainable use, assets will follow a digital-first principal. Printing can be implemented on a needs basis for specific events or purposes.

Where possible, assets will be uploaded directly to the website to encourage users to stay on the site. For example, short publications can be adapted to news articles with a permanent URL instead of requiring design or download as a PDF. Infographics should be included as direct images on website pages instead of separate files, and video links should be embedded on the site instead of requiring a click through to an external page.

Note on Imagery

All assets will be produced using high quality imagery. Where possible, photos produced and owned by **Project Title** directly will be preferred (e.g. taken as part of event attendance). **Project Title** staff will be responsible for ensuring that informed consent has been provided before using any images or video footage and that appropriate acknowledgement is included.

When necessary, stock footage may also be used for specific materials. In this case, care should be taken to ensure that the pictures are representative of the Irish landscape and **Project Title**.

Images should be high resolution, minimum of 300dpi for print publications and 72ppi for online. Images should not be stretched, distorted, or enlarged beyond their original size. Images should include appropriate Alt description text for categorisation purposes.

7. Who is Responsible (Roles)

Implementing the communications strategy is a collaborative effort among the whole **EIP Project Title** team.

A detailed outline of the roles and responsibilities for each communication channel and asset have been developed and agreed at an operational level.

The table below summarises roles and responsibilities for each communication channel and asset.

| Channel | Insert Role responsibility | Insert Role responsibility |
|--|---|--|
| Website | <p>Website terms of reference/ liaise with sub-contracted web developers.</p> <p>Host site on server and maintain storage facility</p> <p>Supporting with the conceptual development of new sections/ modules.</p> <p>Troubleshooting technical issues</p> <p>Development and maintenance of standard sections of website (e.g. homepage, contact us, about)</p> <p>Updating events calendar</p> <p>Final proofread/ check of content before publishing</p> | <p>Development and maintenance of thematic sections/bespoke modules on website adhering to brand guidelines/style.</p> <p>e.g. themed sections</p> <p>Lead on news section of site (news articles, assets, publications etc.)</p> <p>Contact form management, including responding to enquiries.</p> <p>Uploading of content (news articles, resources, image library)</p> |
| Social media | <p>Creation of social media strategy.</p> <p>Lead out on design of specific campaigns.</p> <p>Lead on engagement of sub-contractors to develop original assets (images, graphics, videos)</p> <p>Monitoring social media metrics</p> | <p>Creation and sharing of standard social media content (news, events, posting)</p> <p>Channel maintenance (responding and re-sharing)</p> <p>Implementation of social media campaigns.</p> |
| E-Bulletin & Direct Emails to membership list | <p>Design and template for e-bulletin and other branded emails as needed.</p> <p>Final proofreading of e-bulletin content before publication.</p> <p>Proofreading of other member emails as required.</p> <p>Creation of dedicated Project Email mailbox.</p> | <p>Lead on e-bulletin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting content - Collating draft bulletin - Managing approval by DAFM - Uploading content to e-bulletin template and adding articles to website. - Publication of e-bulletin - Tracking metrics <p>Lead for other direct emails to membership list.</p> <p>Monitoring of Project Title email</p> |
| Membership database | <p>Promoting mailing list to contacts and when attending events.</p> | <p>Maintenance of membership database (e.g. checking for duplicates/ adding missing information etc.)</p> <p>Managing file storage (campaign monitor or other platform).</p> <p>Ensuring GDPR compliance for data collection and storage.</p> |
| Attendance at external events (e.g. external projects meetings, conferences etc) | <p>Represent Project Title at events</p> <p>Provide support in development of communication assets for events (stands, collateral etc) including liaison with sub-contractors</p> | <p>Represent Project Title at national and EU events.</p> <p>Event design, agenda development, logistics, preparation and management lead for high profile events</p> <p>Providing content for assets.</p> <p>Manage any printing or other logistics related to assets</p> <p>Post-event follow up with attendees (e.g. feedback survey).</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Project Title hosted events</p> | <p>Strategic advice on agenda development.</p> <p>Support for development of training assets if required.</p> <p>Support with representation at national conference.</p> | <p>Event design, agenda development, logistics, sourcing speakers, preparation, promotion and management.</p> <p>Providing content for assets.</p> <p>Staff lead for implementing the event (e.g. presentations/ facilitating meetings).</p> <p>Post-event follow up with attendees (e.g. feedback survey).</p> |
| <p>Supporting EIP/DAFM – led events</p> | <p>Strategic advice on agenda development</p> <p>Support for development of communication assets, including liaison with any sub-contractors if required</p> | <p>Event design, agenda development, logistics, sourcing speakers, preparation, promotion and management</p> <p>Providing content for assets.</p> <p>Staff lead for implementing the event (e.g. presentations/ facilitating meetings).</p> <p>Post-event follow up with attendees (e.g. feedback survey).</p> |
| <p>Media</p> | <p>Strategic development of a media pitch based on content provided.</p> <p>Building networks and relationships among media contacts.</p> <p>Pitch content and follow up.</p> | <p>Identify and share source content.</p> <p>Work to develop the story and support with outreach.</p> <p>Provide initial introductions to media contacts.</p> |
| <p>Key Assets</p> | <p>Insert role responsibility</p> | <p>Insert role responsibility</p> |
| <p>Case studies</p> | <p>Strategic advice on case study templates/ assets and promotion.</p> | <p>Identify case study topics.</p> <p>Conduct on site interviews.</p> <p>Develop and publish follow up assets (written report, social media, video, images).</p> <p>Create and implement promotion campaign.</p> |
| <p>Publications</p> | <p>Strategic advice on content, design and dissemination.</p> | <p>Publication schedule and planning</p> <p>Design and content, including liaising with external suppliers if needed.</p> <p>Promotion plan and implementation</p> |
| <p>Infographics</p> | <p>Strategic advice on content, design and dissemination.</p> | <p>Content planning.</p> <p>Design and layout, including liaising with external suppliers if needed.</p> <p>Promotion plan and implementation.</p> |
| <p>Video</p> | <p>Strategic advice on content and promotion</p> | <p>Content planning.</p> <p>Storyboard and visualisation.</p> <p>Liaising with external suppliers as required.</p> <p>Editing and post production (with external providers).</p> <p>Promotion plan and implementation.</p> |

8. Processes for Implementing Strategy (How)

To achieve **Project Title** objectives effectively, team members will adhere to the following processes.

a) Creation of a major communications output (e.g. publication, infographic, video)

Process:

- 1) **Assign LEAD Responsibility:** The Project Manager will identify an Asset Lead as the person responsible for seeing the asset through from conception to realisation.
- 2) **Communication Asset Template:** Asset Lead will complete the Communication Asset Template (see Annex 2). The template is needed to help identify key message, target audience, scope, budget, purpose and intended use of the asset. Asset lead will share the completed template with the Communications Officer and other relevant team members.
- 3) **Concept Meeting:** The Asset Lead will organise a Concept meeting to further discuss the scope of the work, agree on a process and timeline for both development and promotion. This includes roles/responsibilities regarding any external contracting (e.g. graphic design, videography, printing etc) and timing of feedback rounds.
- 4) **Implementation:** Asset lead will project manage the process to complete and publish the asset.
- 5) **Impact:** Asset lead will assess the effectiveness of the asset as intended, capturing relevant metrics and report back to full team at subsequent team meeting. (e.g. number of views on social media, downloads from the website etc.)

Notes:

Timelines for the above depend on the scope and purpose of the asset as well as the intended use. For example, a short (~15 second) social media video for which content is already available can be created in-house within a few days. In contrast, a longer video that requires the development of a script and hiring a videographer to film and edit footage will have a lead time of at least 4 weeks.

The Project Manager is responsible for timely advance planning and delegation to asset leads to ensure that assets are developed with sufficient lead in time.

b) Hosting events

Events may be hosted as part of **Project Title's** work. The process for approaching these events is outlined below.

Process

- 1) **Conceptualise:** The Project Manager organises a concept meeting to understand the scope, purpose, target audience and intended outcomes of the event. This meeting should be attended by the Event Lead and supported by the Communications Officer.
- 2) **Project Manage:**
 - The assigned Event Lead takes ownership for project management of all aspects of the event organisation and implementation, including coordinating the input of **Project Title** staff.
 - Together with input from the **Project Title** team, the Event Lead develops an agenda for the event to include the format, schedule, speakers, any interactive sessions and the shares with **DAFM** for approval.
 - Once approved, the Event Lead takes responsibility for inviting speakers and any logistical arrangements for in-person events.
- 3) **Develop Assets:** The Communications Officer will support the event lead to create any assets required for the event (e.g. promotional materials, online registration form, tools to facilitate interactive sessions).
- 4) **Promote:** The Event Lead will be responsible for promoting the event, including sourcing invitation lists, sending email invitations and promotion through social media or other channels. This can be supported by the Communications Officer as required.
- 5) **Implement:** The Event Lead is responsible for managing the execution of the event, including logistics and coordination of staff roles and responsibilities.
- 6) **Evaluate:** The Event Lead will also manage the post-event activities to include follow-up communication with attendees/ invitations to become a member of **Project Title's** mailing list as well as evaluation of the event from both attendees and together with **DAFM**.

ANNEX 1: Project Title Social Media Strategy

Platforms

Insert names of platforms you will use

Key Hashtags Create Project Specific Hashtags

Objectives

1. Brand Awareness

- Raise awareness of the Project Title and its aims, objectives.
- Ensure the brand has a presence online and in person at relevant events.
- Increase traffic to the website.
- **Specific Target: ...**

2. Improve relationships with key stakeholders

- Become a trusted source of news in Ireland to encourage engagement and build relationships.
- Like, share and promote content from relevant national and EU stakeholders to share news, events and opportunities.
- **Specific Target: Increase average engagement rate across all channels by...**

3. Target new audience

- Create original and informative content to engage and capture new subscribers to further grow the website and social media audience.
- Attract the attention and engagement of local authorities, policy makers, local business owners, community members, rural community groups, farmers.
- **Specific Target: Increase social media audience by...**

Content

Content should be short, primarily visual (e.g., single page Canva stills/ short GIFs instead of multi-page PDFs) and act as sign posts to drive traffic to the website for further information.

Content should follow themed structures e.g. educate and engage showcased below.

1. Educate

- Brand awareness about Project Title.
- Funding programmes farmers and other rural development stakeholders (policy makers, business owners etc.) can apply to and related tips for applying.
- Short graphics, GIFs or stills about biodiversity, climate change etc.
- News, fact sharing and interviews from politicians, industry experts etc.
- Informative webinars about initiatives, the work of the Project Title and more.

2. Engage

- Examples include polls, quizzes, photos with hashtags from followers etc.

- Competition to increase engagement
- Personal stories from business owners and other community groups
- Community-specific posts related to **Project Title**.

Content Guidelines

- Focus on original content rather than simply resharing from other sites.
- Images: Clear, high-quality imagery that reflects the topic of the posts.
- Use hashtags to encourage followers to share their own experiences through a theme
- Post regularly, create and follow a content calendar to align with key events, funding deadlines and other initiatives.
- Schedule posts in advance (choose from Hootsuite, Facebook Business, Tweetdeck, or Buffer).
- Use video content where possible: e.g., case study footage, short GIFs or videos made with Canva or similar.

ANNEX 2: Template for Creating Communications Assets

The template below is an example of the questions that should be addressed when creating any communications asset for **Project Title**. This includes outputs such as publications, infographics, videos, social media content, teaching materials for training workshops etc.

The template does not need to be formally completed before production. Instead, it is a framework that should determine the approach to creating any type of communications output.

Questions to address

1. *Objective and Goals*

- What is the purpose: to inform, engage, share knowledge etc.
- What do we want to achieve with the asset e.g. brand awareness/ enhance visibility/ report to funding agencies/ encourage participation in schemes etc.

2. *Target Audience*

- Specific stakeholder groups?
- Technical expertise or non-specialists?
- Preferred channels for communication? (see main strategy)

3. *Key Message*

- What are we trying to communicate?
- Is the asset structured so that the main message is first, followed by more details?
- Is the type of asset suited to both the message and main target group?

4. *Intended Use*

- How and where will the asset be published or disseminated (e.g., **Project Title** website, social media, online or print publications, reporting to funding agencies/ other)?
- Will the asset be shared across multiple channels and/ or adapted for different needs?
- What is the schedule for publication? Can this be connected to wider events and activities to improve the visibility.

5. *Impact Measurement*

- How will impact be monitored? Social media reach/ number of downloads/ new subscribers to mailing list/ other metric?
- Track progress and impact, use insights to inform planning for future materials. For example, if a publication was very successful, assess which aspects of its content, development or dissemination could be replicated for future.