

## ESDIT's COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

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## **Introduction**

This document describes the ESDiT Communication Strategy, providing details on the strategy that shall ensure awareness and high visibility of the activities carried out in the ESDiT Consortium. Project communication entails all communication and can be divided into two categories; internal and external communication. Both internal and external communication are described in the Communication Strategy. The communication strategy is carried out considering all ESDiT Consortium members and shall support all project partners' own communication activities.

It is key for the development of the communications strategy that it is linked with the Impact strategy of the ESDiT programme. The main challenges to overcome from a communications perspective:

- The complexity of the programme
- The challenge to involve and coordinate partners to multiply communications efforts
- The diversity of target groups requires different engagement approaches
- ESDIT branding not actively coordinated
- Lack of consensus on the message and channels to use
- Other agents of influence or multipliers of publicity are not extensively used in communications efforts (ESDIT partners, media...)

This document includes:

(a) STARTING POINT considering objectives, target groups & current ESDIT's communications channels;

(b) CHALLENGES involving ESDIT's communications in general, but specifically branding and messaging;

(c) SOLUTIONS brings actions to consider when implementing the ESDiT communications strategy.

## **General Communication objectives**

The consortium aims to achieve transparent and thorough internal communication enabling all Ethics of Socially Disruptive Technologies (ESDiT) consortium members to contribute to the project and each other's work. To deliver on the project's overall goals several communication channels have been established and actions will be generated to optimise the internal and external project communication and the quality of the project output.

With different topics and different target audiences, ESDIT requires a variety of engagement tools and approaches. These range from online communication channels such as the ESDIT Website and social media channels, as well traditional approaches such as Annual Report and specific reports, printed collaterals and other promotional merchandise. In addition, PR efforts such as PR & mass media relations and outreach activities will contribute to ESDIT's overall communications objectives.

## **Dissemination versus communication**

Dissemination is the public disclosure of the results of the project in any medium. [...] It is a process of promotion and awareness-raising right from the beginning of a project. It makes research results known to various stakeholder groups (like research peers, industry and other commercial actors, professional organisations, policy makers) in a targeted way, to enable them to use the results in their own work.

Communication means taking strategic and targeted measures for promoting the action itself and its results to a multitude of audiences, including the media and the public, and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange.

## **Internal communication**

### **The main internal communication Objectives**

1. Optimal internal communication
2. Foster coherence between the separate parts of the projects
3. Achieve a common understanding the project's overall goal and the status of the programme.

### **Internal Communication Channels**

The following internal channels are used in the ESDiT consortium:

- Regular meetings
- Templates for reports \*annual, general, SGD... have been developed
- Slack messaging platform
- Obsidian platform
- Document collaboration at SURFDRIVE
- Regular newsletters
- Planning and execution of reports (incl. Mid-term reports to NWO)

## **External communication**

### **External Communications Strategic Approach**

- PRESENT ensure high and clear visibility of ESDiT's work;
- FUTURE maximise outreach to position ESDiT as a reference project in technology + ethics;
- LEGACY guarantee a future impact of the project

### **The main external communication Objectives**

- To give the ESDiT programme high relevance and visibility to create awareness of its scientific outcome.
- To communicate with other similar or complementary organisations and initiatives.
- To encourage knowledge exchange with relevant scientific and non-scientific communities.

### **External Communication Channels**

- Website
- Annual reports

- Organisation of and participation at scientific conferences and other events
- Social media channels like YouTube, Twitter
- Podcasts at Spotify
- Production of online and offline material
- Press releases and publication of articles

## Stakeholder Analysis

The communication efforts are considered different target groups:

- Researchers
  - Part of ESDiT consortium
  - Outside ESDiT consortium
- Research partners
- Scientific projects and initiatives
- Professionals (engineers)
- Industry
- General public
- Policymakers
- Press and media

### Initial stakeholder analysis

| Target groups       | Interest in the ESDiT programme   | Assessment of impact (how much they can influence the success of the project) |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Technical Engineers | High – Implementation of the ESDiT outcomes in the technical requirements   | High – uptake of results and knowledge utilization                            |
| General Public      | High – Guarantee safety, explainability and transparency in consequences of using disruptive technologies   | Low - Attract students to the studies relevant to our program                 |
| Policy Makers       | Medium – Recommendations from the ESDiT outcomes for the (inter)national policy on technological implementation and ethic regulations (like AI act) | High - uptake of results and knowledge utilization                            |

### Actions

Technical Engineers – monitor closely and inform completely – concrete actions need to be defined in the communication strategy update

General Public – monitor regularly and participation needed -- concrete actions need to be defined in the communication strategy update

Policy Makers – regularly engage and keep them satisfied - – concrete actions need to be defined in the communication strategy update

### **Key Messages**

For communication purposes, the key message and additional messages are therefore:

Key message:

**By innovating the ethics of technology, we can critically evaluate and guide the development, introduction and use of current and future socially disruptive technologies**

### **Additional messages**

The wording of the additional messages will be altered depending on the target group. For the general public for instance, the messages will not contain technical/special terminology from the healthcare domain, but the core of the messages will remain the same.

All messages intend to catch relevant stakeholders' interest in the project, invite them to seek more knowledge and preferably enter a dialogue with members of the Consortium.

### **Benchmarking**

It is useful for ESDIT to benchmark its performance in communications to learn from other organisations and projects of the best available practices. For benchmarking purposes, the following organisations have been chosen as reference in terms of the nature of the project, its activities as well as communications channels:

- SIENNA PROJECT <https://www.sienna-project.eu>
- 4TU.Ethics. <https://ethicsandtechnology.eu>. Contact Mariska Bosschaert-Bakhuizen. Email: [mariska.bosschaert-bakhuizen@wur.nl](mailto:mariska.bosschaert-bakhuizen@wur.nl)
- Hybrid intelligence – Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam project – <https://www.hybrid-intelligence-centre.nl/>
- Design for Changing Values - ERC Grant for Ibo van de Poel

### **Knowledge transfer**

Knowledge transfer to academic and non-academic audiences is relevant in the overall ESDiT programme in the long term-run. Accordingly, it should be integrated in the communications plan in the form of general events, articles for general media and online means, mostly social media, considering a link with current affairs and relevant topics and their philosophical and ethical implications.

## **Communication Plan**

### **Areas of work**

- STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION
  - Communications strategy Objectives
    - Short term\*1 year/ Medium\*3 years/ Long term\*10 years
    - Link with impact strategy
  - Communications strategy workshop

- Feedback and update
  - Revision each x year(s)
- INFORMATIONAL CONTENT
  - Website
  - General info leaflet
  - Infographics
- BRANDING
  - Templates
  - Visual guidelines
  - Media kit
- ENGAGEMENT
  - Podcast
  - Website / Social Media content
  - Social media listening (YouTube)
  - Outreach activities
- KNOWLEDGE
  - Mapping of influence agents
  - Workshops to ESDiT members in Communications issues
  - Events \*pre/during/post events good practices

## **Actions**

- In the communication folder and SLACK Communications channel are different presentations available for ESDiT members to use for various communication and dissemination purposes.
- Ensure a regularity of content publishing. This is to maintain the interest of website and social media users on a long-term basis.
- Propose a Communications Representatives meeting, with staff dedicated to communications efforts in each partner University each 1-2 months to tackle coordination issues. Topics such as coordinated content management and events advertisement on social media, etc could be discussed.
- Reinforce Social media channels as a source of direct traffic to ESDiT website. The content can either be ESDiT's or curated from other sources (relevant news items related with ESDiT topics).
- Create and publish media content of events and activities. For example: press releases for the media as well as photographic albums for the general public
- Create an ESDIT Press Kit & templates which will provide clear guidelines for internal and external implementation of design and basic information about the project
  - General information about ESDiT
  - PPT template has been developed
  - Social media publications
  - Good practices for events
- ESDIT calendar to bring together all ESDiT activities.
  - Internal calendar – to connect with Slack

- External calendar – available on the website
- Regarding the media, after having a good base of communication elements ready  
\*not before\* it's important to start reaching out to journalists - need to be identified and cultivated to help publicise the work of ESDIT, as well as topic influencers/experts/multipliers – PR and topic mapping.

### 4.3. Communication activities 2022

|                     | April  | May   | June                                       | July                    | August                | September               | October              | November | December                            |
|---------------------|--|---|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Website</b>      | Structure & content                          | 1st version                                 | Presentation                               | Enhancements            |                       | Final version           | Updates              |          |                                     |
| <b>Strategy</b>     | Initial approach                             |   | Draft                                      | Feedback from Away Days |                       | 1st draft version       |                      |          | Final version (for 2023 evaluation) |
| <b>Events</b>       |  |   | Good practices                             |                         | Workshop 1            |                         | Conference execution |          | Workshop 2                          |
| <b>Branding</b>     |  | Templates & images 1 (derived from website) |  |                         |                       | Templates & kits        |                      |          |                                     |
| <b>Media</b>        |  |   |  |                         | Mapping               | Media kit               |                      |          |                                     |
| <b>Social media</b> | Meeting Youtube and Twitter content creators |   | Meeting ESDiT partners                     |                         | Hootsuite established |                         |                      |          |                                     |
| <b>Podcast</b>      | Meeting creators                             | Season 1 production                         |  | Season 1 evaluation     |                       | Season 2 initiation     | Season 2 production  |          | Season 2 evaluation                 |
| <b>Others</b>       |  |   | COM presentation/ after Away Days: summary |                         |                       | Newsletter introduction |                      |          |                                     |



### 4.3. Communication activities 2023

|                 | Jan  | Feb      | Mar | Apr | May | Jun          | Jul      | Aug | Sep                                      | Oct | Nov                       | Dec |
|-----------------|--|----------|-----|-----|-----|--------------|----------|-----|--|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| <b>Website</b>  | Update/enhancements<br>(during the whole year)   |          |     |     |     |              | Projects |     |  |     |                           |     |
| <b>Strategy</b> |  | Calendar |     |     |     |              |          |     | <b>Communication<br/>Strategy update</b> |     |                           |     |
| Events          |  |          |     |     |     | Away<br>Days |          |     | Workshop New<br>Hires                    |     | Annual<br>Research<br>Day |     |
| Branding        |  |          |     |     |     |              |          |     |  |     |                           |     |
| Media           |  |          |     |     |     |              |          |     | ESDiT book                               |     |                           |     |
| Social<br>media |  |          |     |     |     |              |          |     |  |     |                           |     |
| <b>Podcast</b>  | Continuation<br>Each season has about<br>7 episodes and then we<br>take a break for a<br>couple of weeks. There<br>has been one season a<br>year. This season<br>started on 16 Jan and<br>there are already 4<br>episodes. |          |     |     |     |              |          |     |  |     |                           |     |
| <b>Others</b>   | Quarterly Newsletter   |          |     |     |     |              |          |     |  |     |                           |     |

