



# **Communications Best Practice**

## **Communicating your project (through ACTION)**

**ACTION Accelerator Kick-off Meeting, 15th January 2021**

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T6 Ecosystems srl

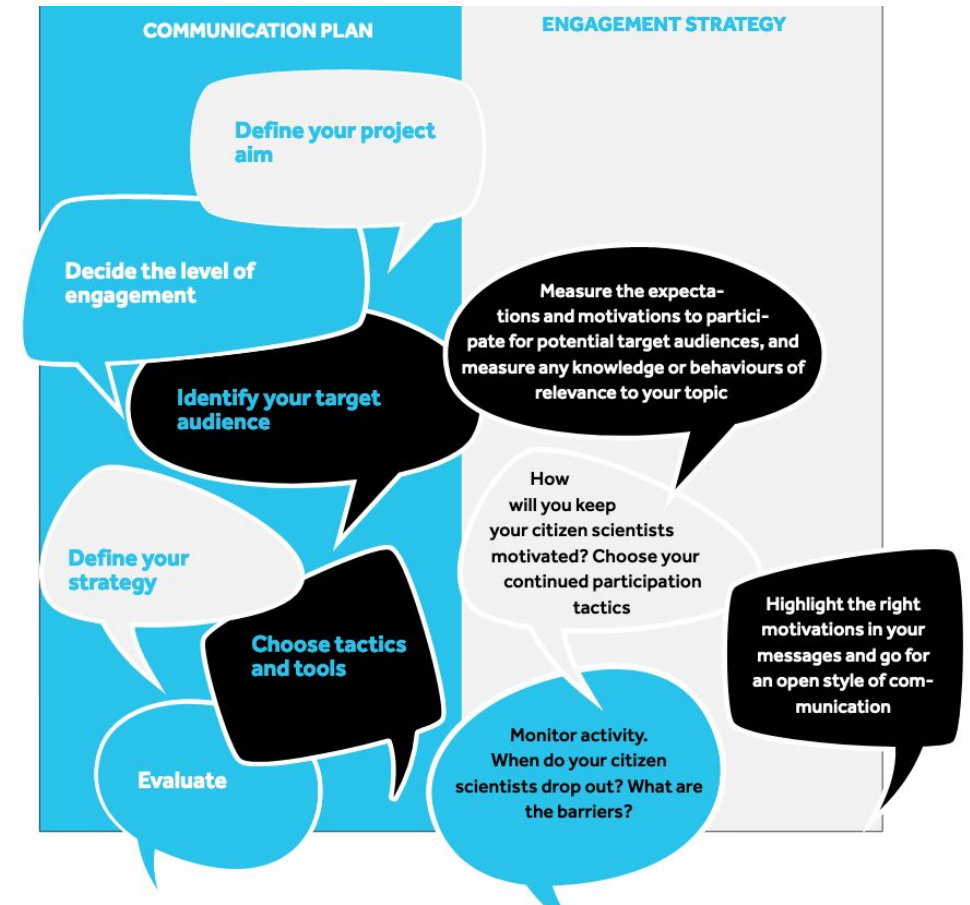
**This document shows one part of the presentation given during the ACTION Accelerator Kick-off Meeting on 15th January 2021**

# What this presentation covers

- Communicating your citizen science project:
  - What are your aims, target groups and resources?
  - Develop a communication strategy/plan that fits your purpose

# Communicating your citizen science project

- Recruit, retain and keep participants informed? - Engagement strategy
- Inform other stakeholders about your project? If yes, who are they? Which are the most important ones? Which channels shall we use? How much efforts are we able to invest - **Communication strategy**



Source: *Communication in Citizen Science. A practical guide to communication and engagement in citizen science*

# Communication strategy - What are the aims of your communication?

Goals of communication:

- Look at your project goals and main activities as well as your mission statement (in case you have one) and decide of what you wish to communicate
- What do you wish e.g. to change
- Define goals that everyone agrees are worthwhile

Examples:

- Inform local community about citizen science activities
- Make it easy for citizen scientists and organisations' staff to share, document and view information and communicate online
- Grow partnerships in citizen science within implementing organisation and externally
- Develop awareness of organisations involvement in citizen science
- Establish the organisation as a thought leader in Citizen Science nationally
- Raise awareness of how public money is spent

# Communication strategy - What are the aims of your communication?

Example:



## Sustainable partnerships

- Grow partnerships with Government, NGOs, NFP, corporate, community groups, research bodies and institutions.
- Find new sponsors – ethical organisations and those looking for Citizen Science initiatives.
- Leverage partner networks for marketing OEH Citizen Science projects.
- Formalise strategic partnerships through MOUs / media announcements and create value proposition for organisations.



## Spread the word

- Make our online presence shine (fresh and visual content, easy to navigate and find what's on, sign up and get alerts, find resources.)
- Explore new communication channels that meet the needs of our citizen scientists.
- Understand our citizen scientists through digital marketing and CRM
- Communicate value and outcomes of collected data from Citizen Science projects
- Point people to where they can find our Citizen Science data. (e.g. ALA, BioNet, Environmental Data Portal)



## Go for growth

- Capacity building for staff e.g. Tool kits and resources to help staff establish new projects and find funding.
- Demonstrate, through stories of success, the value of Citizen Science e.g. filling knowledge gaps, delivering rigour and community engagement outcomes.
- Build a shared understanding of the OEH Citizen Science Strategy and motivate key groups to help us grow OEH Citizen Science.
- Raise profile with key stakeholders OEH Exec, CE, secretary DPE and Minister.



## Stand out from the crowd

- Seek opportunities for speaking engagements
- Leverage and seek out media opportunities for OEH to be quoted as an expert in citizen science.
- Set the benchmark for best practice Citizen Science projects (rigorous and engaging that reach large audience) and provide guidance to others.
- Be a thought leader in the Citizen Science community by taking opportunities to put OEH at the table, publish and share our research and connect and network with those that matter.

Source: OEH Citizen Science Communication Strategy, 2017-2020

# Communication strategy - Whom do you wish to reach?

Target groups:

- Look at your stakeholder mapping and decide which groups are relevant for you for communicating about the project in order to reach your goal; these groups become your target groups
- Order them in terms of relevance
- Identify a communication goal and main message for each of them
- Think about tools and activities how to reach them

Example:

- Citizens in your community
- Local administration
- Legislative bodies



What is your primary target audience?



What is your secondary target audience?

*Source: Communication in Citizen Science. A practical guide to communication and engagement in citizen science*

# Communication strategy - Choose your tools

- Choose tools and channels that cover best the identified priority target groups



What channels are most suitable for your target audiences? What exactly do you intend to organise (potential overlap between target audiences and channels)?

	Target audience I	Target audience II	Target audience III
<b>Social media</b>			
<b>Event</b>			
<b>Campaign</b>			
<b>Printed material</b>			
<b>Website</b>			
<b>Press</b>			
<b>Newsletter</b>			
<b>Other</b>			

Source: *Communication in Citizen Science. A practical guide to communication and engagement in citizen science*



# Communication strategy - Schedule your activities

Source: *Communication in Citizen Science. A practical guide to communication and engagement in citizen science*

Target audience					
Message (content)					
What?					
How? (channel, tactic)					
When? (phase, timing, frequency)					
Goal					
Who executes?					
Cost estimate					

# Communication strategy - plan your efforts and resources


Plan your time and efforts:

- How much budget do you have for communication?
- How much time can you make available for this? Plan if you need a dedicated person for this?
- Decide respectively on activities

# Most prominent tools in citizen science projects' communication

Sonic Kayaks - citizen science in the marine environment for the A...

Watch later Share



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das Bundesprogramm

**Tatort Streetlight**  
A project in the Federal Programme Biological Diversity: Species Protection through Environmentally Friendly Lighting

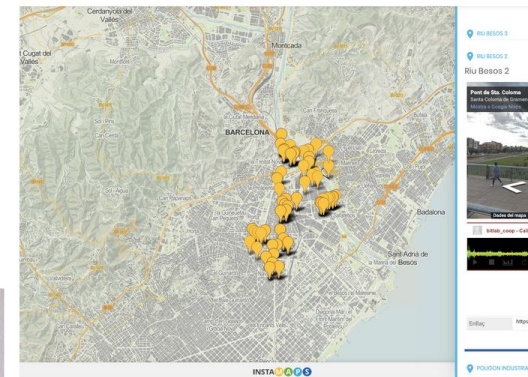
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## els nostres PROJECTES

Coneix tots els nostres projectes d'innovació cultural al territori i retorn social.



## Mapa Sonor de Barcelona

CULTURA + EDUCACIÓ + PARTICIPACIÓ

De Vlinderstichting  
19.736 Tweets



**De Vlinderstichting**  
@vlinderNL

De Vlinderstichting is de organisatie die zich sterk maakt voor het behoud en herstel van vlinders, libellen en natuur in Nederland.

Nederland [vlinderstichting.nl](https://vlinderstichting.nl) Seit November 2009 bei Twitter

281 Folge ich 16.538 Follower

Tweets Tweets und Antworten Medien Gefällt mir

De Vlinderstichting hat retweetet  
IUCN NL @IUCNNL · 5 Std.  
Om de insectensterfte tegen te gaan zijn grootschalige en ingrijpende maatregelen noodzakelijk. Maar ook als individu kun je wel degelijk een bijdrage leveren: [naturetoday.com/intl/nl/nature...](https://naturetoday.com/intl/nl/nature...)

# Social media

- They bring your citizen science project to life
- Offer opportunities for interaction between you and your citizen scientists and between them
- Which social media to choose? What do you currently use? Stay with what is already successful
- ACTION will provide you with a social media mini guide (as part of the communication pack) where you find some tips, e.g.
  - Plan your messages around your activities and events. If you have a special event, always make a teaser campaign. Suspense > Surprise for your audience
  - Post a mix of message types (project messages, subject-specific messages, “like” messages)
  - Plan ahead
  - Divide content between team members in order to maintain diversity and different points of view - while keeping the same tone of voice (your project/team tone of voice)
  - Always prefer videos and images over plain text!
  - Use hashtags (short, unique, simple and easy to type) and use the ACTION hashtag (#ACTION4CS) along with specific global hashtags (e.g. #citizenscience)
  - Post regularly; decide regularity upon the resource you have for communication
  - Look at your statistics (good for further planning, but only business accounts provide this information)

# Digital storytelling

- Uses visuals, audio or text to tell a story about a subject through digital media
- Zoom in on a topic and recount the story, often from a personal perspective
- Short and powerful (2 to 3 minutes viewing time or single screen text)
- Involve your participants to talk about their experiences
- Creates sense of belonging and curiosity
- Share through all kinds of communication channels (website, blogs, newsletter, social media, general media)

# Media work

- Decide about two or three core messages that you communicate coherently throughout the channels, activities and time
- Draw up a list of journalists and provide them with regular information and follow items they publish, mainly on local level (they are often the link to national media)
- Ensure core functions (e.g. press contacts) are consistently available
- Publish press releases (including a description, appealing testimony (e.g. a scientist, or a participant), description of your organisation, contacts, website and social media links)

## Some other tips

- Keep to a uniform style, design and terminology throughout all channels and activities
- Keep up a regular flow of relevant news
- Participate in current discussions in your area / topic
- Inform the municipality/ies in which your citizen science project is based
- Use your and the ACTION hashtags (#ACTION4CS) along with specific global hashtags (e.g. #citizenscience) and tag relevant institutions and groups
- Make sure you have the permission to publish photos or citations
- Get your project on a citizen science platform. Consider have your pilot here: <https://eu-citizen.science/>
  - Get to know some of the most famous: <https://www.zooniverse.org/>, <https://scistarter.org/>, <https://www.inaturalist.org/>
- Keep communicating until the end of the project

## Communication strategy - evaluate

- Measure of the effectiveness of your engagement and communication strategy
- Identify which quantitative and qualitative indicators do you want to check in your evaluation at the beginning of the project; be precise as possible
- Please consider that some indicators will be used as part of the monitoring and impact assessment activities. Including them in your evaluation plan will make it easy to provide these figures to us too (see below)
- Monitor regularly and adapt activities
- Evaluate at the end of activities

### **Metrix that will be used by the ACTION team**

- Number of publications (peer-reviewed articles book chapters, BA/MA/PhD/other theses , non-scientific publications, visibility of your research outputs on social media: N. of download, likes, shares, etc.
- Number of awareness level/dissemination events organised
- Number of participants to organised events
- Number of people/organisation reached through social media (twitter followers, Facebook page followers and like, etc.)



# References

- Veeckman, C., Talboom, S., Gijssels, L., Devoghel, H., Duerinckx, A. (2019). [Communication in Citizen Science. A practical guide to communication and engagement in citizen science](#). SCIVIL, Leuven, Belgium
- [OEI Citizen Science Communication Strategy](#), 2017-2020



ACTION

**Thank you!**  
***We are looking forward to  
collaborate with you 😊***

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