



Project No. 101045956

Biomarker and AI-supported FX06 therapy to prevent progression from mild and moderate to severe stages of COVID-19

Deliverable 8.3

Plan for dissemination including communication activities

WP 8 – Communication, dissemination and exploitation

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Delivery date	31 January 2022
Dissemination level	Public
Type	Report

Version 01



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Revision history

Date	Authors	Revision
30.12.2021	Sara Rodriguez	Draft version
05.01.2022	Andreia Cruz	Revision 1
12.01.2022	Sara Rodriguez	Revision 2
13.01.2022	Jeanette Müller	Revision 3
17.01.2022	Sara Rodriguez	Revision 4
21.01.2022	Benjamin Ginsky (GUF), Petra Wülfroth (F4), Raquel Hernandez, Sylvia Daamen (ESAIC)	Feedback
24.01.2022	Sara Rodriguez	Revision 5
24.01.2022	Andreia Cruz	Revision 6
25.01.2022	Sara Rodriguez	Revision 7
28.01.2022	Andreia Cruz	Revision 8
28.01.2022	Sara Rodriguez	Final version



Abstract

About 14% of COVID-19 patients with mild or moderate disease develop severe symptoms and are eventually admitted to the intensive care unit. The main goal of the COVend project is to reduce the number of COVID-19 patients in hospitals and thereby reduce the burden on patients and their families, hospital staff, and the healthcare sector. The specific objectives are, first, to enrich the current portfolio of SARS-CoV-2/COVID 19 prophylactics and therapeutics by clinically testing FX06 as a promising drug candidate. Second, to provide effective therapy against SARS-CoV-2 by using innovative immune biomarker profiling, endothelial cell assessment methods, and artificial intelligence driven models for decision support for clinical treatment of COVID19 disease. This is expected to prevent a progression to severe disease and subsequent hospitalisation.

Endothelial cells are the main regulators of vascular homeostasis (dynamic equilibrium), as they interact with both circulating cells and cells present in the vessel wall. When endothelial function deteriorates, vascular homeostasis is impaired, leading to increased permeability for blood and its components as well as inflammation of the endothelium. FX06 has shown to have a protective effect on the endothelium by reducing the inflammatory process. This way, the disease progress will be interrupted, resulting in faster recovery of the patients and less admissions to intensive care units.



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Partner short names

GUF	Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität Frankfurt am Main
accelCH	accelopment Schweiz AG
ESAIC	European Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care
F-ITMP	Fraunhofer Institute for Translational Medicine and Pharmacology ITMP
F4	F4 Pharma GmbH
TAU	Tampereen Korkeakouluosaatio SR
UCD	University College Dublin
UMCG	Universitair Medisch Centrum Groningen
MiDA	Medical Intelligent Data Analytics GmbH
UHW	University Hospital Würzburg
ASST	ASST Fatebenefratelli Sacco – Luigi Sacco Hospital
UNIPG	Universita degli Studi di Perugia
KC	Lietuvos Sveikatos Mokslu Universiteto Ligonine Kauno Klinikos
ICS-HUB	Hospital Universitari de Bellvitge
UMFCD	Universitatea de Medicina si Farmacie Carol Davila din Bucuresti
CHUC	Centro Hospitalar e Universitario de Coimbra E.P.E.
APHP	Assistance Publique – Hôpitaux de Paris

Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CO	Communication Objective
D	Deliverable
DO	Dissemination Objective
DoA	Description of Action
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAIR	Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable principles
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
HEU	Horizon Europe
ICU	Intensive Care Units
M	Month
MS	Milestone
RfE	Roadmap for Exploitation
T	Task
WP	Work Package

Executive Summary

This deliverable D8.3 presents the COVend plan for dissemination, including communication activities and describes the main strategy of the COVend consortium to maximise its project impact. In sections 2 and 3, we outline our communication strategy by defining in detail the six target groups established for the project and our key messages, as well as the tools and channels the COVend consortium will use to reach all target groups. Furthermore, in Section 4 this plan details the specific communication and dissemination activities to be pursued in the duration of the project, as well as the respective partner responsibilities. Evaluation metrics and targets in section 5 are set to guide the impact assessment throughout the project. Exploitation measures for the drug developed by the COVend project are also briefly considered, but will be further developed in the Roadmap for Exploitation (D8.6). Tailored to the COVend stakeholders, this plan is designed to be flexible and easily maintained, with foreseen updates throughout the project's duration. This will ensure that the communication and dissemination activities are always created and delivered to reach maximum impact among all stakeholder groups.

1 Introduction

Since the first cases in December of 2019, there have been over 260 million confirmed cases worldwide, up to 11% of which become critically ill^{1,2}. Up to now, there is no clinical evidence of a functioning and efficient direct therapy, but rather all treatments are limited to symptom control. In the meantime, there are several drugs approved and recommended by WHO e.g. antibodies, antiviral drugs, IL-6 antagonist Tocilizumab. However, no drug is targeting the endothelium, which plays a major role in the progression from moderate to severe disease status.

The COVend project is a 3-year project that aims to change that by testing the promising drug FX06 against COVID-19. Because of its high societal relevance and exploitation potential, COVend requires a clear strategy to maximise its impact through well-planned communication and dissemination activities.

This deliverable documents the COVend plan for dissemination including communication activities, developed based on the project's Description of Action (DoA) and best practices from previous experience. All partners will contribute to and support the activities described in this plan, with guidance for future use and implementation, especially by accelCH and ESAIC, the respective work package (WP) 8 leaders. The plan will be updated throughout the project to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the proposed measures. Together with the other deliverables, this plan will support the progress of the technical Work Packages and facilitate the introduction of FX06 to the clinical market.

1.1 Objectives

The overarching aim of this plan is to provide a detailed strategy of COVend's public communication, dissemination and exploitation activities. More specifically, and with the help of this deliverable, the COVend consortium aims to:

- Define and plan the tools with which the communication and dissemination activities will be carried out.
- Establish the channels used for communication with stakeholders external to the project and use a multimedia approach to ensure the widest outreach to all stakeholders.
- Plan communication and dissemination activities targeted to all the COVend stakeholders.
- Outline the evaluation of the project's communication and dissemination activities to ensure their quality and effectiveness.

In the DoA, these objectives are defined in work package 8 (WP8), which is exclusively dedicated to communication, dissemination and exploitation activities.

1.2 Open Science strategy

As seen in Horizon Europe's Key Scientific Impact Pathways (Figure 1), Horizon Europe projects are to "open up science, as shown by research outputs shared openly, re-used and stimulating new transdisciplinary/trans-sectoral collaborations.³" Thus, the COVend consortium is committed to open access publishing, following the [guidelines outlined by the European Commission](#) and the available [guidelines for open access in COVID-19 projects](#). The COVend consortium aims to maximise the impact

of its project by sharing its research results as widely and as openly as possible, as soon as possible. Our practices will include:

- Open methodology, to make our research comprehensible and reproducible for external researchers.
- Producing open-source AI-tools, for possible modification and redistribution via the GitHub platform.
- Participating in the EU Open Research Data scheme adhering to EC's rules. We will take especial care to apply the Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable (FAIR) principles to the data collected within the project.
- Open access and review guaranteeing free access to all peer-reviewed publications and sharing them on our website.
- Open educational resources, encompassing training materials developed as part of the clinical trial.



Figure 1. Key Scientific Impact Pathways

We will follow the EU's open science policy closely to ensure that our scientific process and practices focus on spreading knowledge to a broad range of interested audiences. When new platforms, tools or channels are launched by the EU to support their open science ambitions, the COVend consortium will evaluate and define best practices to implement these actions within the project, where relevant.

2 Communication and dissemination strategy

The dissemination and communication activities planned in COVend are crucial to share the project's results and gather awareness of FX06 and overall therapeutics against COVID-19, especially among the scientific community, clinicians and healthcare experts, patients, policymakers, potential new collaborators and society as a whole. They contribute to increasing the impact of the project and are, thus, aligned with the project's objectives and coordinated by a dedicated Work Package (WP8). The concepts of communication and dissemination are defined below, as understood in the context of this project and in line with the European Commission's definition of such terms and concepts.



Cross-media communication and outreach (Task 8.1)



Disseminate scientific and technological results (Task 8.2)

2.1 Communication and dissemination objectives

The overarching aim of the COVend project is to deliver a new effective therapy against SARS-CoV-2 for the clinical management of COVID-19 disease during mild and moderate stages, including for the prevention of disease progression to severe illness. This plan's objectives are aligned with the overarching project objective, with the aim of supporting its successful achievement through communication about the project and its endeavours and dissemination of its results for maximised uptake and impact. The concepts of communication and dissemination are defined below, as understood in the context of this project and in line with the European Commission's definition of these terms⁴.

- **Communication** consists in taking measures to promote the action itself and its results to a multitude of audiences, possibly through a two-way exchange, with the main aim to reach out to society as a whole to highlight the benefits of the action and how EU funding contributes to tackling societal challenges.
- **Dissemination** is defined as the public disclosure of the results by any appropriate means (other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results). It aims to transfer results to the ones who can make the best use of them and to maximise the impact of research.

More specifically, our communication and dissemination objectives are:

Communication Objectives (CO):

- **CO1:** Raise awareness of the COVend project, its consortium and activities.
- **CO2:** Increase the visibility of the FX06 therapy.
- **CO3:** Facilitate outreach and engagement of key stakeholders and potential contributors to the project.
- **CO4:** Inform about and support the communication of the project in the clinical sites.
- **CO5:** Facilitate dissemination activities.

Dissemination Objectives (DO):

- **DO1:** Share scientific and technological knowledge, data and results with the healthcare and scientific communities to facilitate future and related research.
- **DO2:** Disseminate relevant results to the general public and policymakers.
- **DO3:** Promote and facilitate the uptake of FX06.

WP8 is dedicated to the achievement of the above objectives through specific communication and dissemination activities. It is also dedicated to exploitation activities, though these will be explained in detail in the Roadmap for Exploitation (D8.6).

2.2 Target groups

Defining clear stakeholders is a key step to develop a targeted communication strategy. In the context of the project's pathways towards impact, the COVend consortium identified and mapped six stakeholder groups of relevance to the project, who pertain to four sectors: society, healthcare, science and policy (Figure 2).

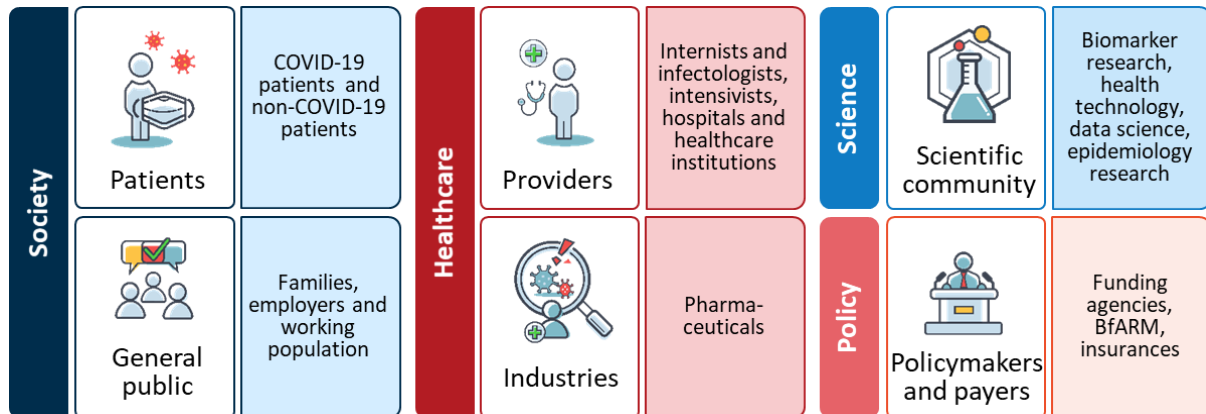


Figure 2: COVend target groups and specified interest groups.

Based on the interest and influence of the stakeholders, as well as on differences in the language and frequency of communication to be used for such stakeholders, the consortium identifies six interest groups:



Patients: The project outcomes impact primarily patients with moderate illness, as the promising therapeutic candidate will offer therapy beyond symptom control and prevent severe courses of the COVID-19 disease. COVID-19 patients with severe illness and non-COVID-19 patients will benefit indirectly, as resources at hospitals can be reserved and other treatments requiring ICU capacity (e.g., heart surgery, cancer treatments, severe injuries) do not have to be postponed.



General public: The successful project could ease the burden for families and the working population. FX06 has the potential to impact the recovery of patients and therefore benefit families that lack parental supervision or suffer from closures of childcare centres or of home schooling. For employers and the working population, a faster recovery and avoidance of severe illness means a reduced loss of working hours, as people can return to their jobs earlier.



Healthcare providers: Internists and infectologists will benefit directly from the COVend project, as FX06 presents a therapeutic option within their medical field for COVID-19 patients. FX06 may also have a beneficial effect on many other diseases associated with systemic inflammation and capillary leak syndrome due to its expected widespread use. Being able to treat patients at an early stage eases the burden of intensivists and other medical staff, as it reduces the workload on intensive care units (ICUs). Hospitals and care facilities benefit from the project as well, as it reduces costs for long-term hospitalisation, and financial difficulties due to the discontinuation of elective procedures may be reduced.



Healthcare industry: The pharmaceutical industry will benefit through the research done in this project on the peptide drug FX06 and the ph II/III clinical study. The COVend project and FX06 have a high potential of exploitation, and upscaling of FX06 production is expected in the medium term.



Scientific community: The project will impact biomarker research through the expected identification of important inflammatory biomarker constellations, to help predict severe courses of COVID-19, and by contributing to the understanding of virus elimination and the avoidance of an exaggerated immune response. The healthcare technology field will benefit from the evaluation of large amounts of health data, which will offer the opportunity to identify further therapy options or disease correlations. Data science will establish itself as a new field of research in medicine in the near future. To be able to conduct effective data science, large databases are needed. In this research project, the collected data will be made available for the benefit of society according to the FAIR principle.



Policymakers and payers: Within the project, a health-economic model will be developed to assess the socio-economic benefits of FX06 and to determine the cost-effectiveness of the new therapy. If the project is successful, this promising therapeutic candidate could become standard clinical practice over the longer term.

Each of these groups requires specific communication and dissemination channels and activities. These will be defined in more detail in the following sections. However, different stakeholders will also require different amount of attention and frequency of communication, depending on their levels of interest and their power to influence the project. The proposed stakeholder map in Figure 3 allows us to define and implement measures that are geared towards the specific needs of the different audiences. Furthermore, all communication and dissemination activities included in this plan shall also be adjusted to ensure that all stakeholders within the target groups are appropriately addressed.

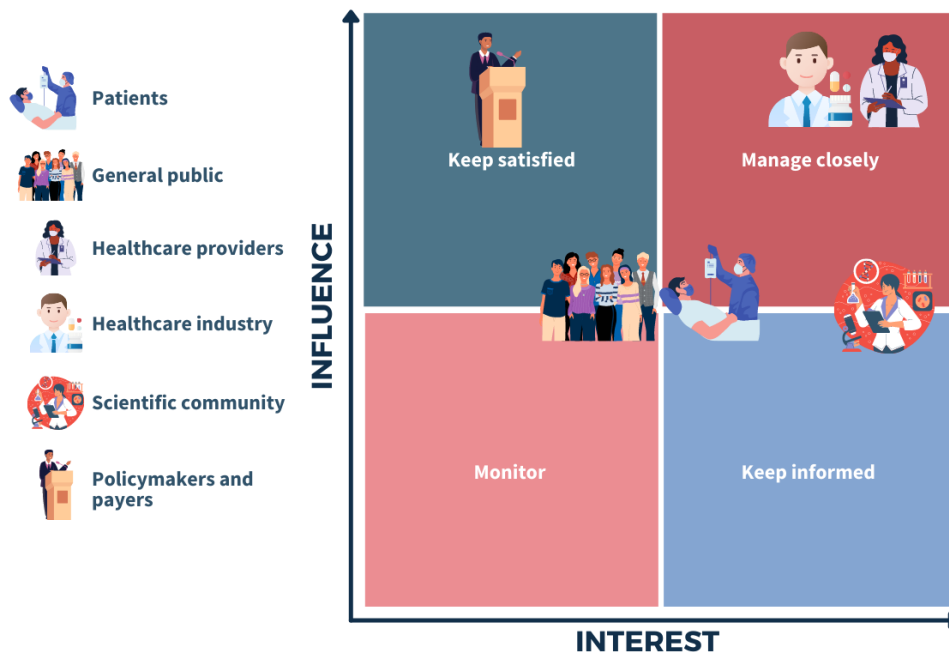


Figure 3. COVend's preliminary stakeholder map (status at M6).

2.3 Key messages

To ensure that the contents of communication and dissemination activities are delivered in an appropriate way to each stakeholder group, it is important to define a set of specific key messages. All communication and dissemination activities within the COVend project, will be developed around the following key messages:

1. The overarching aim of COVend is to deliver a new effective therapy against SARS-CoV-2 for the clinical management of COVID-19.
2. COVID-19 appears to create endotheliitis, a massive inflammatory process in the endothelium that lines blood vessels, heart and lungs, among other organs.
3. The COVend consortium aims to develop FX06, a naturally occurring peptide, which has been shown to have a protective effect on the endothelium.
4. FX06 properties would interrupt the COVID-19 disease process resulting in faster recovery and fewer admissions to intensive care units.
5. The therapy developed by the COVend consortium will not only reduce the severity of COVID-19, but also provide much needed insight into the disease process.
6. COVend is a Horizon Europe research and innovation action funded by the European Union.

2.4 Related projects

In April of 2021, the European Commission launched an emergency request for EU-funded research and innovation actions to fight the coronavirus, under calls HORIZON-HLTH-2021-CORONA & HORIZON-INFRA-2021-EMERGENCY. These projects are to contribute to the commission's overall objective to prevent, mitigate and respond to the impact of the coronavirus variants, in line with the new European bio-defence preparedness plan [HERA incubator](#). COVend was one of the 11 projects funded under the call topic *Vaccines & Therapeutic Clinical Trials to Boost COVID-19 Prevention and Treatment* – HORIZON-HLTH-2021-CORONA, identified in Table 1.

Table 1. List of projects funded under call HORIZON-HLTH-2021-CORONA & HORIZON-INFRA-2021-EMERGENCY

Acronym	Title	Lead partner
COHORTS UNITED AGAINST COVID-19 VARIANTS OF CONCERN – EU funding: € 30 million		
VERDI	SARS-coV2 variants Evaluation in pRegnancy and paeDIiatrics cohorts	Fondazione Penta (IT)
EuCARE	European Cohorts of Patients and Schools to Advance Response to Epidemics	EuResist Network GEIE (IT)
CoVICIS	EU-Africa concerted action on SAR-CoV-2 virus variant & immunological surveillance	Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Vaudois (CH)
VACCINES & THERAPEUTIC CLINICAL TRIALS TO BOOST COVID-19 PREVENTION AND TREATMENT – EU funding: € 57 million		

ECRAID-PRIME	European Clinical Research Alliance on Infectious Diseases - PRIMary care adaptive platform trial for pandemics and Epidemics	Universitair Medisch Centrum Utrecht (NL)
XVR011 Phase 2	ExeVir's XVR011, a best in class nanobodybased biology that broadly neutralises SARS-CoV-1 and SARS-CoV-2	ExeVir Bio (BE)
RBDCOV	RBD Dimer recombinant protein vaccine against SARSCoV2	HIPRA Scientific (ES)
EPIC-CROWN2	Equine Polyclonal antibodies Immunotherapy against COVID-19/SARS-CoV2–VOC	Fabentech (FR)
iMPact	Novel, orally available immune modulator MP1032 with anti-SARS-CoV-2 and anticytokine activity	MetrioPharm AG (CH) 4
COVend	Biomarker and AI-supported FX06 therapy to prevent progression from mild and moderate to severe stages of COVID-19	Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universitaet Frankfurt-am-Main (DE)
FAIR AND OPEN DATA SHARING IN SUPPORT TO EUROPEAN PREPAREDNESS FOR COVID-19 AND OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES – Total EU funding: € 12 million		
BY-COVID	Beyond COVID	European Molecular Biology Laboratory (DE)
RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES FOR RAPID RESEARCH RESPONSES TO COVID-19 AND OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASE EPIDEMICS – Total EU funding: € 21 million		
ISIDORE	Integrated Services for Infectious Disease Outbreak Research	ERINHA - European Research Infrastructure on Highly pathogenic Agents (BE)

2.5 Communication plan implementation roadmap

The key messages identified above will be shared with the COVend target groups via a series of planned activities described further in section 4. The plan’s implementation roadmap below summarises these activities over time, providing an easy-to-grasp overview of what is planned for the following years.

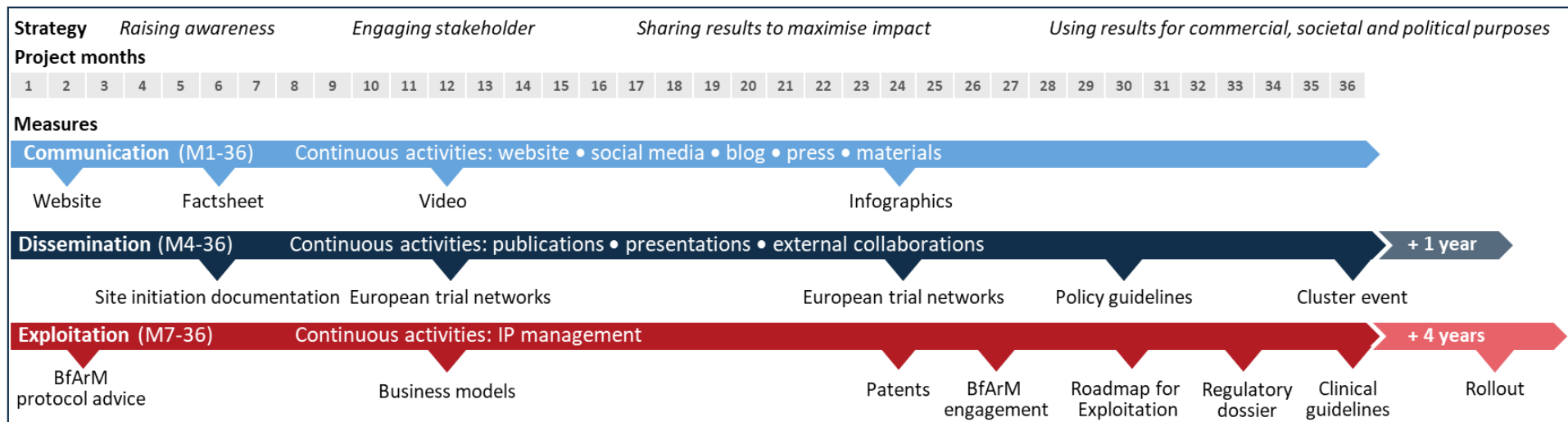


Figure 4: COVend communications implementation roadmap

3 Tools and channels

COVend will make use of a variety of tools and channels to communicate and disseminate its key messages and project results to its targeted stakeholder groups.



Tools

- ✓ Project identity design material
- ✓ Content material
- ✓ Print material
- ✓ Audio-visual material



Channels

- ✓ Direct channel
 - Face-to-face
 - Face-to-audience
- ✓ Indirect channels
 - Print media
 - Display media
 - Online media

Communication and dissemination tools are intended as the structure and the format through which content is provided and presented to a target group, whereas the means through which the content is made available to a target group are called channels. Both are described, in turn, in the following sections.

3.1 Tools

Articles in scientific journals and presentations at meetings, events and conferences are the more traditional and commonly used tools to enhance the project's publicity, at least within the research community. In addition to such tools, the consortium can produce a variety of different materials in order to influence its target groups, some examples are:

- Project identity design material (logos, templates).
- Content materials (reports, articles).
- Audio-visual material (films, slides, podcasts).

The communication and dissemination tools described in the following subsections include those mentioned in the COVend DoA combined with best practices from previous projects. These will be used to reach the projects' target groups and effectively communicate its messages via appropriate channels. All documents will be shared with the rest of partners on accelCLOUD, a cloud storage system established by accelCH.

Most tools are suitable for all target groups, but care must and will be taken to adapt the content, message and language depending on the target group.

3.1.1 Project identity design material

Coherence and consistency in the visual project design help establish a recognisable project identity, which contributes to achieving effective dissemination and communication activities, as well as creating a sense of community and membership for the project's members. All partners have therefore agreed on the following visual identity for COVend.

The COVend visual identity is achieved by using the logo, distinct colours, and typography. In addition to these elements, the following specifications need to be applied by all partners in all presentations, printed and online documents (factsheets, brochures), and publications related to the project:

- Project Logo (minimum width 25 mm)
- EU emblem (minimum height 10 mm)
- Acknowledgement

Logos

Project logo:



EU emblem:



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Visual identity colours

Colours derived from the COVend logo:



CMYK 20c 100m 99y 12k
RGB R179 G28 B36



CMYK 97c 79m 45y 43k
RGB R17 G47 B74



CMYK 74c 42m 0y 48k
RGB R35 G77 B133



CMYK 57c 33m 0y 25k
RGB R82 G129 B192



CMYK 0c 59m 56y 10k
RGB R230 G95 B102



CMYK 0c 17m 32y 5k
RGB R241 G199 B165

Typography

The font types used for text documents within the project are Calibri and Arial.

Templates

Based on the defined logo, design elements and colour guide, templates have been designed to ensure the COVend corporate design is consistent throughout the duration of the project. The following templates are currently available and their use is mandatory for project-related activities:

- Deliverable template
- Meeting minutes template
- Meeting agenda template

- PowerPoint presentation template

If there is a need for further templates, accelCH will provide solutions suitable for the COVend consortium.

Acknowledgement

All project-related public information, be it printed or electronic (presentations, films, posters, flyers, articles, books and all other form of publications) as well as content on websites should – as far as possible – include the COVend logo as well as the EU emblem in a prominent and appropriate position and always acknowledge the EC funding, using the following phrase:

“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HADEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.”

3.1.2 Materials

Communication and dissemination materials for COVend are developed following the guidelines set by the project’s corporate identity outlined above. They will be regularly assessed and updated when necessary. All materials will be created in English, the official working language of the project. However, some audiences (partner hospitals, general public in partners’ respective countries) may need certain information in their local language to ensure full understanding and the highest possible impact. In these cases, accelCH will coordinate with local partners to translate the respective documents according to national and local needs.

All planned materials are outlined below and specific activities that make use of such materials are described in detail in Section 4 and summarised in Figure 6. Three main types of materials are identified:

- Print/Digital material
 - Factsheets
 - Flyers
 - Posters
- Content material
 - Website content
 - Social media key visuals
 - Press releases
 - Newsletters
 - Publications
 - Presentations
 - Workshops
 - Policy guidelines
- Audio-visual material
 - Infographics
 - Videos.

3.2 Channels

Kotler and Armstrong (2004) distinguish two general types of communication channels: direct and indirect. COVend will make use of both direct and indirect channels, aiming to make the best use of their complementarity and the communication advantages of each. To provide continuity and facilitate access to information, links between the channels will be created. For instance, print media (e.g. flyers and posters) will be downloadable from the COVend website and promoted on social media. This will also guarantee that different tools are used to their best effect and not exclusively through one channel. In addition, the strategy will be to create strong synergies with existing channels in order to access already established groups and networks, benefitting from direct connections to these communities.

3.2.1 Direct channels

Direct communication channels enable two or more people to directly communicate with each other. These channels are very effective as there is a high degree of individuality in the message, and feedback from the communication partner is instantly available. The channels that will be used in COVend are outlined in table 2.

Table 2: Overview of direct channels and their characteristics.

Channel	Medium	Characteristics
Face-to-Face	General Assemblies, Work Package leader meetings, teleconference communication, small workshops	Strengths: very targeted engagement, in depth discussions and input. Weaknesses: high cost in time, potentially low impact.
Face-to-Audience	Presentations, poster sessions, large workshops, events, international fairs and conferences, seminars.	Strengths: targeted engagement with a specific audience already interested and specialised in the topic, broad impact. Weaknesses: high cost in time and money (if travel and conference costs involved).

3.2.2 Indirect channels

Indirect channels lack the advantage of receiving immediate feedback through direct contact, however, they have the advantage of reaching large numbers of people at once. Indirect channels include major media and events, such as press conferences, online media and many others. The channels that will be used in COVend are outlined below and are both internal and external to the project consortium.

Table 3: Overview of indirect channels and their characteristics.

Channel	Medium	Characteristics
Print media (mostly also available in online format)	Scientific journals, non-expert journals, general interest magazines	Strengths: targeted engagement with a specific audience already interested and specialised in the topic, broad impact and recognition. Weaknesses: not flexible – difficult to revise content once printed.

Display media	Material displayed on a wall or a panel inside or outside	Strengths: engagement with a wide audience, easily visible, easy to transmit a message and call for action, low cost. Weaknesses: not flexible – difficult to revise content once printed, difficult to know the audience.
Online media	Project website (D8.1), social media, newsletters, webinars, professional publication sites (e.g. CORDIS, research*eu), science publication websites, health publication websites	Strengths: possibility to engage with a wide audience, fast distribution, low cost, possibility to cross-promote content on the different channels. Weaknesses: potentially impersonal, high level of competition, difficult to know audience.

4 Activities and responsibilities

Identifying key activities and establishing responsibilities facilitates the exchange of information about the project and its results, both internally to the consortium and externally with all the project stakeholders. The COVend communication and dissemination activities are mostly led by accelCH and involve contributions from all partners.



Communication activities

Cross-media communication and outreach

- ✓ Inform about the project and its results
- ✓ Inform and reach out to society
- ✓ Show benefits of research



Dissemination activities

Target-group specific dissemination

- ✓ Inform about results only
- ✓ Make results available
- ✓ Enable use and uptake of results



Exploitation activities

Long-term impact of the project

- ✓ BfARM approval
- ✓ Patenting and licensing of results
- ✓ Partnership and collaboration agreements

The COVend communication and dissemination activities and responsibilities are based on the objectives defined in the DoA for WP8. According to the DoA, the main goals of WP8 are to disseminate and exploit project results, and to facilitate future exploitation of the COVend therapy FX06. More specifically, the objectives of WP8 are:

- Achieve the widest possible outreach through project and technology specific communication activities using a multimedia approach.
- Plan and implement dissemination measures to spread the COVend results to the scientific community, industry, policy makers and other actors in the healthcare sector.

- Develop exploitation mechanisms – from IP patents, business model development to a Roadmap for Exploitation – to facilitate future commercial and non-commercial use of the FX06 therapy against COVID-19.
- Develop an IP strategy and monitor its implementation and contribute to standards. Disseminate research results to the main target groups.

The results of the COVend project have a high potential for exploitation. Support and feedback on the planned exploitation measures, and their long-term impact for commercial and non-commercial exploitation, will be received from a dedicated Innovation Manager, Petra Wülfroth, F4. The expected project results will be used for commercial and non-commercial purposes. In WP8, we will also develop a **Roadmap for Exploitation** (WP8; D8.6, M30) that will include a plan for the commercial and non-commercial use of project results, a detailed activity plan, as well as a series of exploitation tools such as an updated stakeholder map, PESTEL and SWOT analyses.

Furthermore, the partners have agreed on the IP strategy in order to protect the project results as laid down in the Consortium Agreement. All activities and their timing will be planned and compliant with the defined IP management. In the case that IP issues arise, some activities can be delayed or adapted if needed.

4.1 Communication

Communication focuses on taking strategic and targeted measures to promote 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. The activities described below address the main aims of communication within the context of EU funded projects, which are: a) to reach out to society as a whole and in particular to some specific audiences; and b) to demonstrate how EU funding contributes to tackling societal challenges.

4.1.1 Project website

The COVend website (<https://covend-project.eu/>) was launched in August 2021 and serves as the main source of information for all stakeholders, providing them with a comprehensive overview, as well as detailed progress on the project objectives, activities and results. The information displayed on the website will be continuously updated and expanded to complement the given content with new findings and results. The website will also integrate the use of new media (e.g. infographic) to enhance outreach to society. Additional information on the project website is available through Deliverable 8.1-“Project website”.

A new design, layouts and graphics were added sitewide in November 2021, giving the website a fresh look and to further align with the healthcare theme. Alongside the obvious pages describing the project and its objectives, introducing the partners involved in the consortium, and reporting on news and events, the website currently includes the following key pages:

- **Research and Innovation:** the three key technologies at the base of COVend are summarised here. Additional details or necessary updates relevant to the technologies will be added during the project, if necessary. While the language used makes the content accessible to all stakeholders, it is foreseen that the Scientific Community and Healthcare Industry Target Groups will have the most interest in this page.

- **Clinical Trial:** this page describes COVend’s clinical trial IXION, from how it came to be, to need to know details and an FAQ. This last section provides a go-to point for non-experts, with clear explanations in non-technical terms, in order to reach a wide audience and maximise the interest and involvement of the website viewers by improving their understanding of the COVend project and clinical trial. Additional details or necessary updates relevant to the clinical trial will be added during the project, if necessary.
- **Information:** this page includes carefully selected details regarding COVID-19, partner projects and the literature that the COVend partners are producing alongside the project.
- **Stories:** as a measure towards topic accessibility and understanding, we will feature several explanatory stories about FX06, how COVID-19 functions and more, that will be prominently displayed in the homepage and focused on the General Public and Patients target groups. The first story on the background of FX06 is now live.



Figure 5. The homepage with a new design on the COVend website.

Activity	Set up and maintain the COVend website
Relates to task / deliverable	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach, T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results, D8.1 COVend website
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	All to be implemented within the website
Channels	Online media
Implementation	M1: created; Continuous updates planned between M3 and M36
Responsibility	Lead: accelCH Participants: All partners.

4.1.2 Social media

The COVend website is linked to the project's Twitter channel (https://twitter.com/COVend_EU) and LinkedIn channel (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/COVend>), enhancing its visibility and routes of access. The launch of a YouTube presence is forthcoming to feature our videos. We will use and benefit from partners' established social media to engage with key audiences. The tone for LinkedIn will be more clinical and scientific to target these groups specifically, whereas on Twitter a more personal tone is considered accurate to target society as a whole.



Activity	Set up and maintain COVend Social Media channels
Relates to task / deliverable	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach, T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube
Channels	Online media
Implementation	M4: existing; Continuous updates planned between M4 and M36
Responsibility	Lead: accelCH Participants: All partners.

4.1.3 Print material

Various COVend print material will be created for the identified target groups. Depending on the target audience of each created material, a different focus and approach will be taken. The language used and the message portrayed will be adapted to the interest and needs of each target audience.

4.1.3.1 Project identity design material

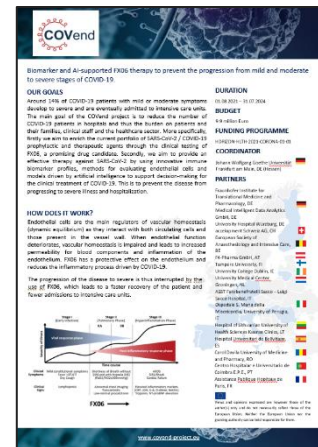
To create a recognisable project identity and ensure a uniform appearance of the COVend project, specific project design items and rules have been developed, as seen in section 3.1.1. These specifications need to be applied by all partners and in all presentations, printed and online documents (factsheets, flyers), and non-scientific publications related to the project.

Activity	Project Identity
Relates to task	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	accelCLOUD
Channels	Use is mandatory throughout all channels
Implementation	M1-36, existing
Responsibility	Lead: accelCH Participants: GUF, F4

4.1.3.2 Factsheet

A project factsheet has already been created, to inform all stakeholders about key project information. The factsheet includes background information, project objectives, impact and information about the consortium. It is available for download and distribution by all partners on the accelCLOUD and by all stakeholders on the [project's website](#).

Activity	Create project factsheet
Relates to task /	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	Factsheet
Channels	accelCLOUD, website, direct channels
Implementation	M1, existing
Responsibility	Lead: accelICH ; Participant: GUF, F4 .



4.1.3.3 Flyers

The flyers will serve as a source of promotional material, with an overview of the COVend project and a more detailed description of the FX06 therapy, geared for different audiences.

Activity	Create Flyer
Relates to task	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	Flyers
Channels	Website, social media, direct channels
Implementation	M10, planned
Responsibility	Lead: accelICH Participants: All partners .

4.1.3.4 Promotional poster and roll-up banner

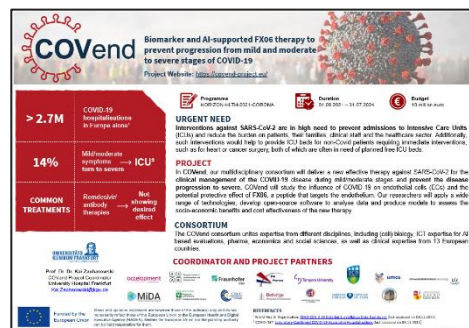
Posters and banners are an efficient way to reach a wide audience in areas of high traffic, such as foyers and at exhibitions (such as BioEurope, where F4 plans to present COVend results, progress and health measures permitting) or at the Science Day. A promotion poster and accompanying banner will, thus, be created for COVend, to visualise the objectives of the project, the key features of FX06 and highlight the benefits it will bring. The language and content presented on the poster will be easily comprehensible for a non-expert audience and will redirect to other material such as flyers and factsheets, and the project's website for more information. The poster and banner will be available for download to all partners on the accelCLOUD, while only the poster will be available for all stakeholders on the website.

Activity	Create promotional poster and roll-up banner
Relates to task	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	Poster presentation and roll-up banner
Channels	Indirect channels, accelCLOUD, website
Implementation	M17, planned

Responsibility	Lead: accelICH; Participant: GUF, F4.
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4.1.3.5 Scientific poster

A scientific poster has been developed using more technical and scientific language. It provides an overview of the project and of the technologies used to develop the FX06 therapy. Designed for the Science and Healthcare target groups it has been made available through the accelCLOUD for all partners to download and display at their institutions, and will be also shared on the project website for direct download by all stakeholders.



Furthermore, accelCH has created poster templates for the presentation of the project to the scientific community at conferences and other events targeted to the scientific audience. This will strengthen the information exchange of project results and use synergies with other experts active in this area.

Activity	Create scientific poster
Relates to tasks	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach, T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	Science and Healthcare target groups
Tools	Poster presentation
Channels	Indirect channels, accelCLOUD, website
Implementation	M3, existing
Responsibility	Lead: accelICH Participants: GUF, F4.

4.1.4 Content material

4.1.4.1 Press releases

To engage and update all stakeholders on the most noteworthy events and ground-breaking advancements of the project, press releases will be produced as official statements. This material is most likely to be used by traditional media and will be also linked to the COVend website for further visibility. The press releases will be structured in a way to allow each partner to further adapt the content to include their organisations' contribution. They will be issued as noteworthy advancements are made throughout the project. As the timing of these is uncertain, the press releases can also not be planned for specific months, with the exception of a final press release, which is planned to inform all stakeholders on the end of the project, its outcomes, and sustainability plans.

Activity	Create press releases
Relates to task	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	Press release
Channels	Indirect online channels
Implementation	M1-36, existing (M3) and planned
Responsibility	Lead: accelICH Participants: all partners.

4.1.4.2 Stakeholder newsletter

Quarterly newsletters based on the project's progress reports and project news articles published on the website will be distributed to the relevant networks and made available on the website to download as pdf.

Activity	Create stakeholder newsletter
Relates to task	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach, T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	Newsletter (e.g. MailChimp)
Channels	Indirect online channels
Implementation	Expected
Responsibility	Lead: accelCH Participants: all partners .

4.1.5 Audio-visual material

4.1.5.1 Infographics

Infographics will be created to highlight key facts and figures that motivate the COVend project and the use of FX06. By visualising the background on FX06, how it works and how it differs from other therapies, these infographics will help raise awareness for the project and its endeavours, especially among the less-informed audience. Focus will clearly be on using graphical and visual appeal. The infographics will be shared via the project website and social media. The main aim will be to easily reach all stakeholders with easy-to-grasp, key messages.

Activity	Create COVend infographic
Relates to task	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach
Target audience	All target groups
Tools	Infographic
Channels	Indirect online channels
Implementation	M8, M24 planned
Responsibility	Lead: accelCH ; Participant: F4, GUF

4.1.5.2 Explanatory video

Brief interviews with members of the COVend consortium will be recorded and combined with graphics to create an explainer video that will be shared on the project website and social media. An animation video on the background and function of FX06 is currently underway. The aim is to explain the key objectives of the project through a combination of general terms and technical lingo, to create engaging audio-visual presentations of COVend and its objectives.

Activity	Create COVend explainer videos
Relates to task	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach
Target audience	General public, Patients, Healthcare target groups
Tools	Video

Channels	Indirect online channels
Implementation	M8, M12 planned
Responsibility	Lead: accelICH Participants: F4, GUF

4.1.5.3 Science Day

Set in community centres (i.e. public library, sports centre) and/or in multipurpose rooms in the consortium's hospitals, our researchers will gather with table top activities, demonstrations, short presentations and exhibits to present to the public the exciting new research developed under COVend in the different fields. COVID-19 restrictions permitting, visitors will enjoy face-to-face interactions with scientists and have a platform to ask questions and hear directly from the scientists about epidemiology, how COVID-19 affects the body, the use of FX06 and other therapies, or how AI can help against the pandemic and the treatment of patients, among others. In case the event could not be held due to COVID-19 restrictions, we would pursue a virtual venue in its stead. Targeting the societal KPI, the aim is to inform the general public, listen to their concerns and address them, and engage people of all ages in science.

Activity	Organise Science Day
Relates to task	T8.1 Cross-media communication and outreach
Target audience	General public, Patients
Tools	Face-to-face interactions, exhibit
Channels	Direct channels
Implementation	M18 expected
Responsibility	Lead: accelICH, ESAIC Participants: all partners.

4.2 Dissemination

Dissemination is defined as the public disclosure of the results by any appropriate means (other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results), including by scientific publications in any medium. It aims to:

- Transfer results to the stakeholders that can best make use of them.
- Maximise the impact of research, enabling the value of results to be potentially wider than the original focus.

4.2.1 Dissemination opportunities database

A database of peer-reviewed and non-specialist journals, conferences, workshops, exhibitions, fairs and congresses of relevance to COVend, as well as a list of relevant ongoing and recently completed projects, will be made available on the project's accelCLOUD. The database will be maintained and updated by accelCH on a regular basis, but all partners will be invited to contribute to it. This will provide the consortium with a centralised resource to find updated information on dissemination opportunities.

Activity	Dissemination opportunities database
Relates to task	T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	COVend consortium
Tools	Dissemination opportunities database, Excel
Channels	accelCLOUD
Implementation	M7-M36, planned
Responsibility	Lead: accelCH Participants: All partners.

4.2.2 Joint publication rules

The joint publication rules have been defined and agreed upon with all partners as part of the Consortium Agreement. The participating academic partners are entitled to use knowledge or results from the project that either has been published or has been declassified for research and teaching purposes. As mentioned in section 3, one of the pages of the COVend website contains an overview and archive of all published dissemination material: scientific articles, publications, conference papers, etc.

4.2.3 Publish results in journals

The academic partners will disseminate non-confidential COVend research results through publications in peer-reviewed journals, such as the European Journal of Anaesthesiology, the British Journal of Anaesthesiology, or the Finnish Journal of eHealth and eWelfare, among others. All publications resulting from the project will be tracked (in the COVend Dissemination tracking file available on accelCLOUD) and monitored to ensure compliance to open access. In line with the Consortium Agreement, all partners will be informed in advance (45-day notice period) by the partners wishing to submit a project-related publication.

Activity	Publish in journals
Relates to task	T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	Science and Healthcare target groups
Tools	Scientific publications
Channels	Peer-reviewed journals (tracked in COVend Dissemination tracking file)
Implementation	M12-36, expected
Responsibility	Lead: F4, GUF, ESAIC, TAU, F-ITMP Participants: all partners.

4.2.4 Conference participation

Conferences with relevance to the project will be identified by each partner and contributed to the Dissemination opportunities database, if not already included. Some examples include those held by BioEurope, Swiss Biotech, the International Society of Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the International Health Economics Association (iHEA) and European Health Economics Association (euHEA) or the Finnish Social and Health Informatics Association science day. Participation in these will be tracked in a designated COVend Dissemination tracking file stored on the project's accelCLOUD. Each partner is responsible for participation at conferences within their own field of expertise.

All partners will promote the COVend project and related research results during their participation at conferences, as well as getting in contact with relevant industries, end-users and similar project leaders. accelCH can support partners who will be participating at a conference by creating relevant dissemination material such as posters, factsheets, promotional material and project presentations.

Activity	Participation and presentation of results at international scientific conferences
Relates to task	T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	Science target group
Tools	Posters, scientific presentations, flyers, factsheets
Channels	Conferences (participation tracked in COVend Dissemination tracking file)
Implementation	M12-36, expected
Responsibility	Lead: F4, GUF Participants: all partners.

4.2.5 European trial networks

COVend will ensure the involvement of the large European trial network, RECOVER, throughout the project to facilitate knowledge transfer and peer feedback, by organising workshop sessions during the project meetings where COVend will present results and receive direct feedback from invited experts to understand the COVID-19 pandemic.

Activity	Organise workshop sessions
Relates to task	T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	Science and Healthcare target groups
Tools	Posters, scientific presentations, flyers, factsheets
Channels	Workshops
Implementation	M12, M24, planned
Responsibility	Lead: F4, GUF Participants: all partners.

4.2.6 Policy guidelines

To disseminate COVend project activities to policymakers at the EU level, GUF will develop and propose policy guidelines for the integration of COVend into the standard of care for SARS-CoV-2 and promote the uptake of these guidelines by clinical staff.

Activity	Create policy guidelines
Relates to task	T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	Policy, Science and Healthcare target groups
Tools	Policy Guidelines
Channels	Website, direct channels
Implementation	M30, planned
Responsibility	Lead: GUF Participants: accelCH, ESAIC, F4

4.2.7 Training & site initiation documentation

We will develop learning material to train clinical staff on site on the COVend clinical trial, how to provide verification of the study data and ensure patients' safety distributed via the project website.

Activity	Develop training documentation
Relates to task	T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	Healthcare target group
Tools	Videos, factsheets, presentations, posters
Channels	Direct channels
Implementation	M6, planned
Responsibility	Lead: GUF, ESAIC. Participants: all partners.

4.2.8 Cluster event

The COVend consortium will organise a multi-lateral COVend cluster event to present the results and outcomes from the clinical trial and the research work packages to all key stakeholder groups, in order to use synergies and promote collaborations for future joint initiatives. The event is meant to further promote a debate to accelerate the implementation of the research results. The event will be advertised through the project website, social media and the partners' respective networks.

Activity	Organise cluster event
Relates to task	T8.2 Disseminate scientific and technological results
Target audience	Science, Healthcare and Policy target groups
Tools	Posters, scientific presentations
Channels	Direct channels
Implementation	M36, planned
Responsibility	Lead: GUF, accelCH Participants: all partners.

4.3 Summary of communication and dissemination activities and responsibilities

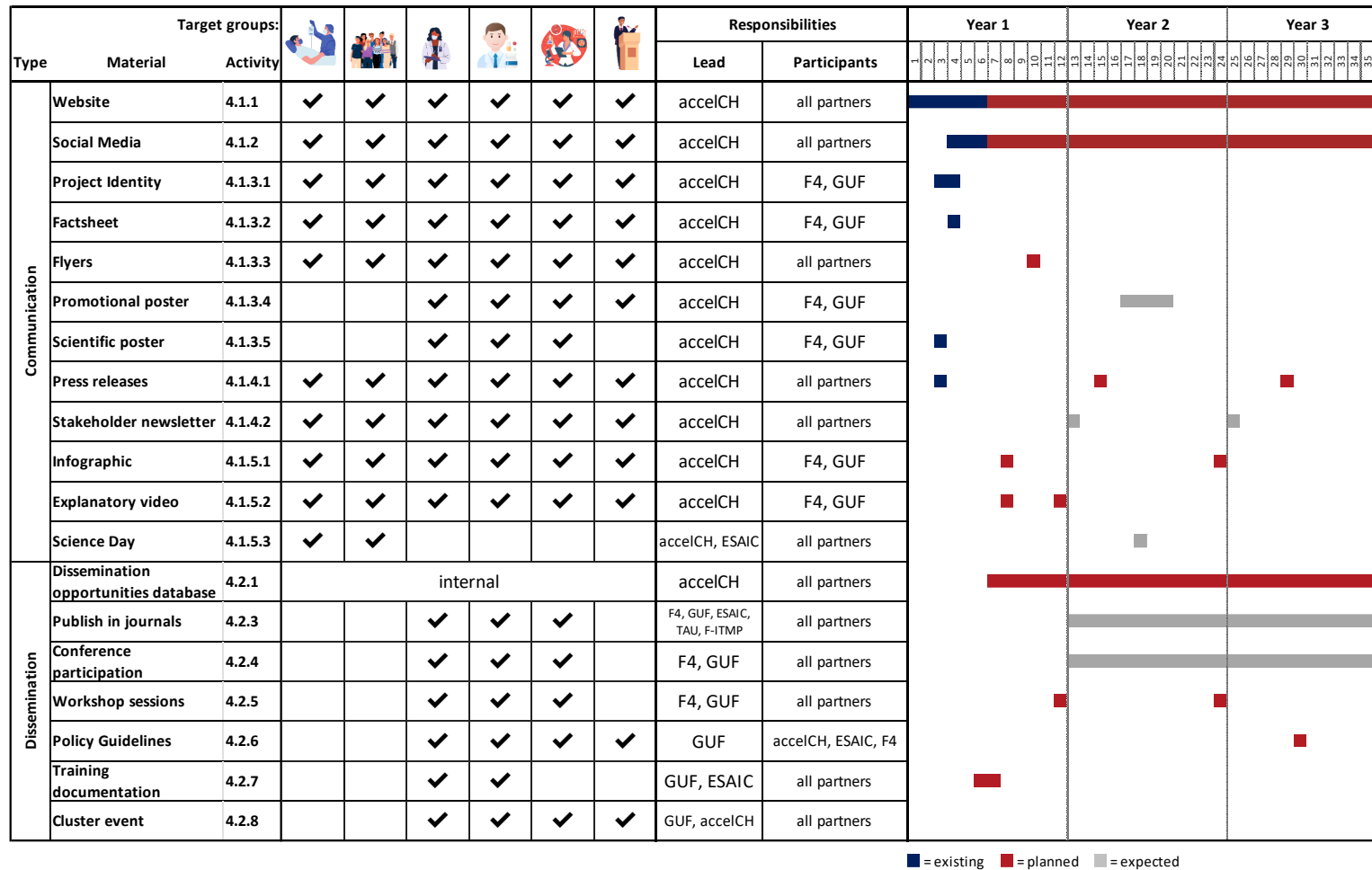


Figure 6: Overview of COVend communication and dissemination activities, including the planned target groups, responsibilities and timing. For target group icons refer to section 2.

5 Evaluation

The overall aim of evaluating the communication and dissemination activities is to keep improving the effectiveness of this plan and, thus, the overall impact of COVend. Clear performance indicators and targets have been set and will be tracked over the duration of the project. These are based on the objectives and the main activities described above and will be revised and updated – if necessary.



Easy-to-evaluate indicators



Realistic targets

This numeric verification of the activities' impact is useful to decide on how to proceed with the implementation of this plan. If after a first evaluation some activities are not yielding the expected results, they need to be adapted. After the next evaluation period, the impact of the improved activity will be measured again and the process of evaluation will also repeat itself. To achieve a high level of efficiency, this cycle of implementation, evaluation and adaptation is the key to best benefit from learning effects within the project and perhaps also between past, current and future projects.

To enable accelCH to plan the evaluation in advance, the indicators and timing of evaluation are defined here. The evaluations of single activities generally take place after a certain milestone, key event or other significant moment during the project. On the other hand, reoccurring activities are evaluated in specific time periods (e.g., every six months). This will ensure comparability.

To increase comparability and facilitate tracking, numeric indicators are chosen whenever possible. Furthermore, the target numbers have to be realistic, otherwise, they won't be met and comparability could be jeopardised. Therefore, if a target is not met at the first evaluation, a re-evaluation of the chosen number should be made.

5.1 Communication

Online and digital channels and media often offer integrated tools to measure their impact over longer time periods, via website analytics or number of followers. Here, evaluating not only focuses on the numbers but should also take into consideration that the COVend activities are interlinked. For example, if there is an increase of visitors to the website this does not necessarily mean the website is meeting its targets, it could be linked to a new publication, which increased interest and drew more visitors to the website. If the website does not meet the visitor's expectations the duration of their stay on the website will be short. An important part of the evaluation process is to allow feedback loops to reassess and adapt activities and approaches when targets are not met. As print material does not allow automatic feedback, accelCH is highly dependent on input from all partners to firstly use and distribute material but also to send feedback so that the usefulness of materials and activities can be evaluated.

Table 4: Evaluation plan and responsibilities for the COVEND communication activities.

Activity	Indicator	Method	Target	Date	Lead
Project Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of clicks • Duration of stay on website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google analytics - duration of stay - number of visitors - searched keywords 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 visitors per month • Increased duration of stay on website over time 	Annually	accelCH
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of retweets, likes, views, shares, followers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website analytics • Google search 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 followers by M24 	Every 6 months	accelCH
Audio-visual material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of downloads • Number of Views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 views • 50 downloads per material 	Annually	accelCH
Explainer video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 600 views total 	Annually	accelCH
Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of readers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website analytics • Mailing record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 subscribers 	Annually	accelCH
Science day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor feedback, entr 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 visitors x site 	M18	accelCH, ESAIC
Flyers, case studies, factsheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of downloads • Number of print versions distributed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website analytics • Partner feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 downloads per material • 50 distributed at events 	Annually	accelCH, all partners involved in an event
Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of downloads • Number of print versions used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website analytics • Partner feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 downloads per material 	Annually	accelCH, all partners involved in an event

5.2 Dissemination

The purpose of evaluating dissemination activities is to ensure that all partners and stakeholders are aware of the results achieved in the project and that these measures are appropriate to the audience.

Furthermore, although the aim is to achieve as much positive feedback as possible, negative feedback should also be taken into consideration as it can show limitations, which will help guide the project in towards maximising its impact and facilitating future exploitation.

Table 5: Evaluation plan and responsibilities for the COVEND dissemination activities.

Activity	Indicator	Method	Target	Date	Lead
Publications in Journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	8 publications	M13-M36	Lead author
Conference Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience Feedback • Number of conference contributions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email contacts • Feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% positive feedback • 5 conference contributions/year 	M3-M36	Partner at Conference
European Trial Networks workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience feedback • Number of attendees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registrations • Feedback survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% positive feedback • 5-10 attendees at each workshop 		F4, GUF
Policy Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of distributed copies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct partner feedback • Website analytics 	50 policy guidelines distributed		F4, GUF
Training documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of distributed copies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct partner feedback • Website analytics 	200 views and downloads of created material		F4, GUF
Network event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience feedback • Number of attendees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registrations • Feedback survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% positive feedback • 50 external attendees at event 		GUF, accelCH

6 Sustainability

As the aim of COVend is to develop a therapy for entry to market by the end of the project, the sustainability beyond the project's end will be supported by the following activities:

1. A Roadmap for Exploitation with path-to-market business models (D8.6) will outline the project's plans for the successful exploitation of the COVend results, supporting the project's long-term impact.
2. Support the business entity that will implement the business plan developed during COVend, organise production and sales.
3. Published scientific articles will extend the impact of COVend in the research community on the long-term.
4. After the end of the project, accelCH will develop a post-project website, which will continue to inform the target groups about the project's results and impact. The website will be available for at least five years after the end of the project.

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