

Communications Strategy Guidelines

Please read before proceeding with your application.

Please attach your full communications strategy to your application (no more than 2 pages) in MS Word (.doc) or as a PDF. See below for more information about writing a communications strategy.

A communications strategy is a document that states the goals of your organisations outreach activities, as well as how you intend to accomplish said goals. The strategy also includes the information you wish to share with your stakeholders and, if applicable, the wider public. The strategy serves as an internal roadmap for your organisation’s communication activities including print, digital and social media, as well as any public relations activities. When writing your strategy, consider:

Your message – What do you want to say?

Keep your message clear and concise. Consider highlighting three to five main points. For example, the problem, the solution, and your organisation’s role. Place your message at the beginning of your document and refer to it throughout the document to ensure that your message is not lost and that the strategy serves to promote that message.

Make your message interesting by presenting it as a story in which your organisation is the lead character. What are your motives, risks, and benefits of your project that will result in a happy ending or a significant lesson for your audience?

Your key audience – Who do you want to reach out to?

Identify the people or groups who may be affected by, or who may be interested in, your project. Think about how your project might be of use to them. You may need to reword your message depending on the type of stakeholder you reach out to. For example, a shareholder or business partner will be more interested in the financial impact of your project. On the other hand, a trade association member may be more interested in the benefits of the project, or pitfalls to avoid, if they are planning to carry out a similar project.

Your channels - How should you communicate your message?

Think about how to reach out to your different stakeholder groups. Will some people prefer to receive a newsletter or be updated via social media, such as Twitter? Do you want to reach a wider audience via a press release or an industry publication? Would they prefer to interact with you at a workshop or conference?

When considering how to communicate, you should also think about your resources (including time) and budget to support your strategy. This will include staff, technology, items you may already have or need to obtain. Show a timeline of your strategy for the length of the project that includes your communication milestones. For example, will you send out a monthly newsletter or email updating subscribers with your progress?

Final points

Write your strategy so that it easy to read and understand:

- Use headings for each section.
- Make your sentences short.
- Keep your paragraphs no more than five sentences long
- Use bullet points
- Underline or bold important parts of your strategy