

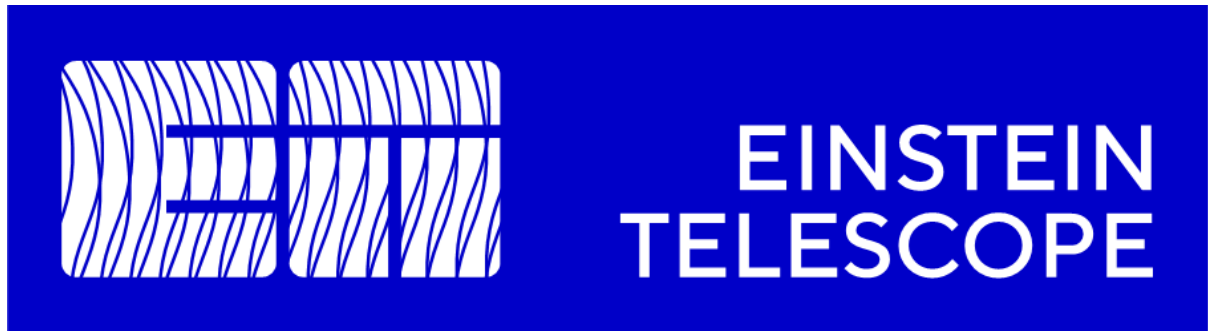
**EINSTEIN
TELESCOPE**

STRATEGIC MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



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Preparatory Phase for the Einstein Telescope Gravitational Wave Observatory

Deliverable 10.3

Formulate strategic media and communications plan

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CCD — Central Communication Department
CEC — Communications and Education Committee
EC — European Commission
EMR — Euregio Meuse Rhine
ESFRI — European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures
ET — Einstein Telescope
ETC — Einstein Telescope Scientific Collaboration
ETO — Einstein Telescope Organisation
ET-PP — Einstein Telescope Preparatory Phase
GW — gravitational wave(s)
ICN — International Communication Network
ROI — return on investment
SMCP — Strategic Media and Communications Plan
TDS — Technical Document System
WP — work package

INTRODUCTION

The Einstein Telescope (ET), will be a key future research infrastructure in Europe with global impact. It will serve science and society and build on the extremely successful work of European researchers in the LIGO, Virgo and Kagra projects and be an essential element of multimessenger astronomy. Pushing scientific and technological boundaries even further, ET can drive significant further leaps forward in scientific discoveries and spin-off technologies.

Important big steps have already been taken: the Einstein Telescope obtained ESFRI-status in 2021, the Preparatory Phase project is well on its way, and governments have already committed significant funding. These positive approaches must be maintained and further developed in order to secure wider, sustainable and long-term support. At the early stage of this complex international project, it is also important to establish structures, policies and procedures that support the realisation of ET, including in communication. After all, communication is one of the essential strategic instruments in order to continue this journey successfully.

Nature of the Strategic Communication and Media Plan

The report titled ‘Initiate Strategic Media and Communication Plan’, submitted to the European Commission as deliverable 10.1 in the ET-PP project, provided an initial approach to European communications and described the intended communication and dissemination activities. This follow-up document — Strategic Communication and Media Plan (Strategy, SCMP) (deliverable 10.3) — provides a more robust strategic foundation by evaluating the complex situation and stakeholder landscape from a communication perspective. It then structures the communication activities around five main strategic pillars: **organise, brand, connect, network** and **be a hub**. This provides focus and helps prioritise communication activities along the way.

Scope in terms of entities

Many entities are currently communicating on behalf of ET, including other projects, potential sites (Euregio Meuse Rhine (EMR) and Italy), research institutes and universities. This document focuses on the ‘supranational’ European Einstein Telescope initiative. It is not meant to take over the communication of the local teams at the potential sites, which have already successfully been focusing on local and national dialogue and building host consortia for many years. Nor does it take over the national communications and stakeholder management aimed at for example governments to ask for their support, as this is best done nationally. This document is meant to provide a central and neutral plan for European and overall communication. This central ‘pivot’ has been missing until now, and is needed to align communication strategies and messages of the different entities. All entities can benefit greatly from this and it will contribute to strengthening the whole Einstein Telescope initiative.

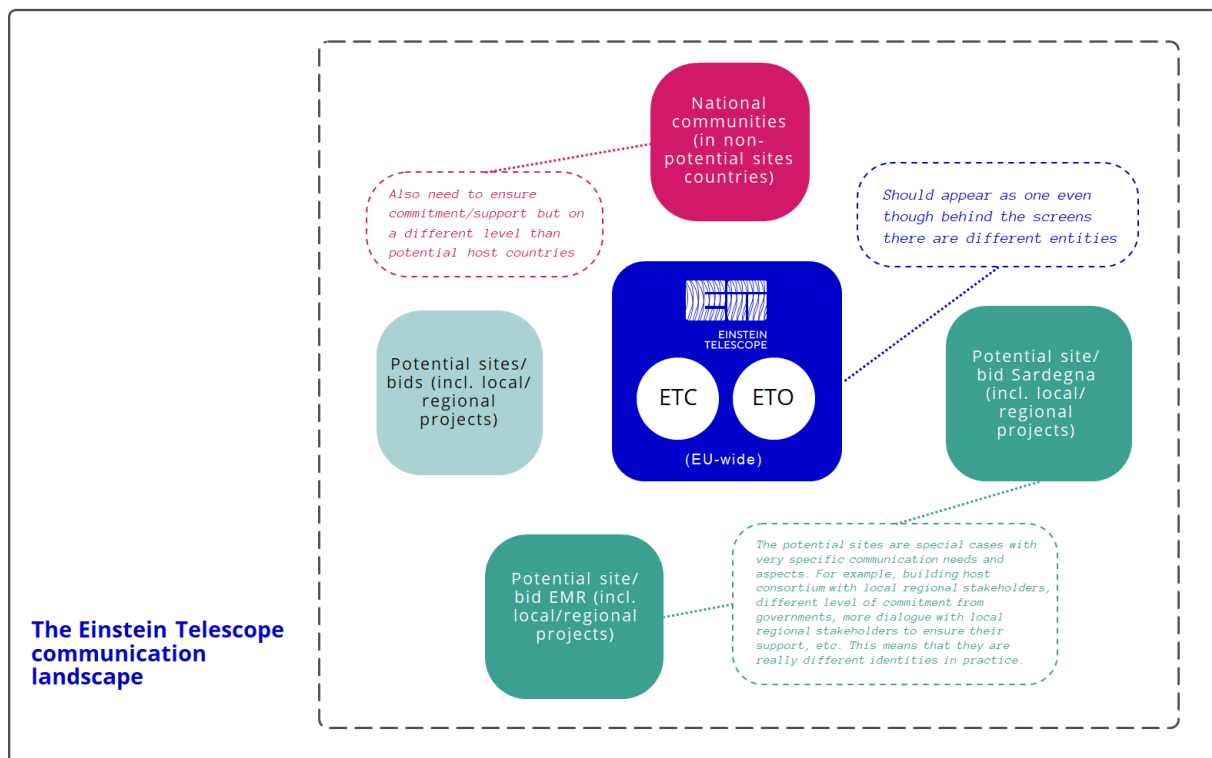


Figure 1: The Einstein Telescope communication landscape, showing the main entities/identities communicating on behalf of the Einstein Telescope. These entities, while distinct with different main tasks and relationships with stakeholders and target audiences, must ensure their communication efforts are properly aligned. Although having different entities isn't necessarily problematic, it is important that all entities position themselves appropriately and avoid conflicting messages.

Scope in terms of phases

For the SMCP we distinguish short-term, medium-term and long-term perspectives. The short-term is from now until the end of the Einstein Telescope Preparatory Phase project (ET-PP) in August 2026. This short-term phase will be used for laying the foundations. The medium-term is from the end of the Preparatory Phase Project until the moment of site decision, assuming that it will take place after August 2026. The long-term perspective is after the site decision. This plan focuses mainly on the short- and medium-term perspectives.

MODULE 1: COMMUNICATION SWOT-ANALYSIS & MAIN STRATEGIC PILLARS

In developing a comprehensive communication strategy for the ET project, it is crucial to first understand the internal and external factors that can influence its success. A SWOT-analysis, which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, serves as a foundational tool in this process. This analytical framework allows us to systematically identify and evaluate the core elements that will shape communication efforts for ET. This chapter presents this detailed examination of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the communication of the ET project, laying the groundwork for strategic decision-making and action planning. Although it is a ‘Communication SWOT-analysis’, it also contains organisational and more general aspects that are relevant to communication.

This communication SWOT-analysis was done during a series of online meetings with a group of six experienced communication professionals who have been involved in ET and other science projects and research infrastructures on local, national and European levels. During these conversations, the points mentioned below were identified as the main ones that are relevant for communication.

Communication SWOT-analysis

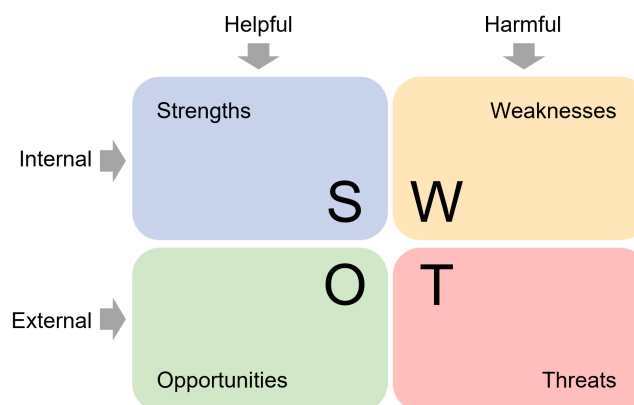


Figure 2: SWOT-analysis structure

Strengths

General strengths that are relevant to communication

- Extensive knowledge and expertise in various fields (not limited to communications).
- Enthusiasm and inspiration; people are genuinely passionate about the Einstein Telescope and their work.
- Highly international collaboration with a large and diverse community.
- Rapidly growing GW community.
- ET is a highly promising scientific infrastructure.
- GW research is a field poised for exciting new discoveries.

Communication specific strengths

- Establishment of a communication network and initiation of communication activities within ET-PP.
- A lot of communication experts are involved.
- The "Einstein Telescope" is a strong, easily recognizable name, with significant societal recognition.
- ET leadership is aware of the importance of effective communication.
- Exceptional communication potential of the project: a mind-blowing topic that is fascinating, will push innovative technologies, and is unique in Europe and globally.

Weaknesses

General weaknesses that are relevant to communication

- High work pressure; many people involved also work for other projects and organisations, leading to divided loyalties and limited time for ET.
- Because of the early phase, there is no clearly established management structure, organisation and strategy yet, resulting in slow decision-making processes.
- General uncertainty and ambiguity about some key characteristics (geometry, location).
- Lack of diversity in top positions (age, gender, ethnic background, professional profile etc).
- Complexity of structure, force field, institutional landscape, and topics, making it difficult to manage and communicate.

Communication specific weaknesses

- No communication infrastructure or activities set up yet; not many materials available.
- Lack of internal communication setup.
- The organisation of communication is currently complex and cumbersome.
- Inconsistent messaging; people are saying different things with varying frames and key messages, leading to a lack of alignment.
- Scientists are not always aware of how their messages and images are perceived locally or by different stakeholder groups.

Opportunities

General opportunities that are relevant to communication

- Potential increased national support (financial, political, governmental, societal); new funding opportunities for the GW field.
- Enhanced networking and international cooperation; strong connections with CERN, APPEC, GWIC.
- Technological innovations improving the ET design and facilitating technology transfer.
- Opportunities for research and development, industry engagement, education, new jobs creation.
- Advancement of GW science as a key component of multimessenger astronomy, leading to a deeper understanding of the universe and participation in a global network

of GW detectors, as well as potential for new discoveries and updates from other experiments in the field.

- ET could make the EU a global leader in gravitational wave research.

Communication specific opportunities

- Establishing a central, neutral, and connecting point for information with central stories and materials, facilitating ongoing dialogue with local stakeholders.
- Leveraging existing media attention and established contacts with journalists to maintain visibility and interest.
- Inspiring interest beyond the scientific community, potentially becoming a movement involving diverse audiences, including fans and curious individuals.
- Capitalising on early initiative phases to engage stakeholders in the journey of setting up a ground-breaking infrastructure, utilising the adventurous and inspiring nature of ET.
- Utilising the familiarity of the GW topic among the public as a starting point for conversations, portraying the initiative as cool and imaginative with significant potential ROI.

Threats

General threats that are relevant to communication

- Political instability, changes in government, and competing plans for potential locations (e.g., windmills) and other funding priorities (e.g., climate change, wars, pandemics); currently insufficient funding, with no reserved funding except from Dutch and Italian governments.
- Escalation of international competition beyond a manageable threshold.
- Lack of support from local and global society (perception of ET as too highbrow and complicated; fear of the unknown); conspiracy theories.
- Competition with other large scientific projects or infrastructures, and for talent with existing GW projects.
- Potential conflicts within the scientific community, leading to external confusion and loss of reputation and credibility; failures or issues with existing GW experiments/detectors.

Communication specific threats

- Misperceptions and unrealistic expectations due to various factors; difficulty in explaining and selling the uncertain and indirect return on investment of fundamental science.
- Losing public attention, interest, and involvement due to uncertainty and long timelines.
- Current communication workflows are not responsive enough to handle future internal and external dynamics.
- Confusion caused by too many websites, logos, and entities communicating on behalf of ET; lack of coordinated communication activities among all parties.
- Missed communication opportunities.

Main strategic pillars

After conducting an in-depth SWOT-analysis, we performed a comprehensive helicopter review of the results. This approach allowed us to holistically assess the entire emerging picture, comparing our weaknesses and strengths, threats and opportunities. From this analysis, we developed five main strategic pillars for ET communication: Organise, Brand, Connect, Network, Be a Hub.

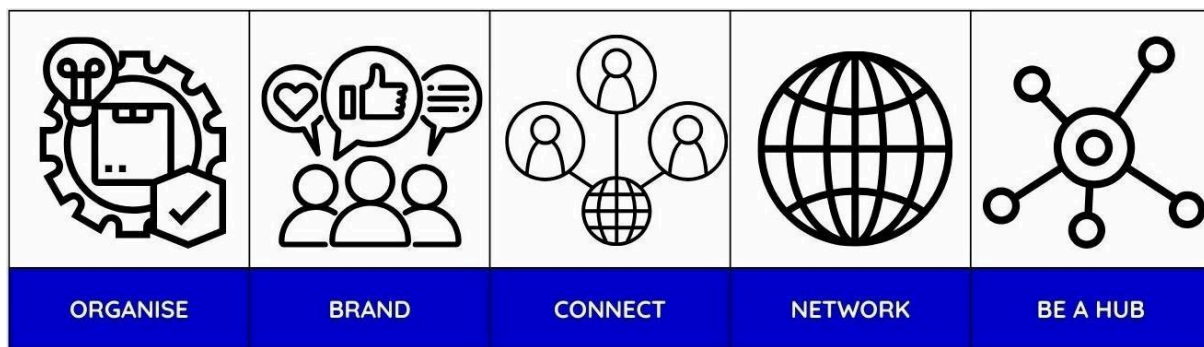


Figure 3. Main strategic pillars for ET communication

The results of the helicopter review and descriptions of each strategic pillar are given below:

1. Due to its early stage ET project faces numerous organisational challenges. Overall structure, frameworks and workflows are still being established. Coordination and communication of and between the main entities play a key role in this and need to be further improved in order to avoid confusion and delay of progress.

Strategic pillar: **ORGANISE**

Establish streamlined workflows, organisational models, and communication channels. Use the advantage of a “blank canvas”, where we can build new connections (external and internal) and craft an image that is new, appealing, and opens numerous perspectives.

2. ET boasts a strong name and enthusiastic supporters, yet it grapples with significant uncertainty and complexity, compounded by the unclear ROI for fundamental research. Additionally, it must engage with a diverse array of stakeholders in the political instability and societal overwhelm presenting itself as an enterprise with a great scientific and economical potential, reliable partner and employer, integrated scientific community.

Strategic pillar: **BRAND**

Define a clear branding strategy for the European ET initiative, aligning perceptions with reality and fostering connections with stakeholders through a compelling mission statement. Follow with key messaging and narratives to reinforce this brand identity. Additionally, leverage the involvement of communication professionals and enthusiasts to develop comprehensive communication strategies that address the complexities and

uncertainties of the project while engaging stakeholders effectively.

3. The initiative consists of numerous entities and individuals sharing expertise and enthusiasm, united by a common goal. However, internal competition and possible conflicts pose risks, potentially fracturing the community or causing inefficiencies and delays.

Strategic pillar: **CONNECT**

Acknowledge that communication cannot resolve all issues, but can aid in fostering cohesion and reinforce a supranational shared identity of ET. Fostering unity and common purpose, emphasising shared goals in all interactions and visual representations (both internally and in the external communication) can play a crucial role to this aim. Representing ET as an inherently and necessarily international and unitary enterprise. Capitalise on the project's strengths, such as the involvement of diverse expertise and enthusiastic supporters.

4. The ET project involves a growing international group of communication professionals, scientists in communication roles and enthusiasts (including other organisations in the field: CERN, APPEC, GWEC, etc.), forming the core of a communication network that can reach many outside of the 'internal' Einstein Telescope community. Leveraging these connections effectively holds the potential for widespread reach and engagement.

Strategic pillar: **NETWORK**

Cultivate a network approach, integrating community management and fan engagement strategies, while maintaining a central communication and storytelling platform. Use the involvement of communication professionals and enthusiasts to develop comprehensive communication strategies that enforce existing networks and connections beyond the Einstein Telescope project.

5. At the national, regional, and local levels, extensive communication, networking, and dialogue are already underway, crucial for maintaining and expanding support among diverse stakeholders. However, this decentralised effort requires a central information hub at European level to achieve coherence and effectiveness.

Strategic pillar: **BE A HUB**

Serve as a central European hub for local, regional, and national communication efforts, being a source of trustful information for the whole ET community, stakeholders and general public, facilitating dialogue with industry and stakeholders to strengthen support and engagement.

MODULE 2: GOALS AND EVALUATION METHODS

After a holistic SWOT-analysis of the project and establishing the main strategic pillars, we progressed to the next stage of the SMCP: defining the primary goals and the methods for evaluating their achievement. Within each of the five main lines, we identified specific goals and potential evaluation methods for monitoring the success in reaching these goals.

Table 1: Goals and evaluation methods for each of the five strategic pillars

ORGANISE	
Goal	Evaluation method
Define and establish roles and a clear workflow for the short term.	Feedback from professionals and relevant (internal) stakeholders through conversations, antennae and possibly surveys.
Create a model for organisation in intermediate term (end ET-PP until site decision) and suggest a possible model for long term perspective.	Check if the model matches the collected input on when organisation of comms is a success during earlier meetings with the ETC executive board, ETO management (March 2024), and a side meeting with communication professionals at the ET symposium (May 2024). Feedback from professionals and relevant internal stakeholders.

BRAND	
Goal	Evaluation method
Develop a clear and compelling brand identity.	Feedback through conversations, antennae and (online) consultation.
Build the image of a reliable enterprise with a high scientific mission and values and spin-off opportunities for industry and society, to align stakeholder perceptions.	Feedback through conversations, antennae, stakeholder feedback and possibly brand perception surveys. Check for consistency and alignment (and reality and fact-check) of different stories.
Raise awareness and visibility of the project, its goals and progress.	(Social) Media analysis. Monitoring engagement with branding materials and campaigns.

CONNECT	
Goal	Evaluation method
Foster unity and a sense of common purpose among ET participants.	Feedback through conversations, antennae and possibly surveys on cohesion and unity. Tracking collaboration and communication among participants.
Emphasise shared goals and (importance of international collaboration.	
Contribute to offline and online (internal) community building	

NETWORK	
Goal	Evaluation method
Build and strengthen a network of communication professionals and enthusiasts.	Mapping and analysing the communication network, feedback sessions. Tracking engagement metrics and reach of communications. Surveying network participants for feedback and suggestions.
Enhance the reach and engagement of the ET initiative.	
Foster collaboration and information sharing within the network.	

BE A HUB	
Goal	Evaluation method
Establish ET as a central, neutral and European information and content hub for all stakeholders, including local communication teams in Italy and the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and those involved in seeking political and financial support for ET in different countries.	Tracking usage and engagement. Surveys and feedback from stakeholders on information quality and accessibility. Monitoring the effectiveness of dialogue and engagement efforts.
Support effective dialogue and engagement with industry and stakeholders.	
Provide reliable and accessible information to the ET community and the public.	
Enhance education and outreach.	
Enable the dissemination of knowledge.	
Support national activities to secure political and financial support from political leaders in Europe.	Evaluate the effectiveness of advocacy campaigns targeted at political leaders, measure changes.

MODULE 3: STAKEHOLDERS

ET stakeholders — individuals, groups, or organisations that have an interest in, are affected by, or can influence the ET project. Creating a comprehensive list of stakeholders is a crucial step in developing the SMCP. It helps to prioritise the stakeholders that require more focus and attention in communication efforts, and to define the main communication strategies in dealing with them.

Identifying the stakeholders

The ET stakeholders can be divided into internal and external. Internal stakeholder groups are those groups or entities that are branded and perceived as a main ‘Einstein Telescope entity’ or are part of one. The other groups and entities are categorised as ‘external stakeholders’.

Internal stakeholders include:

- ETO — ET organisation and management structure with a diversity of professionals involved (e.g. strategy, public affairs, project management, engineering, civil engineering, communication, quality control), organised in departments and offices,
- ETC — ET scientists, organised in boards and research units,
- national/local teams of the potential sites,
- research units.

We identified a long list of *external stakeholders*. For workability, we grouped them together into the following groups and subgroups:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Science & Research | ❖ large companies |
| ❖ scientific organisation/project | ❖ SMEs |
| ❖ scientific institute / research centre | 5. Governments and agencies |
| ❖ GW and multimessenger community | ❖ National governments |
| 2. Science & Education | ❖ European Union |
| ❖ scientific community (scientists and engineers from different fields) | ❖ research councils |
| ❖ universities | ❖ local administration near sites |
| ❖ students | 6. Media |
| ❖ school teachers | ❖ popular scientific media |
| 3. Environmental organisations | ❖ specialised media (e.g. finance or political journalists) |
| 4. Industry | ❖ other media |
| | 7. General public |

Stakeholder cube analysis

As the next step we used a three-dimensional analysis, an adaptation of the stakeholder cube (Hillson, D. & Simon, P. (2007) *Practical Project Risk Management*). The cube method addresses all three aspects (power, interest and attitude towards the project) and labels the stakeholders accordingly. Stakeholders may hold either influential or little direct power over

decision making, and have active or passive interest. They also identify as either a backer, neutral or blocker in attitude.

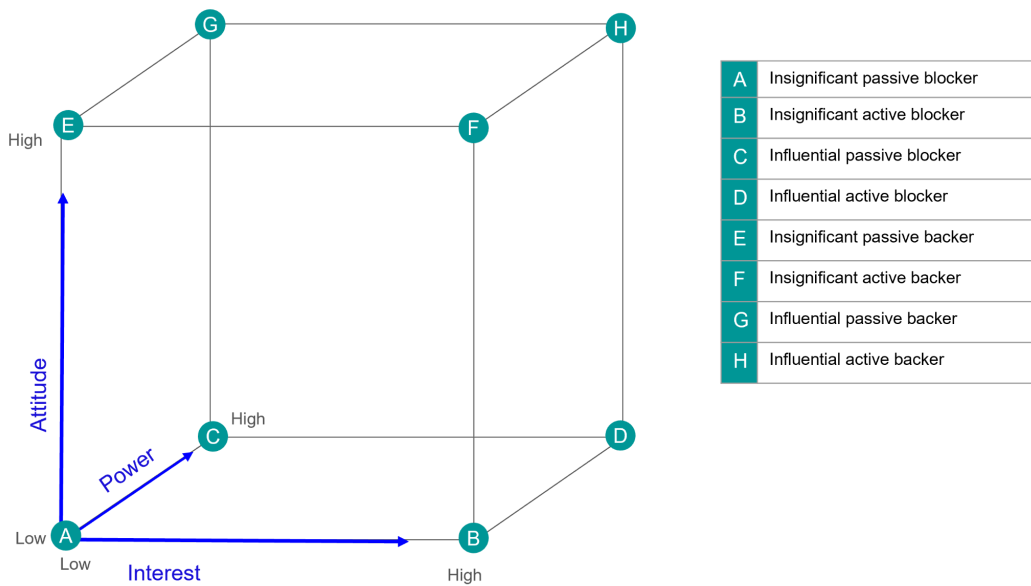


Figure 4: Stakeholder Cube

We performed the stakeholder analysis with a group of six experienced communication professionals who have been involved in ET and other science and research infrastructure projects on local, national and European levels. This means that, together, we have a good understanding of and connection to different stakeholder groups and know their attitudes and points of view towards ET.

Each subgroup of stakeholders was characterised on:

- power with regards to the success of ET (high power received the label ‘influential’),
- interest in the success of ET (large interest received the label ‘active’, little or no interest received the label ‘passive’),
- attitude towards ET becoming a success ((very) positive received the label ‘backer’, neutral received the label ‘neutral’, negative or critical received the label ‘blocker’).

We all ‘scored’ the power, interest and attitude of the identified stakeholder group categories individually, based on our own knowledge and experience. After that, we added the scores together, discussed outliers and differences and different interpretations. Based on this, the scores were adjusted to scores we could all agree on, and in the end the stakeholder categories received the labels as can be seen in the table.

It should be noted that during our conversations, some interesting differences between countries emerged. For example, the influence of large companies is greater in some countries than in others, as is the perceived influence and role of the EU. Additionally, in the potential host

countries, the media are already much more engaged and positive than in other countries. And in some countries, several school teachers are also more engaged and positive compared to those in other countries. The table below should therefore be considered an average general overview.

Table 2: Stakeholder analysis main conclusions

Subcategory	Type
Scientific organisations/projects	active backer
Scientific institute / research centre	active backer
GW and multimessenger community	active backer
Scientific community (scientists and engineers from different fields)	active backer
Universities	active neutral
Students	active backer
School teachers	passive neutral
Large companies	Influential active backer
SMEs	active backer
National governments	Influential active backer
European Union	Influential active backers
Research councils	Influential active backers
Local administration near sites	Influential active backers
Environmental organisations	Influential active blocker
Popular scientific media	active backer
Specialised media	Influential active backer
Other media	Influential passive neutral
General public	Influential passive neutral
ETO institutions	Influential active backer
ET collaboration	Influential active backer
National/local teams potential sites	Influential active backer
Research units	Influential active backer

By identifying and categorising stakeholders systematically, we have laid a strong foundation for our communication strategy, ensuring that all relevant parties are considered and appropriately engaged. This thorough stakeholder analysis will guide our strategic decision-making and help us navigate the complexities of communicating our scientific project effectively. Next steps on how to prioritise and engage with different stakeholder categories, are described below.

Main strategies for working with stakeholders

Before describing the strategies for working with different stakeholders, we want to emphasize that groups with a lower priority at the moment are not unimportant in general or in the longer

term, but in the short term they are less likely to contribute to successfully establishing an Einstein Telescope in Europe.

We also want to emphasise that all detailed strategies are advised in the context of the five strategic pillars: organise, brand, connect, network and be a hub. These pillars provide the overall framework to work in. That means that all interactions with stakeholders have to be aligned with the organisation that is being set up, and the branding that is being developed. Relations with and between internal stakeholders will be supported by activities in the pillars 'organise' and 'connect'. And rather than communication professionals taking over the relations with all other stakeholders, it is important for ET to use the network and existing relations, and for the communication professionals to provide an overall hub of information to support relations.

It is also important to establish a system for regular feedback from different groups, and to use this information to adequately and timely adjust our engagement strategies, and address any emerging issues. The position of stakeholders can change over time.

Influential active backers

Influential active backers are crucial to find resources, advocacy and wider acceptance. Their support can be critical in overcoming obstacles and pushing the project forward.

- **Strategy:** To engage these groups regularly and closely. To involve them in decision-making processes, to keep them informed about project progress, and to leverage their support for advocacy and resources.
- **Communication and engagement activities:** regular updates on project progress; meetings, discussions on the project status to address concerns and gather feedback; to involve them in specific project activities, consultations, or advisory roles.

Active backers and neutral

These groups have an interest in ET and are positive or neutral. They can be advocates and potential future contributors to the project and their enthusiasm and support can provide valuable momentum. It is important to keep earning their support, but they do not influence high level decision making directly (at short term).

- **Strategy:** To keep these groups informed and engaged at a moderate level. They can provide valuable support and advocacy for ET, but they do not require intensive resources.
- **Communication and engagement activities:** periodic updates through social media, newsletters, meetings; project-related events, workshops, or seminars.

Influential active blockers

We identified one potentially influential group of active blockers at this time: environmental organizations. Although they are not currently actively opposing the ET project, they are critical and could become blockers since their interests may partially diverge from those of ET. It is important to proactively engage with them, as the local communication teams at the potential host sites are already doing.

- **Strategy:** To proactively address their concerns. To engage them in dialogue to understand their objections and to seek to find common ground or compromises.
- **Communication and engagement activities:** regular updates on project progress; meetings, discussions on the project status to understand and address concerns and gather feedback; to involve them in specific consultations, or advisory roles; consider involving third-party mediators if necessary.

Influential passive neutral

These groups could have a high influence on decision making, but have no strong interest and are at the moment overall neutral towards ET. It is important to earn their trust and prevent them from becoming blockers.

- **Strategy:** To engage and maintain their support through continuous education and positive communication. Use social media to share the benefits of ET, address any misconceptions, and gather feedback. Encourage public participation and maintain transparency to foster trust and enthusiasm for the project. Collaborate with the media on content and ensure accurate, widespread dissemination of information.
- **Communication and engagement activities:** to keep track of their concerns and positions (surveys or feedback); to use media and communication strategies to address their concerns and keep them informed about the project's positive impacts.

Passive neutral

At the moment, the only stakeholder group in this category is 'school teachers', referring to school teachers in general throughout Europe. While some teachers might already be 'active backers', especially in the potential host countries, here we are talking about the group as a whole. The designation of 'passive neutral' indicates that school teachers, as a collective, are not actively engaged and do not exert a strong direct influence on the project's success at present. However, they have the potential to be informed and supportive, and we can work to potentially turn them into active backers—ambassadors for the ET initiative—even though they are currently not engaged.

- **Strategy:** To monitor their position and address any minor issues. To be open to engagement, to ensure they feel included and valued.

- **Communication and engagement activities:** to keep track of their concerns and positions (surveys or feedback); to use media and communication strategies to address their concerns and keep them informed about the project's positive impacts; to provide educational materials (lesson plans, presentations, videos) for classroom use and explore collaborative projects and future site visits.

MODULE 4: TARGET GROUPS

In the pursuit of successful communication and engagement for ET project, it is essential to consider both stakeholders and target groups. The distinction between stakeholder and target group engagement lies primarily in their direct involvement and influence on ET. Stakeholders require detailed, tailored strategies that address their specific interests and concerns, whereas target groups benefit from broader educational outreach and community engagement efforts aimed at building awareness and support. This chapter outlines distinct strategies tailored for target groups, recognizing their unique roles and perspectives in relation to ET.

The table below lists the main target groups, and the communicative predispositions: knowledge, attitude and behaviour. These predispositions are useful because they provide important clues on how to approach communications and establish connection. Being aware of the predispositions is thus the ‘starting point’ for communication.

Table 3: Target groups description

TG	What do they know?	Attitude (How do they feel?)	Behaviour related to ET
Policy makers (national and international)	Likely aware of the importance of science and research for societal and economic progress. May have limited understanding of GW astronomy but can value its potential impacts.	Viewing ET as a flagship project that aligns with EU priorities. May be sceptical or indifferent.	May allocate funding, support legislation, or advocate for policies that promote scientific research.
Economic stakeholders	Different levels of knowledge (from limited to deep expertise) depending on their specific industry sector, resources, and strategic priorities. Some of them have an understanding of the potential opportunities and challenges presented by ET; some have dedicated research and development departments focused on cutting-edge technologies and innovations.	Pragmatic, prioritising potential economic benefits such as industry partnerships and market opportunities.	May seek partnerships, funding opportunities, or commercial applications that align with their business interests and strategic goals.
Broader scientific community	They may have a diverse range of knowledge about ET. While they may not be experts in GW astronomy, they are likely to have a general understanding of ET's scientific goals, technical challenges, and interdisciplinary nature.	They are generally supportive of scientific projects that advance knowledge and contribute to their field of expertise but may have varying levels of interest or involvement depending on their research priorities and expertise.	May engage through collaborative research proposals, data analysis, publications, conference presentations, and participation in international research networks.

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		May also be neutral or negative (when it does not contribute to or even competes with their topic(s) at funding level).	
Local communities	May have limited knowledge about GW astronomy and ET technologies, but can be familiar with ET project through local news, community meetings, or interactions with project developers.	Some may welcome ET as a source of economic opportunities and cultural enrichment, while others may be apprehensive about potential disruptions to their daily lives and surroundings. May be interested in understanding its potential impacts on their region, environment, and quality of life.	May engage with the project by attending public meetings, participating in community consultations, voicing concerns or feedback, and seeking information about potential benefits or risks.
Relevant media (national and international)	Are generally informed about current events, scientific discoveries, and emerging trends; may have varying levels of expertise and interest in specialised topics like GW astronomy. ant ET in particular.	Are often interested in covering stories that are newsworthy, relevant to their audience, and have human interest or societal impact.	May cover ET topics through news articles, features, interviews, documentaries, and multimedia content to inform, educate, and engage their audience.
Science educators and students	They have a basic understanding of science concepts and may be familiar with topics related to astronomy and physics, but may not be deeply knowledgeable about GW and ET.	Are generally curious, eager to learn, and interested in engaging with cutting-edge research and discoveries in science. Can be neutral or critical.	Science educators may incorporate information about the ET project into their curriculum, lessons, and educational activities to inspire student interest and engagement in STEM fields. Students may seek internships, research projects, or graduate studies, may engage in extracurricular activities.

Main strategies for working with target groups:

Before going to the suggested strategies for the different target groups, we want to emphasize that this also should be seen in the context of the five strategic pillars: organise, brand, connect, network and be a hub. These pillars provide the overall framework to work in. That means that all communication actions have to be aligned with the organisation that is being set up, and the branding that is being developed. And rather than central communication professionals taking over all communications, it is important for ET to use the existing networks and relations, and for the communication professionals to provide an overall hub of information to support all communication and engagement. This also supports the communication and engagement activities of local and national teams.

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Table 4: Strategies, tools, messages for different target groups

Target group	Strategies	Communication tools	Messages
Policy makers: national and international	Engagement and awareness	- Meetings and workshops (on local, national and European levels) - Direct contact with members of the ET community - Official correspondence - Website - Social media (Mainly Twitter/X and LinkedIn) - Reports, statements and white papers - Newsletter	Key message: Supporting ET is a strategic opportunity to drive groundbreaking scientific discoveries and technological innovation, ensuring Europe's leadership in global research and economic competitiveness. Your support is crucial to making this vision a reality. Other: - ET is next level cutting edge science expected to lead to great discoveries. - ET pushes the boundaries developing new technologies. - Fundamental science in general, and ET in this case, can have a great potential impact on knowledge, technology and innovation. - Investing in fundamental science has a high ROI return of investment in the long term. - ET will inspire and contribute to train future generations of European students and innovators to the benefit of Europe's strategic autonomy and economy. - ET is an opportunity not to miss, you want to be part of this! Are you on board? - Governmental support and collaboration are crucial for infrastructure like ET. - Supporting ET is in alignment with EU priorities for research, innovation, and economic competitiveness. - These are the latest updates - This is the roadmap/path towards ET and this is how things are organised.
Economic stakeholders	Business development and networking	- Industry conferences, brokerage events and exhibitions - Direct contact (via ao ILO network) and webinars - LinkedIn - Website	Key message: ET offers unique opportunities in R&D, partnerships, and spinoff technologies. Collaborating with ET can drive innovation, create jobs, and deliver significant

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			economic benefits. Other: - These are possible R&D schemes. - These are collaboration and partnership opportunities. - These are tenders/offers. - ET needs collaboration with industry. Are you interested in collaborating?
Broader scientific community	Collaboration and networking, awareness	- Research conferences and collaboration platforms - Direct contact with members of the ET community - Website - Social media (Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Facebook) - Optional: Professional networks like ResearchGate and ET collaboration platforms?	Key message: ET is a transformative project that will push the boundaries of fundamental science and technology, offering unprecedented opportunities for groundbreaking discoveries and research advancements. Other: - We want to establish ET in Europe. - This is the status and plan. - ET provides opportunities for collaboration and research. - ET provides opportunities for technological developments and new knowledge. - Here are career opportunities. - Fundamental science is attractive. - These are the challenges we are facing. - Your involvement in ET will shape the future of gravitational wave astronomy and fundamental physics.
Local communities	Community engagement, dialogue Education and outreach	- Public meetings, information sessions and community consultations (organised locally by local teams) - Local media, websites and social media (organised by local teams) - Educational materials and resources	Key message: ET will bring significant benefits to your community, including job creation, improved education and training opportunities, technological advancements, and increased investment. We are committed to working closely with you to ensure the project enhances local life and respects your environment. Other: - This is ET and its scientific goals.

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			- This is the status of the project. - These are potential impacts (technologies, benefits, environmental considerations, collaboration opportunities) - We are transparent and honest. - This is how we are dealing with questions and concerns.
Relevant media (national and international)	Use network (media relations), content creation	- Press releases - Media kits - Press conferences around big events Direct contact with members of the ET communication network, media briefings - Coordinated efforts around milestones and events - Offer interviews with project leaders and scientists - Website - Social media - Multimedia content (movies, visuals, infographics)	Key message: ET is set to revolutionize our understanding of the universe with groundbreaking discoveries in gravitational wave astronomy. It will drive technological innovation and economic growth, positioning Europe at the forefront of global science. Stay tuned for updates! Other: - This is ET's milestones. - This is ET's societal impact. - This discovery was made. - This is an opportunity for collaboration.
Science educators and students	Educational outreach and engagement	- For potential host sites: educational resources, lesson plans, interactive activities - In general: ET as part of existing (gravitational wave) outreach activities and events - Social media (mainly Facebook) and website - At late stage (when ET becomes more real): educational resources, lesson plans, interactive activities that integrate ET topics into STEM curricula, workshops, student conferences, educational outreach events - Internship and research opportunities - Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Youtube) and educational platforms	Key message: ET offers a unique opportunity to engage with cutting-edge science and technology and explore the frontiers of gravitational wave astronomy. Other: - Consider the possibilities of your future scientific career in ET. - This is an opportunity for internships, research projects, learning, self-development. - This is ET's curriculum. - ET is inspiring curiosity, fostering a sense of wonder, and brings a lot of opportunities. - Here are resources to enhance STEM education.

MODULE 5: MAIN COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND CONTENT

To achieve multiple communication goals, the project will actively use the priority communication tools described below.

Website

The website will serve as the primary institutional presentation of ET, providing an overview of the project's goals, progress, and significance, and demonstrating the collective and supranational effort. It will be an overall, neutral and accurate point of information (a hub), and will refer to other websites for example location specific information.

Main features of the ET website:

- built on the WordPress CMS, easy to navigate and manage;
- optimised for search engines to increase visibility and attract a broader audience;
- responsive design, ensuring an optimal browsing experience on all devices;
- compliant with EU digital accessibility standards;
- access to an intranet platform (for scientists involved in the project).

The website will highlight the collective efforts of the ET community, including the ETO and the ETC. It will provide updates and news related to both entities, offering neutral coverage of developments at potential host locations and ensuring balanced representation until the site decision is made.

Social media

Social media have become pivotal in contemporary communication, driven by their unparalleled ability to swiftly respond to events, establish an immediate connection with recipients, facilitate interaction, and ensure widespread availability.

To achieve ET communication goals we will use social media:

- share timely updates and news,
- engage and interact with the community,
- inform the public about upcoming events and actions,
- highlight news and developments from the host sites that is posted on the social media and website of ET Italy and ET EMR (and in the future perhaps Saxony), make sure there is a balance and to provide the European/overall neutral context,
- distribute educational materials,
- build and strengthen professional networks,
- humanise science by sharing personal stories and experiences,
- disseminate research findings and results.

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For this European/'supranational' plan, we suggest starting by using the existing accounts on **Facebook**, **LinkedIn** and **Twitter/X** (alternatively **BlueSky**).

Table 5: Existing profiles associated with ET¹

	Facebook	LinkedIn	Twitter / X	Instagram	YouTube	BlueSky
Supranational	YES	YES²	YES²	YES	YES	YES
Italy	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
EMR	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Table 6: Social media description

Social media platform	Description
Facebook	Purposes: community building, inspirational, informative, educational. Target groups: scientists, general public, media, people seeking popular knowledge / “astro geeks”, science educators and students. Tone of voice: informative and approachable; friendly and accessible manner in a conversational tone; plain language without scientific jargon to make complex concepts understandable to a broad audience; engaging the audience through comments, questions, and discussions. Content: - news showcasing the progress, - people of ET, - sharing partners' content, - popular knowledge about ET, - ET values: sustainability, green economy, gender equality, open science, - educational and outreach materials (visualizations, infographics, interesting facts).
BlueSky	Purpose: to serve as an info hub for ET community by sharing timely project updates, research insights, and behind-the-scenes content while encouraging open dialogue and collaboration. Target groups: scientists, tech enthusiasts, partner institutions, educators, the interested public. Tone of voice: professional yet approachable, balancing technical accuracy with engaging, clear language.

¹ Status as of 2430.026.20245. Italy and EMR show the accounts hosted by 'local teams'.

² Exist but are not being used for supranational communication.

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	Content: project updates, behind-the-scenes stories, thought leadership on scientific research and tech, interactive community discussions.
LinkedIn	Purpose: to establish an employer profile for ET; community building, attracting collaborations and financial support, inspirational. Target groups: companies, business partners, scientists, journalists. Tone of voice: professional yet approachable, with a focus on clear and concise communication. Content: - showing people (professionals) behind the project; - generating enthusiasm for GW astronomy among followers; - sharing the insights of collaborations between the institutions; - showing the progress of the project; - presenting the business potential of the project (jobs, tenders, subcontracting).
Instagram	Purpose: to build a community, attract collaborations and financial support, inspire and engage followers. Target groups: scientists, business partners, companies, journalists, general public interested in science, educators and students. Tone of voice: more relaxed than in other social media, plain language, friendly. Content: - highlighting the professionals behind the project, - generating excitement for GW astronomy, - sharing insights from institutional collaborations, - showcasing project progress with engaging visuals, - presenting the business potential of the project (jobs, tenders, subcontracting opportunities). Visual Style: - high-quality photos and videos with a clean, modern aesthetic, - ET's colors and logo in posts and stories, - infographics, animations, and other visual tools to make complex information easily digestible.
Mastodon (optional)	Purpose: to build a community, inspire and engage followers Target groups: scientists Tone of voice: plain language, friendly, informative, not too corporate or political Content: - Sharing insights - Showcasing project progress with updates and photos;

Twitter / X (optional)	Purpose: informative, community building. Target groups: politics and administration, fellow scientists, partner institutions, general public, media. Tone of voice: - concise and informative; - due to the character limit, tweets will be concise and to the point; - hashtags related to our project to reach a wider audience; - active communication with other researchers and institutions in our field by retweeting, liking, and responding to their content. Content: - announcing the news being published on the website; - quickly sharing the insights of collaborations between the institutions at the moment — gatherings, work process, etc.
ResearchGate (optional)	Purpose: to engage the scientific community by sharing research, findings, and updates related to ET; facilitate collaboration, networking, and discussion among researchers. Target groups: scientists in the fields of astrophysics, gravitational wave astronomy, and related disciplines; universities and research institutes; students; science communicators and educators; individuals interested in disseminating scientific knowledge related to ET. Tone of voice: professional, informative, and academic, with a focus on accuracy and clarity. Content: - research papers and publications, - project updates, - datasets and technical resources, - collaborative opportunities (calls for collaboration, research positions, and project participation).
YouTube	Purpose: to inform and educate the public and scientific community about ET through engaging video content. The channel. Target groups: general public, media, people seeking popular knowledge / “astro geeks”, students, researchers, educators. Tone of voice: clear, engaging, and accessible. Content: - explainer videos, - project updates, - interviews and talks, - behind-the-scenes: insights into the daily workings and technical aspects of the ET project - educational materials.

Paid promotion

Although it's not a priority for ET, using paid ads on social media can be a strategic decision that makes sense under various circumstances, depending on our goals. Although there are arguments not to use paid promotions, it is important to keep an open mind and take this decision consciously. Here are some scenarios when using paid ads on social media can be beneficial:

- increasing project awareness,
- fundraising for research or outreach activities,
- career opportunities and networking.

Synergy of social media and a website

Social media, as one (but not the only) of the project's communication channels, should be used in synergy with other channels, enhancing the overall effect. The synergy between social media and a website is a powerful combination that can enhance our online presence, engage target audience, and drive meaningful interactions.

Content management tool

The content management tool (platform/app) will streamline the various stages of information/news collection, content creation, review, and final approval. It will track the progress of each piece of content, ensuring it undergoes all necessary checks. Asana, one of the most popular project management tools, will be utilised for these purposes.

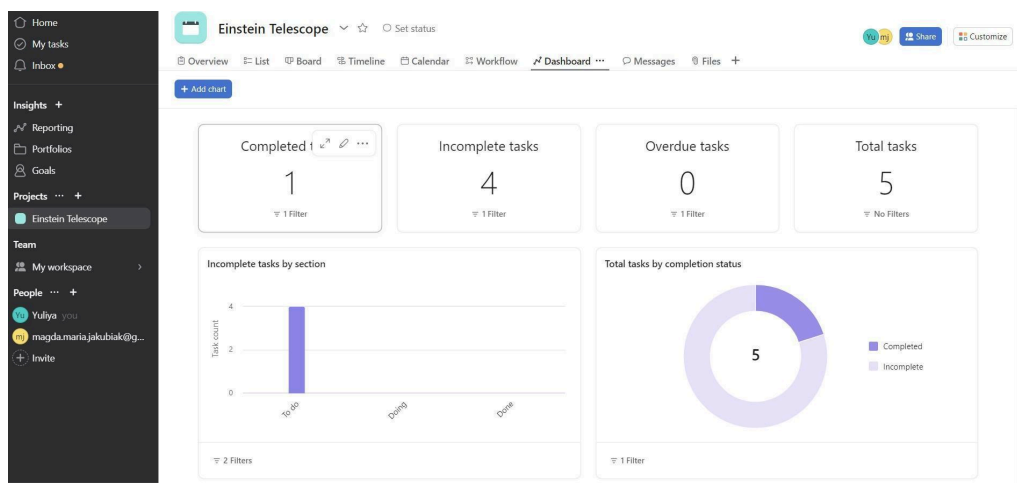


Figure 5: Asana interface

Additionally, the communication team will develop a content calendar in Asana that outlines the planned posts, publication dates, and responsible parties for each piece of content. This calendar can help ensure a consistent and organised flow of content.

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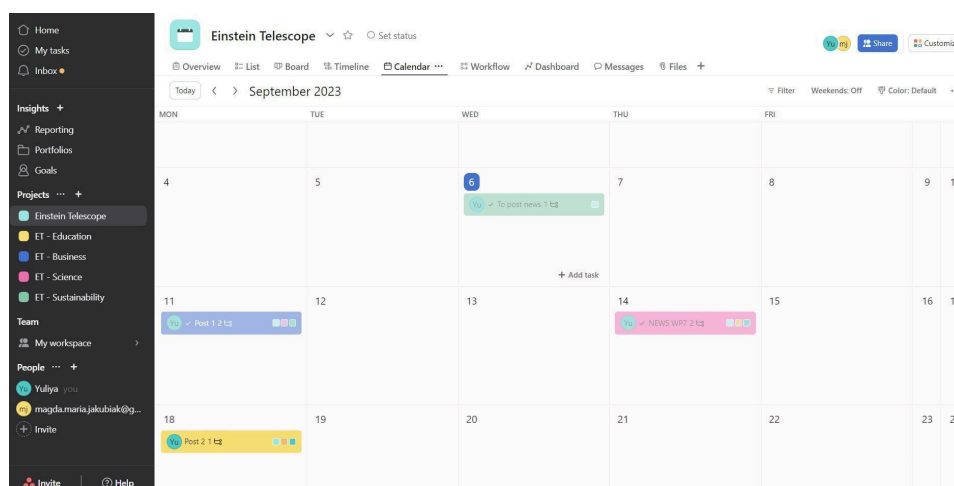


Figure 6: Example of content calendar

Outreach Repository

Development of a well-structured and simple to use repository for outreach materials is essential for ET communication. By collecting strategy documents, approved texts on science and technology, multimedia, and other relevant materials in one place, the repository will enhance seamless communication and collaboration.

Several solutions were considered (e.g. B2DROP, CERN CDS, Google Drive, developing an entire new software, public platforms such as Flickr and YouTube). Finally, we tested a new version of ET TDS (Technical Document System). Repository development will continue based on this platform as (i) its functions and features already include essentials identified for the repository; (ii) it is a system already used by most of the community; (iii) we have strong IT development & hosting support within the community.

The repository will be organised by file types, topics & use cases, also making use of existing ET topical structures. Files will be accessed through an intuitive navigation structure and a search function.

ET Gitlab will be used to develop and manage repository content, only the final versions will be uploaded to the repository (including metadata such as credits, licence, captions, description, use case).

Using the TDS is a good working solution now, and also an efficient way to develop the repository structure and content. If there is a decision to use a different system in the future, the structure and content can be easily migrated to another system.



Figure 7: The TDS interface

Contacts with traditional media

We have begun developing a press kit, and discussed the structure and key aspects of media relations as well as possible milestones for media communication.

Interaction with traditional media should be preceded by thorough preparation. Official project materials will be created by the communication office, then approved by management, and after that sent to the media.

Project spokespersons must speak in one voice, providing the public with only accurate and consistent information.

Outreach materials

Basic information materials that can serve several purposes and chose the following types:

- leaflets,
- roll-ups,
- portable exhibition,
- stickers,
- t-shirts, cups, pens, other swag,
- bookmarks,
- advocacy brochure,
- digital materials (visualisations, infographics, etc.).

MODULE 6: VISUAL IDENTITY

Prior to 2024, the ET initiative lacked a cohesive and distinct visual identity. The existing logo, a combination of image and lettering, has served the ET community for quite a long time. However, it does not adequately reflect the project's essence or effectively communicate its core ideas. Additionally, the communication teams at the candidate sites (EMR and Sardinia) already use their own visual identity systems. While these existing logos effectively address the communication needs of local initiatives, they also contribute to a fragmented perception of ET as a unified project.

As we move forward, it was crucial to develop a new logo and visual identity that:

- strengthens the ET community and initiative at a European level;
- presents ET as a reliable and consistent initiative, easily recognizable and relatable to stakeholders;
- creates an emotional connection with both internal and external stakeholders, aligning with the revolutionary science and technology associated with ET.

The new supranational logo and visual identity should meet the following criteria:

- Modern look and feel (it should be contemporary and aesthetically pleasing).
- Uniqueness and memorability (the design must be distinctive and easily recognizable).
- Representation of revolutionary science symbolizing the innovative science and technology of ET.
- Clear indication that ET is a European project.
- Supranational and neutral, avoiding specific national symbols and shapes related to the future construction (like triangles or L-shapes).
- Copyright compliance.
- Adaptability for various communication tools, including social media.
- Potential for delicate modifications (e.g., descriptors, mutable elements, colours) to distinguish different ET units (ETO, ETC, etc.).
- No depiction of Einstein's image (as it is cliché and lacks uniqueness).

Design and approval process

The design process is overseen by the dedicated logo-and-website subgroup (work package 10 of the ET-PP project) and consists of several steps:

- 1) Brainstorming sessions were conducted with the ET community to gather and validate concepts and ideas.

Two editions of this exercise were organized: an in-person session (November 16, 2023, during the ET annual meeting) and an online session (December 19, 2023). Using the digital tool Mentimeter, we asked participants five questions related to ET, resulting in approximately 1,500 responses. A total of 150 people participated. In addition to gathering valuable insights for the

designer briefing, these sessions fostered community integration, engaging representatives from both the ETO and ETC, and facilitating networking among participants.

2) Work with a graphic designer.

A graphic designer was selected through a tender process, which was won by the Italian artist and designer Cristina Chiappini (<https://cristinachiappini.com/>). She proposed several directions, from which one was ultimately chosen, with the support of the Management.

3) Consultation with the ET community.

Survey for the ET community was conducted, where participants were presented with several logo variations and asked to provide their feedback and opinions. These comments were carefully considered in refining the final design.

4) Finalisation and official presentation.

The new ET visual identity was finalized in October 2024 and officially unveiled to the ET community at the 3rd Einstein Telescope Annual Meeting, held on November 12-15, 2024, in Warsaw. It was subsequently published on the ET Wiki page, along with a detailed guideline.

MODULE 7: ORGANISATION

The objective of this section is to suggest in a preliminary form an organisational model for the communication of the Einstein Telescope. To develop the best recommendation, the ET-PP WP10 group has reviewed various existing models (CERN/LHC, EGO/Virgo, LISA, LSC), evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to communication and outreach (see appendix A). We also collected insights during a meeting with the Executive Board and the ETO management team, and during a communication-focused side meeting at the Einstein Telescope Symposium in May 2024. Furthermore, our proposal is informed by the extensive experience of several communication professionals involved in the project. Naturally, this has to be combined with the vision of how the Einstein Telescope will develop organisationally, and the final decision on how communication will be structured lies with management.

We have the advantage of starting the design of the organisation of communication at the same time of the design of the general organisation of ET. This has not been the case for several other research infrastructures. We begin by establishing a long-term vision and then work backwards to determine how we can evolve from our current situation to achieve that vision.

A long term vision of the general organisation and the organisation of communication

While discussions and work on financial, organisational and legal aspects and the number of sites are ongoing, we can already conclude that when a site decision is taken and ET will be realised, at some point in the future there will be:

- An **accountable legal entity**, responsible for organisational, financial and legal aspects and construction, operation and ‘running’ of the main infrastructure. This entity will also be the main point of contact for the government(s) of the host country/countries.
- A **scientific collaboration**, focusing on the research and instrumentation.

For the long term, we propose the following structural organisation:

- Central Communication Department (CCD),
- International Communication Network (ICN),
- Communications and Education Committee (CEC).

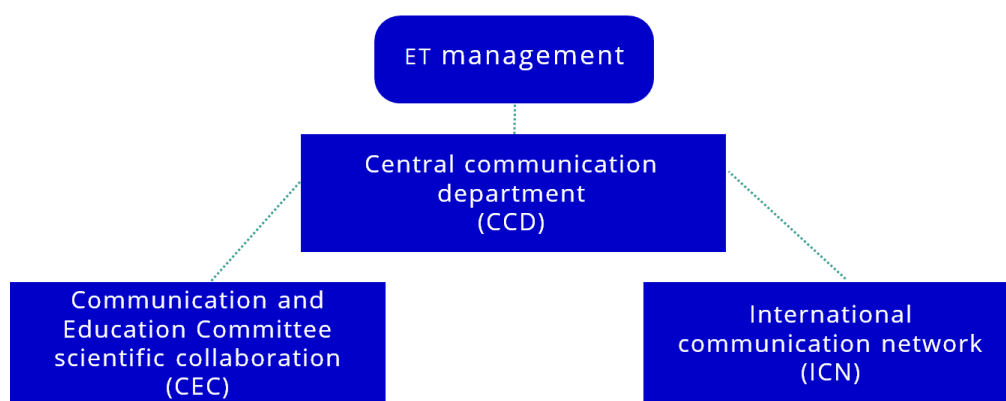


Figure 8: A proposal for the long term vision for organising communication with three main bodies³.

The key characteristics of each body of the ET communication structure are described below.

Central Communication Department (CCD):

- Under an accountable legal entity, it consists of communications professionals.
- The head is part of the ET management and is closely connected to the CEC, ICN and the spokesperson of the ETC.
- Located at/near the site or at headquarters.
- ‘Runs’ and coordinates communication.
- Important features: responsiveness, functional autonomy, effectiveness, and a sense of diplomacy.
- Activities include (but not limited to): central and overall press and media-related activities; strategy development and strategic advice, support public affairs, content production and the production and maintenance of central communication tools and materials (website, newsletters, brochures, etc.); community engagement, including local and internal communication; management of visitor centre(s); coordination of central teacher, student, and outreach programs, including the training of scientists involved in outreach; events and exhibitions.

International Communication Network (ICN):

- Consists of representatives (communication professionals) in different countries.
- Will be enabled and facilitated with information, materials and content by the CCD.
- Sends signals and concerns to the CCD.
- Co-chairing by the CCD can ensure a connection to strategy and central communications.
- Ensures maximum impact in different countries.

³ This is not a definitive decision, and the future organisation of communication will be determined by management, taking into account other organisational developments. A more in depth description and the reasoning behind this proposal is given in Appendix A.

Communications and Education Committee (CEC):

- Consists of an elected chair and communications and outreach enthusiasts.
- Competencies best suited for outreach and education.
- Stimulates scientists to initiate and coordinate education and outreach activities, be aware of and sensitive to communication aspects and opportunities, and collaborate with the CCD.
- Interface with the CCD. CEC chair is also a member of CCD.
- CEC chair is linked to the Collaboration Spokesperson. Both should coproduce (and approve) the relevant scientific news, i.e. news involving scientific results, technological upgrade or somehow related to the collaboration work.
- Co-chairing by the CCD could be useful for connecting to strategy and central communications.
- Activities include (but are not limited to): involvement in strategic planning, supporting national lobby work / political outreach, focusing on more detailed scientific news that is interesting for fellow scientists and hardcore ET science fans but goes a bit too deep for most stakeholders and target audiences.

Present situation

In the present situation, there are several entities and projects communicating on behalf of ET. The ET-PP project comprises a limited set of activities to kickstart communication, and has initiated a network of communication professionals across different countries, working together to align efforts. ETO is in the process of establishing a communication office and evolving into a legal entity. And the ETC is launching a Communication and Education Committee (CEC).

Local teams in Italy and the Euregio Meuse-Rhine are concentrating their communication efforts on local and national stakeholders, feasibility studies, and forming host consortia. These teams are closely collaborating with both the ET-PP network and the ETO communication office.

While the foundations are being laid at present, the current situation will develop and grow into a more robust and effective organisation of communication for the medium term. The insights provided above and in Appendix A can serve as guidance. In the end, it is up to management to decide how communication will be organised and this should happen in line with other organisational developments of the Einstein Telescope.

Vision for medium term

The current existing entities could develop into the long term model as follows:

Table 7: Organisation of communication in the medium term

ETO communication office	Will expand and fall under a legal entity. Takes over 'daily running' of supranational activities from ET-PP. Serves as a link to local teams. Can later develop into the CDC, for example by merging with the local comms office of the host country/countries.
CEC scientific collaboration	Will grow into a vibrant committee that stimulates scientists to initiate and coordinate education and outreach activities, and interfaces with the ETO communication office. Antennae in scientific collaboration for science news and developments relevant for communication.
ET-PP	Is now kickstarting communication activities, but will dissolve as such (August 2026). Evolves and expands into international communication network.
Local teams (EMR and Italy)	For now focused on forming host consortia and communication with local/regional/national stakeholders and feasibility studies. After site decision: could merge with ETO communication office into CDC.

For this medium term vision goes the same as for the long term vision: this is not written in stone and has to follow other organisational developments.

MODULE 8: WORKFLOWS AND PROCEDURES

Effective communication is crucial for the success of the ET project, ensuring that key messages about the project's goals, progress, and achievements are conveyed clearly to both internal and external audiences. This chapter outlines the proposed workflows, structures, and procedures for organising the communication activities.

Workflows

1. Content creation and approval:
 - Step 1: Topic proposal
 - Team members propose topics for content.
 - Proposals are reviewed and approved by the content manager.
 - Step 2: Research and drafting
 - Assigned writers conduct research and draft content.
 - Drafts are submitted to the content management tool (Asana).
 - Step 3: Review and feedback
 - Drafts are reviewed by editors.
 - Feedback is provided through Asana.
 - Step 4: Revision
 - Writers revise content based on feedback.
 - Revised drafts are resubmitted for final review.
 - Step 5: Final approval
 - Final drafts are reviewed by the content manager.
 - Approved content is scheduled for publication.
2. Social media management:
 - Step 1: Content calendar planning
 - Social media team plans a content calendar for the month.
 - Topics and posting dates are approved by the communications manager.
 - Step 2: Content creation
 - Social media posts are created and entered into Asana.
 - Step 3: Review and approval
 - Posts are reviewed by the social media manager.
 - Approved posts are scheduled using a social media management tool (e.g., Hootsuite or Buffer).
 - Step 4: Monitoring and engagement
 - Social media team monitors posts and engages with the audience.
 - Engagement metrics are tracked and reported.
3. Event management:
 - Step 1: Event proposal
 - Team members propose events (conferences, workshops, etc.).

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- Proposals are reviewed and approved by the event coordinator.
- Step 2: Planning and logistics
 - Event details (venue, speakers, agenda) are planned.
 - Logistics are coordinated and tracked in Asana.
- Step 3: Promotion
 - Promotional materials are created and reviewed.
 - Event is promoted through various channels (website, social media, newsletters).
- Step 4: Execution
 - Event is executed as planned.
 - Team members ensure smooth operation and handle any issues.
- Step 5: Follow-Up
 - Post-event feedback is collected.
 - A summary report is created and shared with the team.

Procedures

1. Participation in ETC and ETO meetings:
 - Agenda: Review project progress, discuss upcoming content and events, share feedback and ideas.
 - Attendees: Head of comms ETO / Chair CEC / other members if necessary.
2. Weekly meetings for ET-PP WP10 communication team
 - Agenda: Review the previous week's tasks, set goals for the upcoming week, discuss upcoming content and events, share feedback and ideas.
 - Attendees: ET-PP WP10 Communications team.
 - Documentation: Minutes are recorded and shared.
3. Content calendar planning:
 - Frequency: Monthly planning sessions.
 - Details: Topics, deadlines, and responsible team members are assigned.
 - Tools: Asana for tracking progress and deadlines.
4. Review and feedback process:
 - Initial review: Editors review drafts and provide feedback.
 - Revisions: Writers revise content based on feedback.
 - Final approval: Content manager approves final drafts.
 - Tracking: Asana is used to track the status of each piece of content.
5. Performance metrics and reporting:
 - Tracking metrics: Engagement metrics (social media likes, shares, comments), content performance (views, shares), and event attendance.
 - Monthly reports: Communication manager compiles and shares performance reports.
 - Team review: Monthly review meetings to discuss metrics and adjust strategies.

MODULE 9: ESTIMATED BUDGET (FOR ORIENTATION)

The early stage of the ET project is characterised by numerous uncertainties, which make precise cost calculations difficult. Consequently, this SMCP will focus on outlining broad budget categories and providing rough cost estimations. These preliminary estimations (intended for orientation) will serve as an initial framework and will be subject to revision as the project progresses and more detailed financial information becomes available. This approach ensures transparency and flexibility, allowing us to adapt to evolving circumstances.

Table 8: Estimated ET communication budget

Budget category	Description	Short term (I 2023 - II 2026), €, total	Medium term (III 2026 - IV 2028), €, total	Long term (from 2029, €, per year)
Strategy and Planning				
Communication & Outreach officer(s)	Full-time equivalent staff dedicated to communications and outreach efforts: 3 FTE >> 7 FTE	5 FTE	7 FTE	TBD
Support Fund	Discretionary funds to support ad-hoc collaboration activities and initiatives that align with the communication strategy. Travel costs, external services.	10.000	50.000	TBD
Branding and Identity				
Subcontracting graphic designer: logo production	New visual identity for ET; cooperation with a professional graphic designer (external service, tender)	20.000	50.000	TBD
T-shirts, cups, pens, bookmarks, stickers, other	Design, print (external service)	10.000	10.000	TBD
Digital Presence				
Subcontracting web developer: Website	Approach, navigation tree, design, content, maintenance; cooperation with a professional web developers (external service) >> development and enlargement	15.000	60.000	TBD
Social media	Preparations, establish channels (by comm team: FTE, in-kind contribution, included in FTE mentioned above)	- €	- €	- €
Social media content, e.g. short videos, animations	By comm team: FTE, in-kind contribution (included in FTE mentioned above)	- €	- €	- €
ET promotion videos	External service	5.000	30.000	TBD
Animations	External service	5.000	45.000	TBD
Content Creation				
Photos and video	Definition, coordination of production (external service)	15.000	10.000	TBD
Infographics	External service	15.000	5.000	TBD
Leaflets/brochures/magazine (including advocacy	Design, production (external service), content & coordination of production	30.000	15000 €	TBD

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brochure)	mainly in-kind FTE			
Education materials	Development of online educational environment, creation of educational materials for ECR	90.000	60.000	TBD
Translations of outreach materials into all the consortium partner languages	By comm team: FTE, in-kind contribution, Adjustment of layout and production costs to be covered by national comms offices	- €	- €	- €
Events and Exhibitions				
Exhibits (eg interferometer, models, 3D prints)	Design, produce (by comm team: FTE, in-kind contribution; external service)	60.000	60.000	TBD
Booth incl. backdrop and multimedia, screens/laptops	External service, purchasing	5.000	15.000	TBD
Shipping for exhibition	Delivery costs	5.000	5.000	TBD
Participation in conferences	Travel costs	20.000	20.000	TBD
Travel costs - exhibitions	Travel costs	20.000	20.000	TBD
Rollups	Design, content, coordination of production, production (external service)	1.000	1.000	TBD
Media Relations				
Press kit	Development of press kit and maintenance (by comm team: FTE, in-kind contribution)	- €	- €	- €
Media work	Definition of topics, media distribution list, development and maintenance (by comm team: FTE, in-kind contribution)	- €	- €	- €
Repositories and tools				
Repository	Definition of tool and organisation, realisation, maintenance (by comm team: FTE, in-kind contribution; external service)	5.000	5.000	TBD
TOTAL (exl FTE)		331.000	461.000	TBD

We acknowledge that precise budget estimation for a long-term perspective is currently challenging due to many uncertainties and evolving factors. However, we can identify several cost categories that are likely to emerge, and detailed cost estimations will be performed as more information becomes available.

Key expenditure areas will include:

- operational costs, covering long-term staff hiring and training;
- creating new outreach materials, modernising existing platforms, and ongoing maintenance;
- resources for international collaboration, coordinating with global research entities, travels and communication for outreach events, hosting international conferences and workshops;
- resources for public engagement and education efforts: long-term educational programs, outreach materials, public engagement platforms

MODULE 10: TIMELINE AND MILESTONES

For the Einstein Telescope initiative, there are several milestones and events that will require thought-through and coordinated communication. We will keep track of these milestones through a living communication calendar.

Table 9: The ET project milestones preview

Event/ milestone	When	Suggested approach	Angle	Coordination
EMR R&D call awarded in NL	Early September 2024	Highlight message EMR-team on social media	Focus on R&D that will be done and collaboration	ET-EMR comms
Geognostic surveys Sardinia	Mid-September 2024	Highlight message Team Italy on social media	Focus on studies and what they signify	ET Italy
ET Roadmap ready	Early 2025	Launch event inviting relevant stakeholders Infographic/mini-brochure	Be clear about what it is and isn't and why it is relevant.	ETO comms
Next TDR ready	TBD	Low key, + news/blog article with interview	Mainly focus on context and the place of this TDR in the whole process	ETO comms
Launch of new supranational ET website	TBD	Announcement in ET community semi-informally beforehand (network). Go live and send mail to the ET community.	Announce that this is the new 'supranational' website for ET, neutral European point of info for various interested stakeholders.	ET-PP wp10
Launch of new logo and visual identity	TBD	Focus on internal, email + put materials and templates where people can find them. Role for directors and spokespersons.	Announce internally, briefly explain the process + how to use this new logo and visual identity. Refer to templates.	ET-PP wp10
Clarity on Lusatia as possible site	TBD	Announcement on website, social media and reach out to media (through network). Together with ET-Germany	Informative and providing context: what does this mean for ET at large	ETO comms together with ET Germany
Configuration decision	TBD	TBD	TBD	ETO comms
Site decision	TBD	Go big, press	Announce decision +	ETO comms

Strategic Media and Communications Plan

		release/announcement/event, offer interviews to journalists, work together with host team, be aware of what happens after	consequences + hint of future process. Emphasise international community	
Bid (book) procedure ready	TBD	First internally (direct communication with supporting document), then externally (news item)	Neutrally and factually explain procedure	ETO comms
New scientific publication		Depends on publication	Announce news + give context (place of this publication in the whole process and initiative)	ET collaboration
Legal form established	TBD			ETO comms

Communication Timeline and Milestones

A. Short-term perspective (2023-2026)

Table 10: ET communication timeline (2023-2026)

1 of 3																																													
TASKS	2023						2024												2025												2026														
	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12			
WEBPAGE																																													
Preparation/Concept																																													
Procurement																																													
Creation																																													
Approval, improvement																																													
Content maintaining																																													
LOGO																																													
Development																																													
Implementation																																													
SOCIAL MEDIA																																													
Setting up, SM Plan																																													
SM activities																																													

Strategic Media and Communications Plan

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⁴ European Science Open Forum, Annual EPS meeting, British Science Week, European Science Night, Science festivals around Europe.

B. Medium- and long-term perspective (2026-2028; after site decision)

As we transition beyond our short-term goals, the ET Communication Strategy must adapt to the evolving landscape. Planning for the medium and long-term introduces complexity due to uncertainties, particularly the forthcoming decision on the ET construction site. This decision will profoundly impact our future activities and timelines. Nevertheless, the five strategic pillars — **Organise, Brand, Connect, Network and Be a Hub** — will continue to serve as a vital framework guiding our efforts. They will remain relevant as overarching principles, ensuring consistency and coherence in our communication strategy as we navigate through this pivotal phase.

In the **medium term**:

- Our focus will be on continuing to build and maintain our digital presence, particularly through the ET website. This will involve regular updates, enhancements, and expansions to keep our audience engaged and informed. Social media will remain a critical channel for outreach, with ongoing activities and new campaigns aligned with key project milestones.
- Our branding efforts, including the development and management of the ET logo, will also continue, ensuring that our identity evolves alongside the project. Media relations will be another priority, with proactive outreach to maintain strong relationships with journalists and media outlets, providing them with timely and relevant updates about our progress.
- Outreach programs will expand to include more comprehensive initiatives, targeting various community groups and stakeholders. We'll continually update our repository of outreach materials to support these efforts. Education will be a significant focus as well, with advanced lesson plans and materials being developed for secondary education and beyond.
- Internally, we'll refine our communication tools and procedures to ensure efficient information flow within our organisation.

In the **long term** the focus will shift from gaining financial and political support to the construction phase. As ET transitions from concept to reality, it will attract heightened attention — both positive and negative. For communications, this will mean an intensified emphasis on engaging and maintaining dialogue with local and national stakeholders in the host location. Simultaneously, efforts will need to continue to unify the ET community and strengthen the project's international presence and organisational cohesion. The following aspects of our approach are particularly important:

- Adaptability will be key: as the project progresses, we'll need to be flexible and responsive to new developments and changing circumstances.
- Sustainability of our communication efforts will be crucial, maintaining a robust digital presence and continuous media engagement.
- Global outreach will become increasingly important, as the ET project gains

international recognition, and we'll focus on building partnerships and engaging diverse audiences worldwide.

- Innovation will drive our communication strategy, leveraging new technologies to enhance our outreach efforts. Maintaining strong relationships with all stakeholders, including the scientific community, policymakers, industry partners, and the public, will be essential for the long-term success of the ET project.

While it's challenging to create a detailed timeline for these future phases, our commitment to effective and sustainable communication remains strong. We will continuously refine our approach, learning from our experiences and adapting to new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

Towards a unified digital communication framework

The SMCP recognizes the challenge of multiple websites, logos, and entities currently communicating on behalf of ET, which has the potential to cause confusion. To address this, a phased approach can be used with distinct strategies for the current pre-selection phase and the post-selection phase, once a site has been chosen.

1. Pre-Selection phase: fostering alignment and introducing the European brand and 'hub'

At this stage, the main entities communicating on behalf of ET (the potential candidate sites) have very distinct communication goals and are, to some extent, in competition with each other. To reduce potential confusion, the following steps are proposed:

1. **Introducing the new European Einstein Telescope brand and tools and positioning it as a neutral hub**, as described in the SMCP, will significantly reduce confusion. Communication professionals at the two potential sites have already indicated they welcome this and will refer to it, for example by linking to information.
2. All entities must be **consistent and precise** in their branding which means that local teams should present themselves explicitly as local representatives and avoid acting as though they are the Einstein Telescope initiative as a whole. Regular communication between ETO and local teams ensures alignment, with ETO actively monitoring developments and content within ET-PP to uphold consistency.
3. **Fostering cooperation and coordination**: within ET-PP, a network of communication contacts has been established, including representatives from candidate sites. This network facilitates regular exchanges of information, insights, and updates during various meetings, promoting transparency, strengthening the flow of information, and fostering a sense of shared purpose. Representatives from the sites are also actively engaged in WP10 activities, ensuring continuous communication between local and project-wide levels. News relevant for the entire ET community is selected and shared on supranational social media, ensuring visibility at the European level.

4. **Integrating links** between soon-to-be-published European website and local resources will ensure seamless navigation. Local initiatives will be encouraged to provide reciprocal links to the central page, establishing a stronger connection and improving accessibility for users.

By focusing on cooperation, information exchange, and cross-linking, this stage lays the groundwork for a more unified communication strategy while accommodating the diverse goals of the candidate sites.

Table 11: Overview of existing web pages dedicated to ET (status as of January 2025)

Main url	Entity	Main target audiences and role	Content
https://www.einsteintelelescope.eu (not yet online)	Supranational (European) Einstein Telescope	Europe-wide: national and international policymakers, economic stakeholders, broader scientific community, local communities, media, science educators and students	Updates, backgrounds and stories, focused on neutral, connecting and European-wide relevant content. Will link to other websites mentioned below for relevant content.
https://www.einsteintelelescope-emr.eu/en/	Einstein Telescope Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR)	Target audiences: local, regional and (tri)national (the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium). Role: supporting feasibility studies and potential candidacy.	Updates, backgrounds and stories interesting for mentioned target audiences. Will link to a new European website for relevant content.
https://www.einstein-telescope.it/en/home-en/	Einstein Telescope Italy	Target audiences: local, regional, national and potential supporters of candidacy. Role: supporting feasibility studies and potential candidacy.	Updates, backgrounds and stories interesting for mentioned target audiences. Will link to a new European website for relevant content.
https://www.einstein-teleskop.de/	Scientific community in Germany	Target audiences: scientific community and stakeholders in Germany. Role: supporting the ‘ET-community’ in Germany.	Backgrounds and updates that are interesting for mentioned target audiences, mainly focused on the science community. Will link to a new European website for relevant content.
https://www.et-gw.eu/	Einstein Telescope Scientific Collaboration	Target audiences: scientists, engineers (ET-community in Europe). Role: supporting the scientific collaboration and ET community.	Updates and documents interesting for mentioned target audiences, heavy focus on scientific community. Will link to the new European website for relevant content until the new website is fully operational and can take over

Strategic Media and Communications Plan

			this role, at which point the current website will be discontinued.
https://etpp.fae.es/		Target audiences: ET-PP project members and stakeholders. Role: supporting the ET-PP project, will be discontinued after project ends and new European website can take over (part of) this role.	ET-PP project members and interested stakeholders. Will link to a new European website for relevant content.

2. Post-Selection phase: streamlining communication

Once the site characterization process is complete and a location is selected, we foresee that the communication structure will likely transition to a more unified approach:

- A **consolidated official ET website** and set of communication tools is expected to become the central communication point for the project, probably replacing the candidate site-specific pages and tools. These sites and tools would represent the entire project, aiming to ensure consistent messaging and branding. We foresee this will be coordinated by the Central Communication Department that would by this time be fully in place, as part of the broader organisation.
- Although we do not recommend this, former candidate sites and institutional pages could retain their online presence, provided they would shift their focus fully to **localized content**. These pages would likely emphasize regional contributions, such as technological developments or institutional updates related to ET, while providing links back to the official ET website for overarching project information.
- We would recommend the whole of the ET community, including the former ‘local potential sites’ to use the same consistent logo and branding, which means the multitude of logos would come to an end.

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Table 4: Strategies, tools, messages for different target groups

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Table 7: Organisation of communication in the medium term

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Table 9: The ET project milestones preview

Table 10: ET communication timeline (2023-2026)

Table 11: Overview of existing web pages dedicated to ET (status as of January 2025)

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
Version	Publication date	Change
1.0	16-10-2024	Initial final version
2.0	24-02-2025	Modules 5, 6, 10 update

APPENDIX A: Backgrounds organisation of communication

Conclusions after comparing various models of organising communication of scientific infrastructures

(Including CERN, EGO/VIRGO, LISA, LIGO)

What works and could be used for ET	What doesn't work and should be avoided for ET
• Close links between communication and management • Outreach done by scientists, strong interplay between comms and scientists • When everything is connected in a general plan • Close connection to the founding labs • Combination of a communication department that is a hierarchical entity and an international network of comms professionals • In principle: outreach done by scientists, communication by communication professionals • Shared key messages and strong coordination	• Lack of coordination and sharing between different national groups and institutions • Lack of awareness of strategic role of communication amongst part of the scientists • Disconnect between (in part bottom-up organised) outreach and (more top down) organised communication • Too many hierarchical layers between communication and management • Scientists in charge of communication, don't always have time or recognition

Input from ET Collaboration Board – ETO Management team meeting about the organisation of communication

5-3-2024

When are we happy with the organisation of communication?

- When all aspects are considered and respected (internal as well as external communication, right now internal comms seem not to get enough attention).
- When we have an established pattern that people know and can use, when confusion is gone, when we know who to contact
- When the communication message is reflecting what I am doing
- It's a push-pull process, when the comms office is trying to pull info from people, and when I want to push something and there is an established path for this
- I am happy when we see an impact, when the general public is aware and happy that we exist

- When communication is structured
- When I know I am not making any mistakes when I am communicating, when I can be relaxed in communicating internally and externally
- When I know the environment

What do you think ET needs of the organisation of communication?

- One appealing landing page for European communication
- Documents that can be used for external communication
- That things are up to date, and that there is a place to check whether it's up to date
- That we also communicate about things we don't typically communicate but are relevant for stakeholders (we need help to learn this).
- Readiness in order not to miss opportunities
- ET comms office should be aware of what is happening, they should have access to all info to know what's going on

When do you think the communication people would be happy?

- When they are well informed
- When they receive info that has been agreed upon
- When they receive gratification
- Afterwards, Martine (we didn't have time for this): A mix of space and trust (to do our part of the job) and connection and involvement. Clear decision lines.

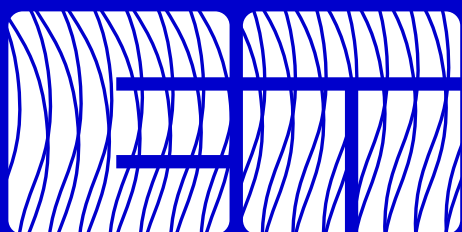
Input from communication side meeting ET symposium

May 2024

I'm happy with the organisation of communication of ET:

- When structure is settled (now it's going in different directions)
- When ET will be realized and all involved partners collaborate
- If I knew what was going on everywhere
- Speak with one coherent voice
- When structures are clear and sub leaders
- When we have good internal comms
- When the role of people is well defined
- (a scientist): if it was easier to balance comms tasks with other tasks
- If communication follows what's happening (and doesn't leave it up to journalists)
- When people are more aware of our function of communication
- Effectiveness
- When we build a structure and base organisation in order to be responsive and flexible

APPENDIX B: Executive Summary



**EINSTEIN
TELESCOPE**

**STRATEGIC MEDIA AND
COMMUNICATIONS
PLAN**
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**Funded by
the European Union**

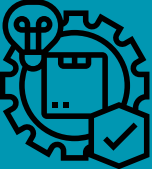
2024

STRATEGY

PROJECT NAME: Preparatory Phase for the Einstein Telescope Gravitational Wave Observatory

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strategic Media and Communication Plan (SMCP) for the Einstein Telescope (ET) is a comprehensive document that outlines a framework for effective communication. It consists of 10 modules that address various aspects of strategic communication, including a SWOT analysis, goals and evaluation methods, stakeholder engagement, target group strategies, communication tools, visual identity, organisational structure, workflows and procedures, budget planning, and a timeline with milestones. This short document provides an overview and summary of the SMCP.

M1. MAIN STRATEGIC PILLARS	M2. GOALS
 ORGANISE	Define and establish roles and a clear workflow for the short term. Suggest a model for organisation in intermediate term (end ET-PP until site decision) and suggest a possible model for long term perspective.
 BRAND	Develop a clear and compelling brand identity. Build the image of a reliable enterprise with a high scientific mission and values and (spin-off) opportunities for industry and society, to align stakeholder perceptions. Raise awareness and visibility of the project, its goals and progress.
 CONNECT	Foster unity and a sense of common purpose among ET participants. Emphasise shared goals and importance of international collaboration. Contribute to offline and online (internal) community building
 NETWORK	Build and strengthen a network of communication professionals and enthusiasts. Enhance the reach and engagement of the ET initiative. Foster collaboration and information sharing within the network.
 BE A HUB	Establish ET as a central, neutral and European information and content hub for all stakeholders, including local communication teams in Italy and the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and those involved in seeking political and financial support for ET in different countries. Support effective dialogue and engagement with industry and stakeholders. Provide reliable and accessible information to the ET community and the public. Enhance education and outreach. Enable the dissemination of knowledge. Support national activities to secure political and financial support from political leaders in Europe.

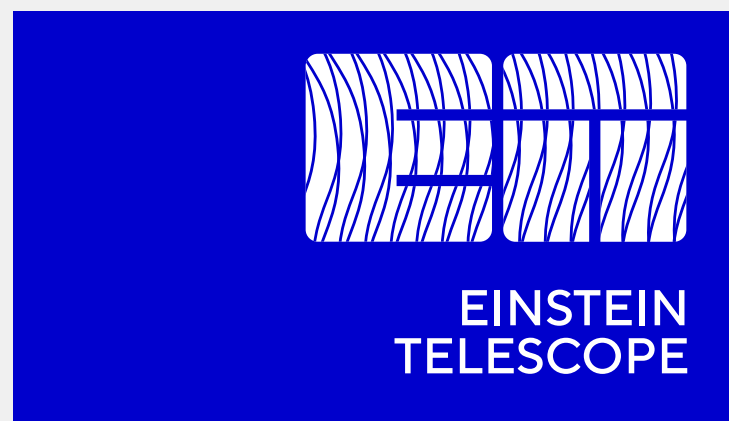
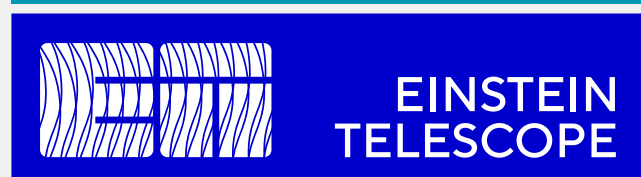
M3. STAKEHOLDERS		
Science & Research	active backers	
Science & Education	active backers/neutral, passive neutral	
Industry	(influential) active backers	
National governments	influential backers	active
Environmental organisations	influential blockers	active
Media	(influential) active backers, influential passive neutral	
General public	influential neutral	passive
Internal	Influential backers	active

M4. TARGET GROUPS		
TG	Strategy	KEY MESSAGE
Policy makers (national and international)	Engagement and awareness	Supporting ET is a strategic opportunity to ensure EU's leadership <...>
Economic stakeholders	Business development and networking	Collaborating with ET can drive innovation, create jobs, and deliver economic benefits <...>
Broader scientific community	Collaboration and networking, awareness	ET will push the boundaries of fundamental science and technology <...>
Local communities	Community engagement, dialogue; Education and outreach	Significant benefits to the community: jobs, education, technology, investment, environment <...>
Relevant (inter)national media	Use network (media relations), content creation	ET is set to revolutionize our understanding of the universe! <...>
Science educators and students	Educational outreach and engagement	Unique opportunity to engage with cutting-edge science and technology <...>

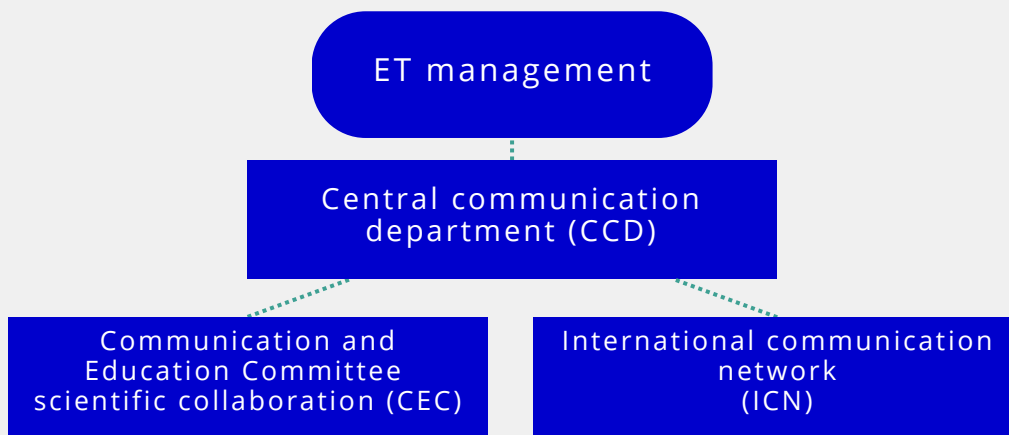
M5. MAIN COMMUNICATION TOOLS

WEB PAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA FaceBook, LinkedIn, Instagram, X, Mastodon, YouTube, ResearchGate
CONTENT MANAGEMENT	REPOSITORY TDS
TRADITIONAL MEDIA	OUTREACH MATERIALS

M6. VISUAL IDENTITY



M7. ORGANISATION (proposed model)



M9. BUDGET

SHORT TERM 2023-2026
MEDIUM TERM 2026-2028
LONG TERM After 2028

M8. WORKFLOWS AND PROCEDURES

CONTENT CREATION AND APPROVAL	ETC and ETO meetings
	Weekly meetings for communication team
SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT	Content calendar planning
	Review and feedback process
EVENT MANAGEMENT	Performance metrics and reporting

M10. TIMELINE

SHORT TERM 2023-2026	Webpage, Logo, Social Media, Media, Outreach, Education, ECR, Internal Communication, Policies & Procedures, Events
MEDIUM TERM 2026-2028	
LONG TERM After 2028	

The Einstein Telescope communication landscape

