

COMMUNICATION

TO THE GENERAL

PUBLIC



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This session addresses the growing need for researchers and innovators to communicate their work clearly and meaningfully to non-specialist audiences. As part of the KALEIDOS training programme, it reinforces the idea that societal impact depends not only on producing knowledge, but also on ensuring it reaches and resonates with the wider public.

OBJECTIVE

To equip participants with the awareness and guidance necessary to communicate their research and innovation projects to the public in clear, accessible, and engaging ways. The session aimed to help participants define their audiences, shape their messages, and choose appropriate channels for impact.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- ◆ Researchers, early-career academics, and innovation professionals.
- ◆ Project teams preparing for public dissemination and stakeholder engagement.
- ◆ Participants of programme seeking to increase the social visibility and relevance of their work.

METHODOLOGY AND CONTENT

The session was delivered as a conceptual and reflective training, designed to foster awareness of how communication to general audiences contributes to societal impact. Rather than offering technical tools, it provided a strategic framework to guide participants in thinking critically about how they communicate their research and innovation.

▶ KEY COMPONENTS OF THE SESSION INCLUDED:

- ◆ **The purpose of public communication:** Clarifying how it differs from academic dissemination and why it matters in the context of Open Science and knowledge valorisation
- ◆ **Audience identification:** Encouraging participants to reflect on who they want to reach (e.g. citizens, policymakers, civil society organisations) and what those audiences value
- ◆ **Message framing:** How to transform complex scientific content into clear, relevant, and emotionally engaging narratives

- ♦ **Channel strategy:** Exploring the pros and cons of formats such as social media, newsletters, podcasts, infographics, videos, and public events
- ♦ **Planning and alignment:** Highlighting how communication efforts should align with project milestones, funding requirements, and stakeholder engagement strategies
- ♦ **Engagement as a two-way process:** Emphasising dialogue, listening, and co-creation rather than one-way broadcasting

The session was supported by examples of real communication materials, reflection prompts, and guiding questions to help participants apply the concepts to their own contexts.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- ♦ Presentation slides with definitions, strategies, and guiding questions. The [slides used in session 8](#) can be found on the KALEIDOS website.
- ♦ Examples of communication formats (e.g. tweets, infographics, public talks)
- ♦ Optional tools for assessing communication impact (e.g. feedback forms, analytics dashboards).

All materials were adaptable for both **face-to-face and online delivery**.

EXERCISES FOR FACE-TO-FACE AND ONLINE SESSIONS

This was a mainly conceptual session. However, participants were encouraged to reflect individually or in small groups on the following questions:

- ♦ Who is your audience?
- ♦ What do you want them to know, feel, or do?
- ♦ How can you make your message accessible and engaging?
- ♦ What channel is most appropriate for your content and audience?

These reflective prompts aimed to stimulate awareness and inspire participants to develop tailored communication strategies for their projects.

OUTCOMES OF THE SESSION SKILLS AND COMPETENCES ADDRESSED

This session increased participants' awareness of the strategic role public communication plays in the valorisation of research and innovation. It helped them understand how to identify target audiences, craft accessible and engaging messages, and choose appropriate channels to reach broader societal groups.

► KEY OUTCOMES

- ◆ Recognition of public communication as an essential component of Open Science and responsible research practices
- ◆ Enhanced ability to differentiate between dissemination, communication, and engagement
- ◆ Greater clarity on how to frame key messages and align them with audience needs
- ◆ Inspiration to apply strategic communication principles in participants' ongoing and future projects

► SKILLS AND COMPETENCES ADDRESSED

The session supported the development of several transversal and Open Science-related competences identified in the D1.1 portfolio, including:

- ◆ **Communicate to the broad public** – This was the session's core objective: to train participants in making science understandable, relevant, and engaging for non-expert audiences.
- ◆ **Promote the transfer of knowledge** – By learning to communicate beyond academia, participants advanced the potential for their research to be taken up and used by society.
- ◆ **Increase impact of science on policy and society** – The ability to connect with general audiences enhances the reach and societal influence of research.
- ◆ **Strategic thinking** – Participants had to frame their messages with purpose and intention, choosing formats and channels appropriate to their communication goals.
- ◆ **Critical thinking** – Emphasis was placed on selecting, simplifying, and shaping content in ways that preserve meaning without losing rigour.
- ◆ **Empathy** – Understanding audience needs, prior knowledge, and perspectives was key to crafting accessible narratives.
- ◆ **Interact professionally** – Researchers practiced interacting with journalists, media professionals, and the public, adapting language and behaviour to context.
- ◆ **Adaptability** – Participants learned to adapt messages and formats to different audiences (e.g. youth, policy makers, media).
- ◆ **Manage learning** – They also developed awareness of how to use communication moments as opportunities for mutual learning between researchers and society.

By reinforcing these competences, the session empowered participants to act as ambassadors of responsible science, capable of building bridges between research and society.



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