

COMMUNICATION TASKS AT PROJECT START-UP

Guidance for beneficiaries



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1 Introduction

Communication plays an inevitable part in our everyday lives, as in the projects' activities and success, regardless of internal or external communication. Project communication is fundamental in increasing awareness about the projects, the Programme and their achievements.

In general, the communication rules of the Programme are detailed in the Implementation Manual, Chapter 5. The legal background is introduced, as well as information is provided about the requirements the projects shall meet. In order to meet those requirements, the Programme provides support to beneficiaries in various ways (see Chapter 5.4 of the Implementation Manual).

While the communication rules are available in the Implementation Manual, this guidance offers beneficiaries helpful tips for the beginning stage of their projects. A project kick-off is a busy and challenging period in terms of communication management too, much of the Programme's communication support is also offered during the start-up phase – related e.g. to the project logo, document templates, the setup of a project webpage. Strongly linked to these tools, further crucial start-up tasks are to be completed, such as selecting an appropriate project photo and developing a strong elevator pitch.

Below, these tools and connections are discussed, and tips are provided.

2 Project logo

The Programme provides the projects with their project logos that are part of a harmonised Interreg branding. The use of the project logo is obligatory.

Logos are designed to meet the most fundamental visibility requirements, namely

- acknowledgement of European Union funding;
- reference to the emblem of the European Union (flag);
- reference to the funding from Interreg.

The legal background and the rules on how to use the logo are detailed in Chapter 5 of the Implementation Manual, while the Programme's Brand Manual provides examples for correct logo use as well as design templates for publications, plaques, posters, promotional materials, etc.

3 Project photo

Selecting a good project photo is a crucial point in project communication activities. The project photo is displayed

- on the project's A3 poster,
- the project webpage, and
- the presentation ppt template,

and likely appears on many other promotional materials. The project photo is used all the way to the project end (and beyond), therefore, it's critical to select a truly appropriate one.



The Programme assists the beneficiaries and takes an active role in selecting the photo. Below, we provide tips and criteria on what a “good” photo means.

The programme suggests selecting a photo from the following websites:

- <https://elements.envato.com/photos> or
- <https://stock.adobe.com/>

since in these cases the programme is able to ensure that images meet all the copyright requirements.

It is also possible for a project to use a photo taken individually with proper justification and proof of owner rights. When considering a photo from another source, please keep in mind the following recommendations:

How to select the project photo	
Legal and Ethical Considerations:	Ensure that all individuals, especially minors, in the photos have given consent for their images to be used, following GDPR guidelines. Respect privacy and dignity. Adhere to copyright regulations.
Context, Clarity and Technical Quality:	Provide context by including relevant backgrounds that enhance the story. Use high-resolution images that are clear and visually appealing. Photos should be of a high enough resolution to be used in print and digital media. Avoid cluttered or distracting backgrounds. Good lighting and focus are essential. Use good composition techniques, such as the rule of thirds, to create balanced and interesting photos.
Captions and Metadata:	Provide detailed captions that explain who, what, where, when, and why. Include copyright information and photographer credits. Add project name, and “InterregATHU” to the caption.

When selecting your project photo, please consider also the following aspects:

How to select the project photo	
Relevance and impact representation:	Photos should clearly showcase the project's activities and their positive effects. They should tell a story, illustrating how the project is making a difference. Aim to evoke emotion or connection with the viewer, showcasing human interest and stories behind the project. Look for images showing moments of engagement to convey the project's dynamic nature.
EU Visibility:	Remember that the project photo will be applied together with elements that acknowledge EU funding, such as the programme- or project logo and the EU emblem. Try to use colours that look good with programme branding.
Focus on people:	People are the core of EU-funded projects. Images should feature beneficiaries and participants, highlighting their engagement and empowerment. Ensure a balance of representation, including diverse groups.
Action over static image:	Photos should show action, and people engaged in the projects' activities, instead of just static shots of people posed around a table. Show people actively involved in project activities. Avoid staged or overly posed shots. Aim for natural, candid images that capture genuine moments.



4 Project poster

All project partners must publicly display at least one poster of a minimum size A3 (or an equivalent electronic display) on their premises with information about the operation highlighting the support from the Funds.

The Programme provides a template for the A3 project poster, in portrait and landscape format. The project photo, the project logo and a QR code leading to the project website are displayed on the poster, therefore, it's crucial to complete these prerequisites well in time.

5 Other document templates

Beyond the project poster, the Programme delivers a comprehensive, brand-harmonized communication package to beneficiaries. This package features a PowerPoint presentation template incorporating project photos and logos, and a Word document template with the project logo. The Brand Manual provides a range of other branded templates and illustrations.

6 Project site on the Programme webpage

Project beneficiaries are provided with dedicated websites on the Programme webpage to showcase their progress through news, events, and achievements. These sites are designed with an eye-catching headline featuring the project logo and the photo, along with the centrally placed elevator pitch. While basic data is automatically updated from Jems, beneficiaries are responsible for filling in a few supplementary fields and keeping the site consistently updated.

The use of the project site is obligatory; however, beneficiaries shall also keep in mind that all project partners have to share information about the project on their websites and social media sites (see rules in the Implementation Manual, section 5.5).

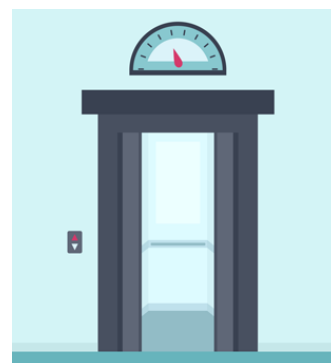
7 Elevator pitch

Sometimes the projects have very short time to make a good impression and to catch the interest of people. Preparing project pitches is a good communication tool to make the best out of a moment, and the Programme opts for the tool *Elevator Pitch* to present its projects.

7.1 What is an elevator pitch?

An elevator pitch is a short description of your project that clearly explains its value and captures the audience's attention. It's usually also the best chance to make a good first impression about the project.

The purpose of the elevator pitch is to attract the interest of the reader in the time you would have if you met this person in the elevator. In the space of 30 - 60 seconds, you summarize your project, its goals and most important expected achievements. The aim is to captivate and convince your audience, you must show all stakeholders that it's worth their time, effort, and resources.



In Interreg AT-HU the elevator pitch appears on the project website to catch the attention of the reader and will be used for other communication purposes. Project partners are closely assisted by the programme bodies in the design of their elevator pitch – the following sections provide detailed instructions about how to do it.

7.2 What makes a successful elevator pitch?

First, here's some general advice to write a good elevator pitch:

Define your project's core idea. To make an effective elevator pitch, you should start by understanding your project's main idea. This means you need to figure out how your project can benefit *people*. Clearly articulate the issue your project addresses and explain how your project solves this problem.

Be concise, clear, and professional: less is more. An elevator pitch lasts for a maximum of 1 minute and generally includes between 400-600 characters. The shorter the better. Avoid repetitions, digressions, and jargon, including the Interreg projects' own language.

Know your audience. To create a powerful elevator pitch, identify exactly who you're targeting, understand your pitch's target audience and use language, style and tone tailored to your audience.

You shall also take care of the structure of the elevator pitch to keep it short, concise and precise. Set up the elevator pitch based on the following components:

Elevator Pitch structure		
FOR	WHO NEED(S)	WE PROVIDE, CREATE, ENABLE
Who is the target group? (clients, customers, partners, politicians, citizens). It's about people, concrete people!	The challenge, the main issue, the main pain point we are solving.	Our product, idea, activity, solution.
WITH OUR HELP, THEY (NOW CAN)	OUR SOLUTION IS BETTER THAN	BECAUSE
Unique, new possibilities & benefits, thanks to our idea. Highlight the change!	Existing competitors or alternatives. Are we replacing an existing solution, or is what we invented disruptive & groundbreaking?	The reason why your solution is better.

7.3 Good examples

Examples in this section illustrate how an elevator pitch of an imaginary project can be designed in the given structure, but tailored to specific issues.

Example 1	
For	people living in poverty in Bangladesh,
who need	to easily get clean water,
we created	a mobile water purification system.
With our help,	their children can now focus on school work instead of spending days sick from bad water - and nights walking hours to carry back water from the dirty river.
Our solution is better than	the existing governmental support,
because	it doesn't rely on one-way bottles, hence fostering autonomy and sustainability.

Example 2	
For	water management departments at the cross-border Lake Neusiedl/Fertő,
who need	resilient data for improved decision-making and strategic development,
we created	an innovative digital tool that delivers an integrated set of information on reeds, sediments and water quality.
With our help,	manage Lake Neusiedl in a complex, more efficient and environmentally friendly way.
Our solution is better than	the existing systems,
because	the developed digital tool provides cross-border, cutting-edge sensor technology, AI-based classification and simulation environments for highly accurate forecasting of reeds and sediment conditions.