FreeTwinEV

Funded by the European Union

Internal communication strategy

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only
and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or The European Commission.
Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Table of contents

Context and purpose 3
2. Communication Objectives 3
3. Implementation Plan 3
4. Communication Protocols 4
5. Communication Channels and Tools 5
6. Monitoring and Evaluation 7
Conclusion 7

Context and purpose

The Centre of European Projects (CEP) at the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (STU) supports researchers and project centres in preparing and implementing international projects, particularly within Horizon Europe.

The internal audit conducted within the FreeTwinEV project identified key communication challenges, including fragmented information flows, inconsistent dissemination practices, and lack of centralised access to information. Communication inefficiencies were found to negatively impact coordination between the rectorate, faculties, and project centres, leading to delays, duplication of work, and reduced effectiveness in project preparation and implementation.

This strategy aims to establish a structured, efficient, and transparent internal communication system, aligned with the roadmap, to ensure timely information flow, improve coordination, and support successful participation in international projects.

2. Communication Objectives

The strategy is guided by the following objectives:

- Ensure timely and targeted dissemination of information to relevant stakeholders
- Establish clear and standardised communication protocols
- Improve access to information through structured tools
- Strengthen coordination and collaboration across faculties and project centres
- Centralise communication of funding opportunities and project-related information
- Increase visibility and understanding of CEP services

3. Implementation Plan

Phase 1: Setup and Communication Tools (03/2025)
Based on the internal audit findings, this phase translates identified communication gaps into practical tools. A contact and competency map of CEPSIT staff will be created to clarify roles and improve information flow. An FAQ system will also be developed to reduce repetitive queries. Outputs include a

published competency map in Microsoft Teams and an initial FAQ section. This phase is implemented by CEP STU.

Phase 2: Protocol Development and Implementation (04–05/2025) Microsoft Teams will become the main communication platform, replacing the STU intranet. Formal communication protocols will be developed, Teams channels will be restructured, and processes integrated into daily use. Outputs include a final protocol document, active Teams channels, regular updates, and staff familiarisation with the new system. Implemented by CEP STU.

Phase 3: Continuous Communication (from 03/2025 onwards) Ongoing communication ensures continuous information flow and engagement. Activities include sharing funding calls, presenting new projects and consortia, organising online events, and regular updates via Teams and the CEP newsletter. Success will be measured through dissemination volume, event participation, and stakeholder engagement. Jointly implemented by CEP STU and project centres.

Phase 4: Review and Improvement (05/2026) This phase evaluates the effectiveness of the communication strategy through stakeholder feedback and analysis. The output is a review report with findings and recommendations, presented at the biannual project centres meeting. Coordinated by CEP STU.

4. Communication Protocols

To address the gaps identified in the audit, the following communication protocols are established in order to ensure timely, targeted, and consistent information flow across STU.

4.1 Dissemination of Funding Calls

Relevant calls will be communicated through Microsoft Teams, specifically via a dedicated channel, ensuring accessibility and transparency. The information will be targeted at project centres, researchers, and other relevant departments. Each communication will follow a standardised format, including a short summary of the call, a link to detailed information, the relevant deadline, and contact details for further support.

4.2 Communication of Events

Communication of events will follow a structured timeline to ensure sufficient awareness and participation. All events will be announced at least two weeks in advance through Microsoft Teams and the CEP newsletter. In addition, a reminder will be sent two to three days before the event to reinforce visibility and maximise attendance.

4.3 Internal Communication Flow

To improve the effectiveness of internal communication, information from CEP will be communicated directly to project centres and responsible staff members. The contact and competency map will be used to identify the appropriate recipients and ensure that communication reaches the relevant individuals without delay. This approach is intended to reduce information loss, improve targeting, and enhance overall efficiency.

5. Communication Channels and Tools

The selection of communication channels reflects the audit findings and responds to the need for more structured, centralised, and accessible communication across STU. The strategy combines digital tools with regular interactive formats in order to ensure efficient information flow, improved coordination, and stronger engagement among researchers, project centres, and administrative staff.

Microsoft Teams channel

Microsoft Teams will serve as the central platform for internal communication and will replace the previously underused STU intranet. All communication related to international projects will be consolidated within Teams, where dedicated channels will be established for funding opportunities, events and announcements, CEP updates, as well as FAQ and support. This will allow for more targeted and timely dissemination of information while enabling direct interaction between CEP, project centres, and researchers. The effectiveness of this channel will be monitored through engagement levels, activity within channels, and responsiveness of users.

CEP Newsletter

The CEP newsletter will complement Teams by providing regular and structured updates to stakeholders. It will include information on funding calls and deadlines, upcoming events, updates on CEP services, and highlights of successful projects.

The newsletter will be distributed periodically, for example on a monthly or bi-monthly basis, ensuring that key information is communicated in a consistent and accessible format. Its effectiveness will be assessed through distribution reach and engagement with the content.

Project Centres Meetings

Regular meetings of project centres will play a key role in strengthening coordination and knowledge sharing across faculties. These meetings will be organised by CEP three times per year. Each meeting will feature a different faculty, which will present its best practices in project management and administration, as well as concrete challenges it faces in practice. This format ensures active participation and creates space for discussion, exchange of experience, and identification of practical solutions. By combining central coordination by CEP with contributions from individual faculties, the meetings will support more consistent approaches across the university. Their effectiveness will be reflected in participation levels, the quality of discussions, and the extent to which shared practices are adopted by other faculties.

Horizon Europe Day

A university-wide event focused on Horizon Europe will be organised to engage the broader research community. This event, in the form of an annual Horizon Europe Day, will be open to all STU researchers and will provide a platform for presenting funding opportunities, introducing CEP services, showcasing successful projects and consortia, and facilitating networking. It will contribute to increasing awareness, strengthening collaboration, and encouraging participation in international projects. Its impact will be monitored through attendance levels, participant feedback, and follow-up engagement.

FAQ System and Structured Information Tools

To improve access to information and reduce repetitive communication, structured tools will be developed and integrated into Microsoft Teams. These will include an FAQ system addressing the most common questions, as well as a contact and competency map identifying responsibilities and key contact persons within CEP and project centres. These tools will provide easily accessible information, support clarity in communication, and reduce the need for repeated

inquiries. Their effectiveness will be monitored through usage rates and a decrease in recurring questions.

LinkedIn

A CEP LinkedIn profile will be established to support external-facing communication and increase the visibility of CEP activities and achievements. The platform will be used to share selected information on funding opportunities, highlight successful projects, promote events such as Horizon Europe Day, and showcase collaboration outcomes. While primarily external in focus, LinkedIn will complement internal communication efforts by reinforcing awareness and engagement among researchers. Its effectiveness will be monitored through follower growth, engagement metrics, and visibility of published content.

Centralised Dissemination of Information

A structured system for the dissemination of funding opportunities and project-related information will be implemented primarily through Microsoft Teams and supported by the CEP newsletter. This approach will ensure that all relevant stakeholders receive consistent, timely, and targeted information, thereby improving transparency and coordination across faculties. Monitoring will focus on the number of disseminated calls, the timeliness of communication, and the level of stakeholder engagement.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of the communication strategy will be monitored using the following indicators:

- Engagement in Teams (activity, responsiveness)
- Number and participation rate of events
- Usage of FAQ system
- Reduction in repetitive inquiries
- Stakeholder feedback

Conclusion

This internal communication strategy provides a structured and implementable framework aligned with the roadmap and audit recommendations. It addresses key challenges such as fragmented communication, lack of centralised information, and absence of clear protocols by introducing standardised communication flows, centralised tools, and measurable processes.

Its implementation will improve coordination across STU, enhance access to information, reduce administrative inefficiencies, and support more effective participation in Horizon Europe and other international programmes.