

# 5 tips

on communication  
in your project application



**Interreg**  
North Sea



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# Communication is a key part of your application

Communication supports project implementation, and is crucial in securing the necessary buy-in for upscaling of project work. This is why communication is important in all Interreg North Sea projects.

Please make sure to cover communication in the following parts of the application form: Work plan (C5); Project approach (C7.3); and Budget (D1). The tips below help you strengthen these parts of your project proposal.

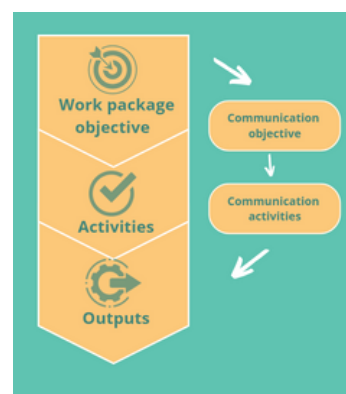
## TIP #1 Use a clear structure for work packages

### Applies to: Section C5 in the application form

In the VIB programme period (2021-2027), you need to consider communication at work package level.

For each work package, you should set up one or more communication objectives supporting the work package.

You must specify activities and target groups for each communication objective.



### Example

A project on sustainable farming has a work package testing new techniques. Examples of relevant communication objectives are:

1) *At least 20 farmers in 3 countries are involved in testing the techniques.* Target group: Farmer associations in all project countries. Communication activities: Producing a leaflet and organising events targeting farmers.

2) *Relevant stakeholders are aware of the test results and their implications.* Target groups: Farmers' associations, media, and policymakers. Activities: Promoting the results, promoting a policy brief, and organising events.

### Common pitfalls

- Target groups and/or activities not specified for each communication objective.
- Communication objectives/activities not clearly linked to the work package.



## TIP #2

## Present a strong communication set-up

### Applies to: Section 7.3 in the application form

Overall project communication is a core project task. This may include, for example, developing a communication plan, branding, and key messages; managing the project website, social media, and a project newsletter; preparing videos and promotional materials; and organising project events.

However, as described above, targeted communication will also take place as part of each work package. In the field C7.3, you should present your overall project communication set-up, including the role and responsibilities of central project communication versus work package communication. A key aspect to cover is the cooperation and alignment between the two levels.

### Common pitfalls

- Insufficient focus on coordination between centralised and work package communication.
- Lack of clarity on the target groups for the overall project communication.
- Omission of obvious target groups or inclusion of target groups with no clear relevance.
- Using C7.3 to repeat specific work package activities covered in C5.

## TIP #3

## Choose the right target groups

### Applies to: Sections C5 and C7.3 in the application form

All North Sea projects must aim to provide durable and transferable work that can be scaled up to create a wider impact. Your choice of target groups must reflect this ambition.

So, please consider who will transfer and adopt the different parts of your work. These are your 'takers' whom you should seek to engage from the early stages of your project.

While you need go beyond one-size-fits-all communication, broader audiences are often relevant target groups, too. We strongly recommend you to also consider engaging with broader groups such as citizens or the mass media.



## TIP #4 Plan enough budget for communication

### Applies to: Section D1 in the application form

Your proposed budget will reflect the level of ambition for communicating your project effectively. Strong project communication will normally require the involvement of at least one communication specialist. We recommend you set aside sufficient funding for a central communication role as well as any external PR costs that you foresee.

Approved projects receive a project website, project logos, and priority-specific visuals free of charge. All other communication costs must be covered by your project budget.

## TIP #5 Check for consistency and alignment

### Applies to: C5, C7.3 and D1 in the application form

Finally, you should make sure that the three parts of the application form hold together.

- Communication must support project activities and the project's overall ambitions.
- The three parts of your application that cover communication should be mutually aligned.
- The budget (D1) should reflect the level of ambition set out in C5 and C7.3.

#### Hitting the right balance

You should provide enough detail to show that you have thought through your communication set-up, target groups, and main activities. On the other hand, too detailed planning at the application stage means you lose flexibility during the project implementation.

The best approach is therefore to provide some detail while keeping your descriptions broad enough to allow you to adjust your communication approach as you go along.



