



European  
IPR Helpdesk



[www.iprhelpdesk.eu](http://www.iprhelpdesk.eu)

**Making the Most of Your H2020 Project**  
Boosting the impact of your project through effective  
communication, dissemination and exploitation

### **Acknowledgements**

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## Opening words

One of the main goals of the European IPR Helpdesk is to offer a full range of capacity building and training measures to (potential) beneficiaries of EU-funded projects. We want to provide them with the best possible support, so that they can develop their own intellectual property (IP) management strategies and processes. That is why our training measures cover a full range of levels and topics: from basic to more advanced training, from specialised IP issues to cross-cutting topics.

In our training workshops when we address exploitation in Horizon 2020 projects, we have often been asked how IP management relates to **communication, dissemination and exploitation** – crucial horizontal activities which must be taken up in EU-funded research projects. It became clear that there was some confusion about these terms and also that there was a strong interest on how they should be addressed during the proposal and implementation phase of a project.

Although communication, dissemination and exploitation are obviously connected in one way or another, a reference document was missing that tied them together on the one hand, but also helped to better define the individual terms on the other. In line with our goal to offer the best possible support to our European IPR Helpdesk users, we set out to fill this information gap.

Our initiative was encouraged and supported by members from the EC's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation – in particular the Directorate J – Common Support Centre and was created in a collaborative effort. Together with already available online manuals and guides that cover the individual topics more specifically, we hope that it will finally help clarify the link between communication, dissemination and exploitation.

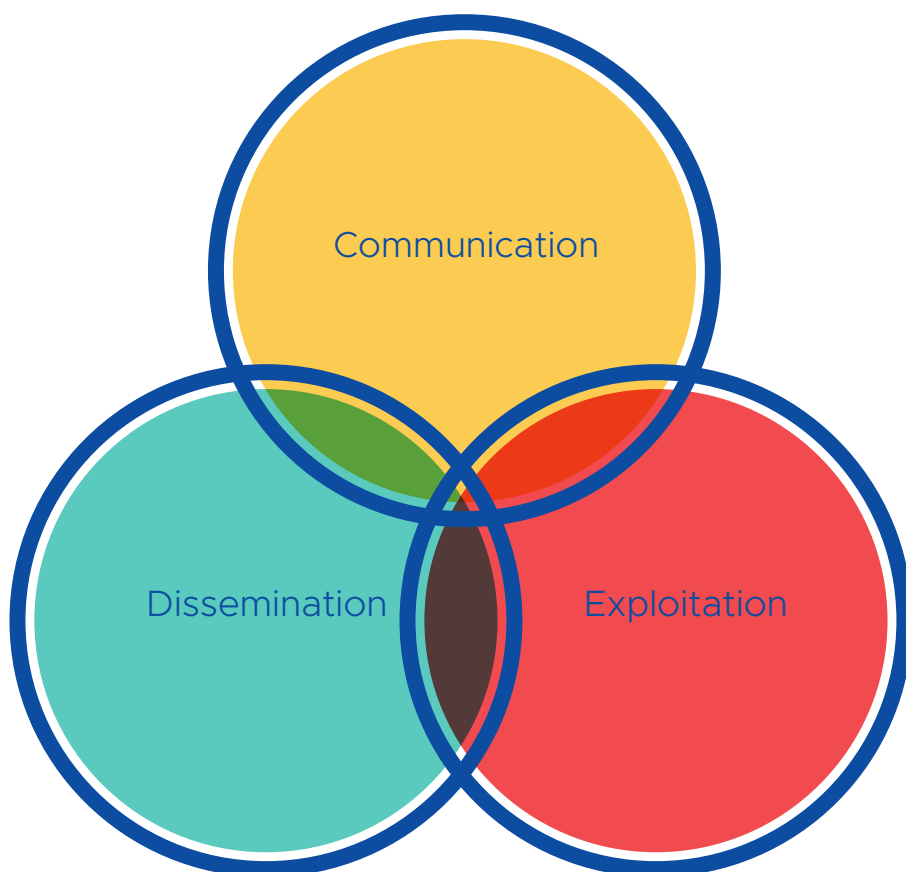
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# Introduction



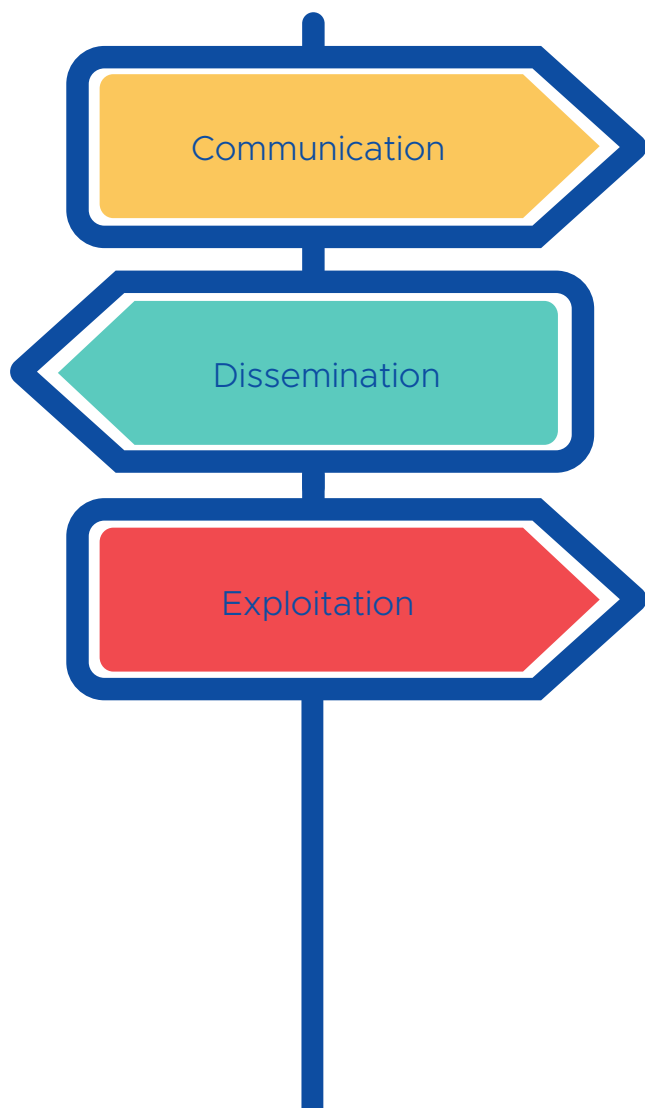
**Excellent science needs effective communication and dissemination.** Bringing research and its outcomes to the attention of non-scientific audiences, scientific peers, potential business partners or policymakers fosters collaboration and innovation. Strategic communication and dissemination will help to explain the wider societal relevance of science, build support for future research and innovation funding, ensure uptake of results within the scientific community, and open up potential business opportunities for novel products or services. Overall, it helps to **increase the impact of research and innovation in many ways.**

Yet, there is still some **confusion about what the terms communication, dissemination and exploitation in Horizon 2020 really mean:** how do these terms and their corresponding activities relate to each other, and how can they be distinguished from one another?

This document will **clarify the terminology** by illustrating the differences between communication, dissemination and exploitation, and point out the areas they have in common. It is intended as an introduction, and will provide a helpful overview when developing your project's outreach and exploitation strategy and plan.

In addition to this concise document **there already exists a series of useful documents** such as online manuals and guides that provide further information on how to implement these actions, a list is included at the end of this document.

# Communication, Dissemination, Exploitation: Why should I care?






## Making an Impact

Often when writing a proposal, project teams consider communication, dissemination and exploitation as abstract measures that are only marginally linked to their research activities; or they see peer-reviewed publications as the only “real” way to communicate their work. Any activities concerning potential exploitation, communication to the broader public or dissemination of results from their work beyond the research community are sometimes considered as pro forma – they have to be mentioned in the proposal, but are seen to have no added value. Consequently, the activities planned in these areas often result in non-strategic, ad hoc efforts lacking clearly defined objectives and targets.

The extent to which projects define their approach towards communication, dissemination and exploitation activities varies depending on the project, and so a one-fits-all solution is neither reasonable nor desirable. Project teams aiming for a successful Horizon 2020 project need to reflect and address communication, dissemination and exploitation through an integrated approach that strategically targets these activities, and which is fully embedded in the project’s work plan.

Effective plans for communication, dissemination and exploitation are important for successful project evaluation; particularly given the increased focus that the Horizon 2020 programme places on activities which demonstrate and maximise the societal and economic impact of Research & Innovation (R&I) funding. Communication activities to promote the project itself and its success, as well as the dissemination and exploitation of results should thus be key components of every Horizon 2020 project. Their successful implementation will **bring EU-funded research and its results to the attention of multiple audiences, thus helping to drive competitiveness and growth in Europe and address societal challenges.**

An increased awareness of EU-funded R&I activities and project results will directly and indirectly provide many benefits; for example, by helping to secure or increase research and innovation funding, establish new research or business contacts, and stimulate further research.



Impact is not limited to economic or commercial aspects; it can also be societal, environmental, technical, educational, or scientific.

<b>Benefits ☺</b> If strategy for effective Comm/Diss/Ex is in place	<b>Risks ☹</b> If strategy for effective Comm/Diss/Ex is missing
<b>Improve your proposal's chances of success.</b>	<b>Lower prospects of success for your proposal.</b>
<b>Increase the visibility of your research, enhance your reputation and help your efforts gain understanding and support (also financially)</b> , by presenting your work and its results not only to the scientific community, but also to potential industrial partners, policymakers and society at large.	<b>Recognition and reputation of your work remains limited</b> to a small circle of experts. Advancing your field of research has less traction.
<b>Sharpen your profile within the scientific community</b> and attract talented scientists/students for your own or partner institution(s).	<b>Needless duplication of your resources and spending of public funds</b> (i.e. limited "return on investment" of public R&I funding).
<b>Tap into additional funding sources</b> by explaining how your project successfully tackles current issues and challenges, and how this positively affects our daily lives (e.g. by creating new jobs, improving public knowledge, influencing a change in policy).	<b>Little awareness of the needs and significance of your research</b> on policy level, potentially resulting in limited public funding/investment.
<b>Discover novel approaches and solutions</b> by promoting the exchange of knowledge on all levels – cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary.	<b>Untapped potential</b> of your project results and data. New knowledge and insights, which could lead to whole new fields of application are lost.
<b>Attract potential users of the project results</b> – including business partners for commercial exploitation, but also other users such as researchers, educators, policymakers, etc.	<b>Difficulties to find partners</b> who might take an interest in (commercially) exploiting your results, leading to missed opportunities for commercialisation of project results.
<b>Help strengthen the research and innovation landscape in Europe</b> by ensuring knowledge transfer, uptake and commercialisation of novel technologies and results by industry, decision makers and the scientific community.	Europe's <b>full innovation potential remains untapped.</b>
<b>Spread knowledge and allow that knowledge to be built upon</b> by making your project results openly available and searchable under fair conditions.	<b>Uphold barriers</b> that prevent others from gaining access to research publications and data they can check and re-use.


## Contractual Obligations

A number of obligations related to communication, dissemination and exploitation are formally outlined in different Horizon 2020 documents; such as the Rules of Participation, the proposal template for Research & Innovation Actions (RIA)/Innovation Actions (IA), or the respective Model Grant Agreement.

More specifically, by signing the EC Grant Agreement participants agree to:

- **Promote the action and its results**, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in a strategic and effective manner and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange (**Article 38** of the Model Grant Agreement)
- **Disseminate results** – as soon as possible – through appropriate means, including in scientific publications (**Article 29** of the Model Grant Agreement)
- **Ensure open access** (free of charge, online access for any user) to all peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to its results (**Article 29** of the Model Grant Agreement)
- **Take measures aiming to ensure ‘exploitation’ of the results** – up to four years after the end of the project – by using them in further research activities; developing, creating or marketing a product or process; creating and providing a service, or using them in standardisation activities (**Article 28** of the Model Grant Agreement)
- **Acknowledge EU funding** in all communication, dissemination and exploitation activities (including IPR protection and standards) as well as on all equipment, infrastructure and major results financed by the action by using the wording and criteria specified in the Grant Agreement (Articles 27, 28, 29, 38).

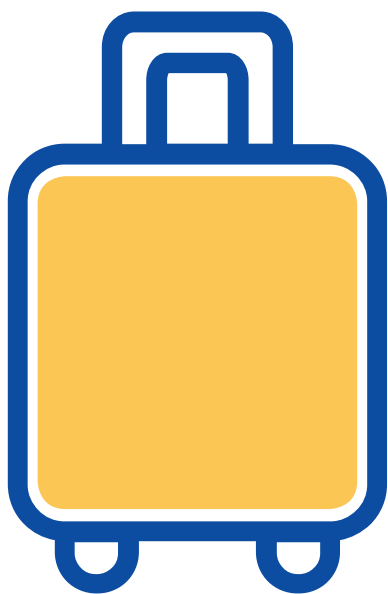
It goes without saying, that participants may opt out of making information/results openly available if there are legitimate reasons; such as for commercial confidentiality, privacy or security requirements, prior to filing a patent, etc.



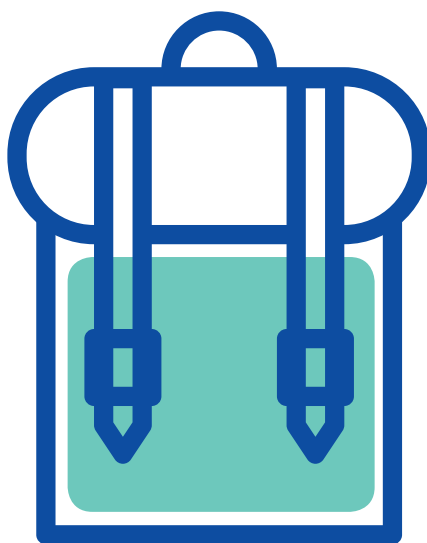
Don't forget to mention the funding acknowledgement: "This project has received funding from the [European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme][Euratom research and training programme 2014-2018] under grant agreement No [number]"

## Central Definitions

Understanding the concepts behind communication, dissemination and exploitation, will help to create successful and targeted action plans.








Communication



Dissemination



Exploitation

Communication	Dissemination	Exploitation	
<p>“Communication on projects is a strategically planned process that starts at the outset of the action and continues throughout its entire lifetime, aimed at promoting the action and its results. It requires strategic and targeted measures for communicating about (i) the action and (ii) its results to a multitude of audiences, including the media and the public and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange.”</p> <p>(Source: EC Research &amp; Innovation Participant Portal Glossary/Reference Terms)</p>	<p>“The public disclosure of the results by any appropriate means (other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results), including by scientific publications in any medium.”</p> <p>(Source: EC Research &amp; Innovation Participant Portal Glossary/Reference Terms)</p>	<p>“The utilisation of results in further research activities other than those covered by the action concerned, or in developing, creating and marketing a product or process, or in creating and providing a service, or in standardisation activities.”</p> <p>(Source: EC Research &amp; Innovation Participant Portal Glossary/Reference Terms)</p>	 Definition
<p><b>Reach out to society and show the impact and benefits</b> of EU-funded R&amp;I activities, e.g. by addressing and providing possible solutions to fundamental societal challenges.</p>	<p><b>Transfer knowledge &amp; results</b> with the aim to enable others to use and take up results, thus maximising the impact of EU-funded research.</p>	<p><b>Effectively use project results</b> through scientific, economic, political or societal exploitation routes aiming to turn R&amp;I actions into concrete value and impact for society.</p>	 Objective
<p><b>Inform</b> about and <b>promote</b> the project AND its results/success.</p>	<p><b>Describe</b> and <b>ensure results available</b> for others to <b>USE</b> → focus on results only!</p>	<p><b>Make concrete use</b> of research results (not restricted to commercial use.)</p>	 Focus
<p>Multiple audiences beyond the project’s own community incl. media and the broad public.</p>	<p>Audiences that may take an interest in the potential <b>USE</b> of the results (e.g. scientific community, industrial partner, policymakers).</p>	<p>People/organisations including project partners themselves that make concrete use of the project results, as well as user groups outside the project.</p>	 Target Audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules for Participants</li> <li>• RIA &amp; IA Proposal Template 2.2 b)</li> <li>• Grant Agreement Art. 38.1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules for Participants</li> <li>• RIA &amp; IA Proposal Template 2.2 a)</li> <li>• Grant Agreement Art. 29</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules for Participants</li> <li>• RIA &amp; IA Proposal Template 1.1, 2.1, 2.2 a)</li> <li>• Grant Agreement Art. 28</li> </ul>	 Formal Obligations

The **boundaries between certain activities – in particular with regard to communication actions and dissemination – are often blurry or can sometimes overlap**. For instance, a magazine article highlighting the project's work and achievements that is written for communication purposes could end up in the hands of potential stakeholders outside the project and trigger interest in using some of the results. The initial communication tool has now become a dissemination tool as well. This illustrates how certain tools and activities can oscillate between communication and dissemination, depending on the target group and content.

The interplay between dissemination and exploitation is closely linked on the other hand. Although they can be examined separately, they often belong together, since one drives the other – and vice versa. Demonstration activities, prototype development, data and open access

management, knowledge and innovation management, IP protection strategies and active stakeholder engagement, are all examples that further facilitate and accelerate the process between both fields.

**Communication, dissemination and exploitation all aim to help maximise the impact of R&I actions. What differentiates them from one another are the objectives, focus and target groups they address.**

### **What are Project Results?**

One cannot speak about the concepts of communication, dissemination and exploitation in Horizon 2020 projects without clarifying the term project results. It is a central reference point in all three definitions, and it is fundamental when implementing any relevant activities.

There is a series of helpful publications as well as videos dealing with different communication activities and measures:

- **Horizon 2020 Participant Portal Online Manual “Communicating Your Project”**
- **Guide: Communicating EU Research & Innovation**
- **Guide: The EU Guide to Science Communication**
- **Webinar: 60-minute Communication Workout**



In the Horizon 2020 programme project results are defined as:

***“Any tangible or intangible output of the action, such as data, knowledge and information whatever their form or nature, whether or not they can be protected, which are generated in the action as well as any attached rights, including intellectual property rights.”***

(Source: EC Research & Innovation Participant Portal Glossary/Reference Terms)

In a nutshell, results encompass all project outcomes that may be used by the project partners or other relevant stakeholders outside the project. They have the potential to be either commercially exploited (e.g. concrete products or services) or lay the foundation for further research, work or innovations (e.g. novel knowledge, insights, technologies, methods, data).

Stakeholders outside the project need to be made aware of results that will not be exploited or used solely by the project partners themselves. Therefore, focussed communication and dissemination actions surrounding these results are crucial to maximise their potential impact.

An overall strategy for the communication, dissemination and exploitation of planned and future project results should be drafted during the proposal stage, and continue to be regularly addressed throughout the course of the project.

### **What about Open Access?**

The European Commission promotes the overall concept of Open Research by supporting open access in its framework programmes, aiming to improve science and innovation in the public and private sectors. By making project results and data accessible to all societal actors, other researchers, innovators and the public, can find and re-use these for their own specific needs. In this way further research is encouraged, novel solutions can be found, and complex challenges can be tackled. It's about making research outputs more transparent and their use more efficient.

In addition to providing open access to peer-reviewed publications, the European Commission has enabled access to and reuse of research data

Peer-reviewed publications (Open Access)	Research Data (Open Data)
<p><b>Mandatory</b> Each Horizon 2020 beneficiary must ensure open access to peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to results of the project.</p> <p>It is not, however, an obligation to publish and does not override any prior decisions to seek IP protection.</p>	<p>A flexible pilot under Horizon 2020 called the Open Research Data Pilot (ORD Pilot) gives open access to research data by default.</p> <p><b>“As open as possible, as closed as necessary.”</b> Grantees have the possibility to opt out at any stage, but need to say why.</p>
<p>Self-Archiving &gt; <b>GREEN</b> Open Access The final peer-reviewed publication is deposited in an online repository of choice, often after an embargo period set by the publisher. Beneficiaries must ensure open access to the publication within a maximum of six months (twelve months in the social sciences and humanities).</p> <p>Open Access Publishing &gt; <b>GOLD</b> Open Access Publication in Open Access journals. Open access to the peer-reviewed publication is provided immediately, often by paying a fee to the publisher. Note that a copy of the publication still needs to be deposited in a repository.</p>	<p>Deposit data in a repository of choice.</p> <p>Open access to data underlying the consortium’s scientific publications, as well as any other research data of choice.</p> <p>H2020 projects must have a <b>Data Management Plan (DMP)</b>, unless they have opted out of the ORD Pilot.</p>
<p>Open access costs are eligible for funding, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions specified in the Grant Agreement.</p>	<p>Data management costs are fully eligible for funding, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions specified in the Grant Agreement.</p>

generated by Horizon 2020 projects through the Open Research Data Pilot (ORD Pilot). From 2017 onwards the pilot is being extended to cover all thematic areas, making open access the default setting for research data generated in Horizon 2020. Participating in the ORD Pilot should give open access to any related research data that would allow others to validate the



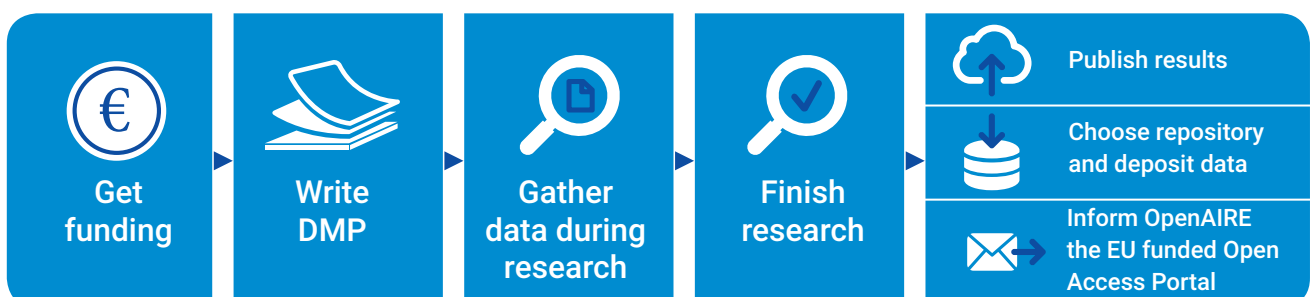
results presented in the scientific publications. To be able to handle the collected, processed and/or generated data in your Horizon 2020 project, as well as any other data you wish to provide, a **Data Management Plan (DMP) is required for all projects participating in the extended ORD Pilot**. It should ensure that the relevant data is **findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable** or “**FAIR**”, as well as define the procedures involved in capturing, handling and managing the research data throughout the project’s life cycle and beyond.

Open access will not affect the intellectual property generated by your research results. The decision on whether to seek protection for intellectual property rights is made before deciding whether or not to publish open access. Therefore research results can only be published after an application for IP protection (e.g. patent application) has been filed. Similarly, the author will retain the publication’s copyright, even if it is open access. The protection of research results and their commercial exploitation (for example through patenting) is still guaranteed.

To find out more on how to setup your Data Management Plan, please take a look at the [Online Manual on Data Management](#), which also provides a template in its Annex 1.

However, not all data can be open. Projects can opt out at any stage (either before or after signing the Grant Agreement) for legitimate reasons and so free themselves retroactively from the obligations associated with the conditions. Among other reasons, participation in the ORD Pilot might be incompatible with the obligation to protect results that can reasonably be expected to be commercially or industrially exploited. Even if you decide to opt out of the ORD Pilot, it is still advisable to setup and implement a DMP for your project, as part of your overall communication, dissemination and exploitation strategy.

### ***Make your research data available FAIR and free of charge!***

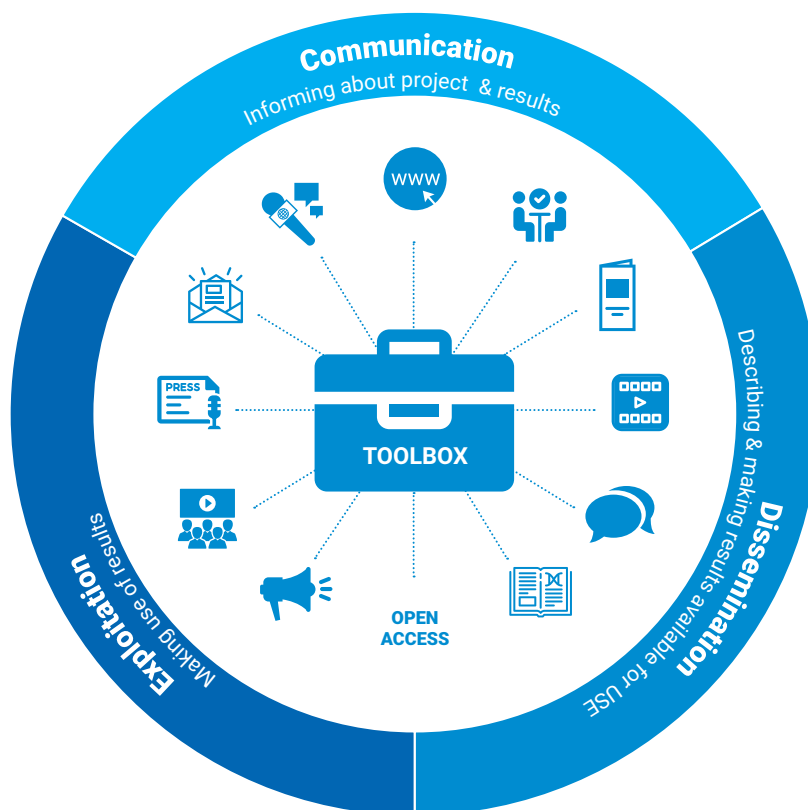


## Ready, Set, Action



A wide range of activities can be carried out for communication, dissemination and exploitation. The key here is to stay in line with the strategic plan of the project and select the activities that are best suited to achieve its objectives. In other words, **first define the purpose of the communication, dissemination and/or exploitation measure, and who is addressed by it, then identify the tool and carry out the activity that will optimally convey your message.**

***Choose the right tools to address the challenges of the call and contribute to the expected impact!***



There are many tools that can be used for communication, dissemination and exploitation purposes. Some, however, are specific to the dissemination of results such as scientific publications, and sharing results in an online repository; and there are other tools, such as IP Rights, that may be used to specifically support commercial exploitation: i.e. patents, design rights, utility models, database rights, copyright, trademarks, and others.

## 1. Timing

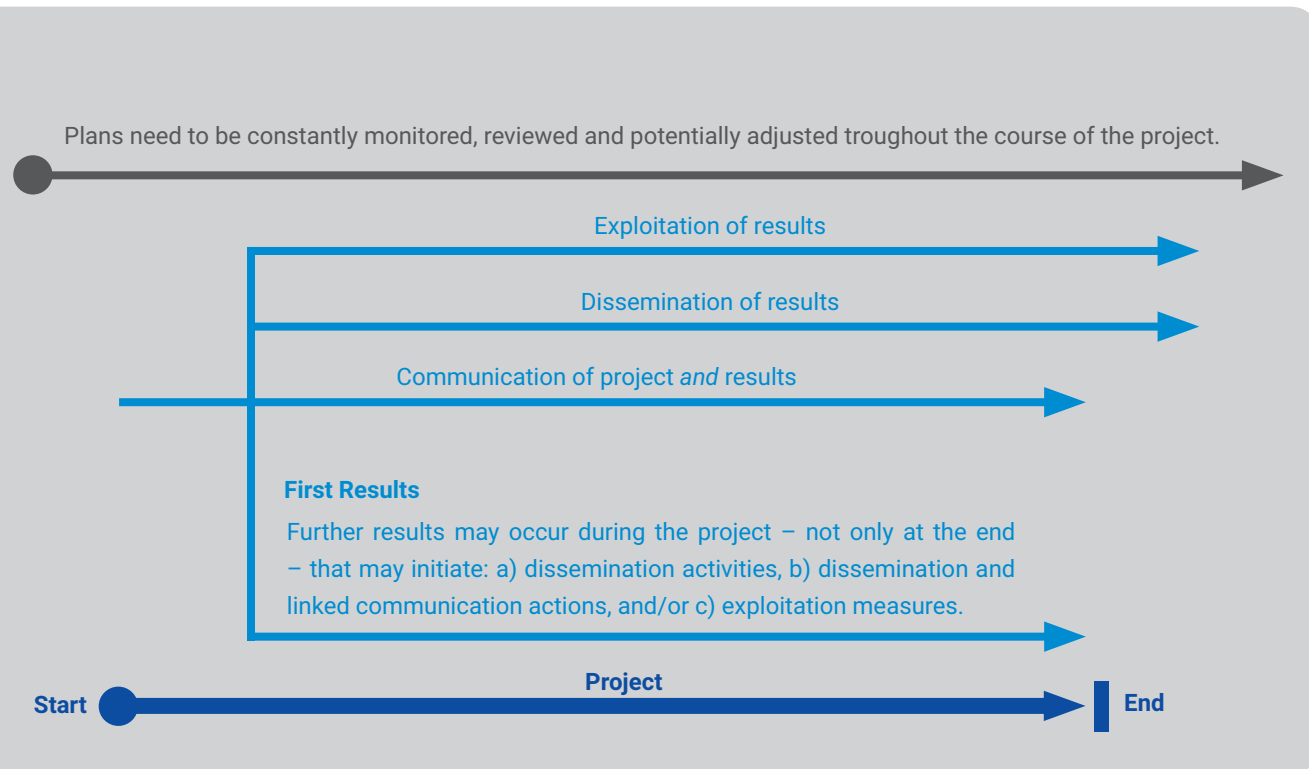
The strategic planning of communication actions together with appropriate dissemination and exploitation measures **begins during the proposal stage** of a project. Once it is running, the **communication actions will accompany the R&I work of the project throughout its duration**, while activities related to the dissemination and exploitation of results often continue even after the project has ended.

Project outputs become available throughout the course of project – not only towards the end – therefore it is essential to **closely capture, monitor and manage results** (including the accompanying IP Rights) over the entire lifetime of the project and adjust communication activities, as well as dissemination and exploitation plans accordingly. Regularly keeping track of the project's progress will not only help capture results once they are achieved, but will also help identify possible outcomes that were not originally foreseen at the start of the project. These unforeseen results should be closely evaluated to determine their exploitation potential and further application in various fields.

Even though the dissemination and exploitation of results is relevant during the project, these activities usually gain more momentum towards the end of the project when the bulk of expected outcomes typically emerges, and can be brought together to address the call challenges and expected impacts. Consequently, there must be a viable plan in place to address what happens after the project has come to a close – even more so, since project partners are contractually obliged to use their best efforts to exploit the results four years after project completion. **Dissemination and exploitation measures thus remain relevant beyond the project's end**: results should continue to be publicised, ideally creating an increasing awareness and interest amongst potential users, which in turn fuels further exploitation of results.

### *During Proposal Submission*

At the proposal stage **the focus is on the thorough analysis and assessment of how your project and the expected results will address the challenges and deliver the expected impact** outlined in the call topic – during and beyond the project's lifetime. This could for example be done via a structured



assessment of the various determinants for the successful delivery of expected impacts, such as market analyses, user definition and/or regulatory considerations. Based on the outcomes of this analysis you will not only be able to convincingly demonstrate how your project will generate added value and benefits, but consequently, you will also be able to strategically plan all related communication, dissemination and exploitation activities. Furthermore, this analysis can then be further elaborated and updated during the course of the project.

### ***Throughout Project Duration***

While strategic assessment and planning take centre stage during the proposal writing phase, **once your project has successfully been granted, it is all about putting your concepts into practice, monitoring progress and evaluating your activities. Project participants should not assume that once the plan has been approved, it is final and definite.** Especially since “only” a draft of the intended communication measures and dissemination and exploitation plan(s) is required at the beginning. During the project’s lifetime,

market needs or interests of potential stakeholders may change, results that were not foreseen in the planning phase can develop, or any other number of unknown variables can come up, that require a close review and regular updates/adjustments of the plans for communication, dissemination and exploitation.

In fact, since regular updates and adjustments to the communication, dissemination and exploitation plans are expected, project teams are requested to document these in their periodic project reports. Hence, a structured approach towards communication, dissemination and in particular exploitation during the proposal phase enables a thorough and well-documented management of these issues during the project. One possibility could be to document all topics discussed above via a template or canvas which can then be updated on a regular basis.

### ***Integrated Approach***

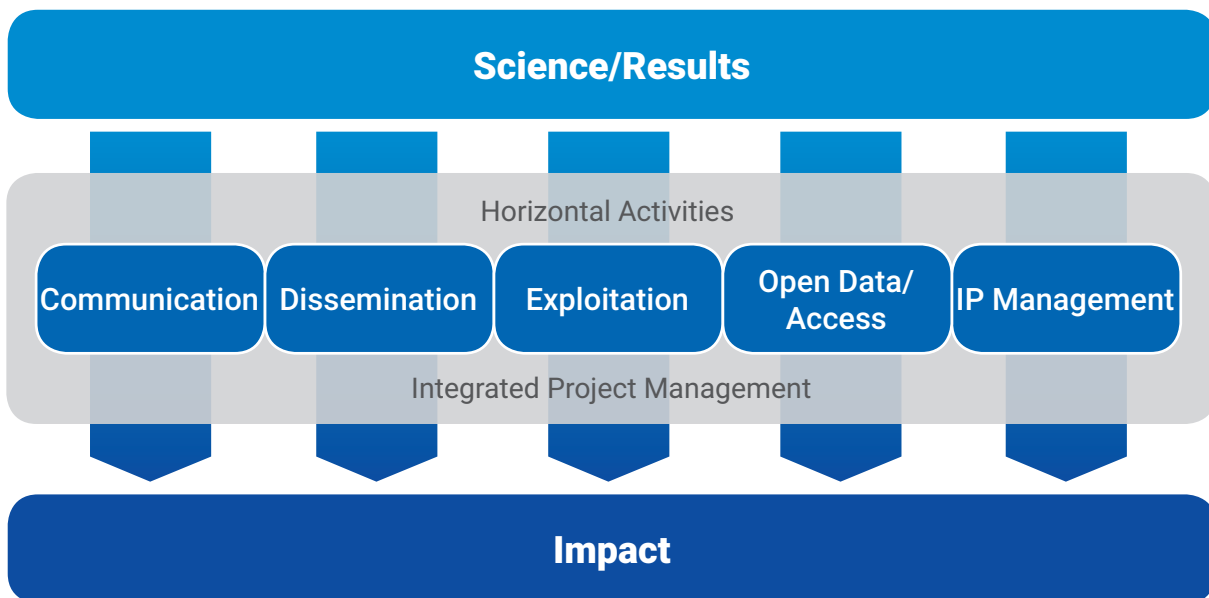
Overall, it takes an integrated approach to effectively carry out communication, dissemination and exploitation activities. One that enables you to capture and monitor project results, select the right tools to inform about them, and manage open access while at the same time considering a strategy for IP protection, if there are commercial opportunities. It should promote your project on many levels, reaching out to both a wider audience and interested parties, while exploring possible exploitation routes.

An approach that targets all of these objectives needs to be closely tied in with your project's actual work plan; in other words, it should be integrated in the project's day-to-day activities. For example, the regular monitoring of tasks and objectives allows you to identify project results. Also, maintaining an open and regular communication amongst all partners lets you encourage and keep track of outreach activities.

**Communication, dissemination and exploitation measures should therefore be understood as "horizontal issues" that run alongside and complement research activities throughout the project's life cycle**, with the main goal to maximise the expected impact of the call topic. It is thus advisable to implement a structured and systematic approach to plan, coordinate, monitor, and assess all impact-related activities.

For example, a model canvas can help the consortium establish standards and processes that capture and assess project outputs. This will ensure an early identification of potential opportunities, conflicts, barriers and bottlenecks, thus laying the foundation for successful dissemination and exploitation activities.

*Keeping track of communication, dissemination and exploitation means keeping track of your project!*



For further details on IP issues and management in Horizon 2020 projects, please take a look at: "Your Guide to IP in Horizon 2020"



## 2. Situation Analysis

Given the importance and different character project results may have in each individual R&I endeavour, it is essential for project consortia to carefully consider the following aspects – not only in the preparation phase, but throughout the project's lifetime:

1. **What are the (expected) key exploitable results of the project?** How is the value for further use going to be assessed?
2. Which **IP protection and IP management** measures have been laid down for expected results?
3. How will project partners address the **issue of (joint) ownership of results** and the **management of exploitation activities** – especially for jointly owned results?
4. **How are the results going to be used** to a) address the call topic challenges and expected impacts, and b) for further uses?
5. **Who are the main innovators** within the consortium to drive commercial exploitation?
6. Which (other) results will be produced and **could be exploited by people or organisations outside the project – under which terms and conditions?**
7. **What are potential additional application areas** (even outside the project's field of research) that could benefit from its developments?
8. What **impact do your results have for everyday life?** How could society benefit from your work? What would be the consequences for future policymaking?
9. **What are the market & customers' needs and wants?**
10. What are the **key messages** related to your results that you wish to communicate? (e.g. What is new? Why is it important?) What are your objectives and who are your target **audiences you want to reach with your communication activities**, and consequently, what are the **appropriate communication tools?**



In order to effectively capture the current knowledge and information available during the proposal stage, it is advisable to structure the various topics (see below) in a comprehensive manner, making use of available templates and guidance documents where relevant.

Additionally, this ensures that any predicted outcomes can be monitored and adjusted later during the course of the project.

- **Assess the “State of the Art”** (i.e. gather information):
  - What is the current state of knowledge/scientific literature?
  - What are the results of a patent search – if relevant?
  - What knowledge, technologies and IPR will partners bring to the project (i.e. background-related patents or other IP Rights)?
  - Which related R&I projects already exist and what are their central outcomes?
  - To what extent will the project build on existing state of the art technologies and what is the envisioned progress beyond the state of the art?
  
- **Reflect on the innovation potential and capacity** of your project:
  - What are the expected results, and how will they address the specific challenges of the call topic and contribute to the expected impacts?
  - To what extent will the expected outputs deliver benefits?
  - Will project results be capable of stimulating further innovation and use?
  
- **Evaluate how your project is complementary to other EU-funded or national projects:**
  - How can my consortium best work with complementary EU project(s)?
  - How can the project gain leverage from a possible collaboration with national or EU-funded project(s)?

**Innovation Potential** = Potential of the results to deliver innovations and expected impacts relevant to the call.

**Innovation Capacity** = Capacity of the results to be used to develop other innovations not mentioned in the call, i.e. “other substantial impacts”.



- **Evaluate the market potential** of your results:
  - Who are potential users/stakeholders? Do you know their needs and demands?
  - What are the user's gains? What are their gains from your solution?
  - What are the potential markets?
  - Who is the competition and what solutions exist already?
  - What is the unique selling proposition of your expected outputs, and why is it "better"?
- **Analyse potential barriers and enablers** for further use of the project results:
  - Are there any critical ethical, privacy, safety or security issues?
  - Do you address all relevant regulatory aspects or standards/norms?
  - Did you carefully consider Freedom-To-Operate issues to avoid that exploitation activities can be done without infringing on intellectual property rights of others?
  - Have (joint) ownership issues, access rights and use of background/ results been discussed and agreed upon amongst consortium partners?
- **Develop first approaches towards a potential exploitation strategy:**
  - What are the exploitation interests of the project partners?
  - What are possible exploitation routes?
  - What are appropriate exploitation activities during the project's lifetime and beyond?
- **Outline the broader socio-economic and policy context** of your project, and **demonstrate how the expected results may influence future policymaking.**

Of course, depending on each specific project proposal and the type of action (e.g. Research and Innovation Action, SME Actions, Fast Track to Innovation Pilot) as well as the specifics of the respective call topic, the above mentioned aspects may be weighted differently.



Useful tips for successful project communication including a checklist for building your own communication strategy can be found in the EC's guide on Communicating EU Research & Innovation.

### 3. Strategic Planning

After the situational analysis, begin your strategic planning by:

- **Defining key objectives and describing the results** you want to achieve through communication, dissemination and exploitation
- **Defining target audiences/users**
- **Planning concrete measures** to meet the challenges of the call and expected impact
- **Defining a strategy for knowledge management and protection**
- **Setting up dedicated work packages or tasks** (i.e. allocate resources: time and money) for dedicated communication activities, dissemination and exploitation actions in addition to the actual scientific work plan
- Employing a framework matrix tool to **plan and oversee all related activities in a coherent manner**

#### *Communication*

- **Take strategic and targeted measures to promote the action** itself and its results to multiple audiences beyond the project's own community.
- **Define clear (measurable) communication objectives** derived from the overall project objectives.
- **Define the audience(s) that you want to reach** with your communication activities including the media and the public, and possibly engage in a two-way exchange.
- **Formulate key messages** for each target group and **choose the right medium** and means to transport them.
- **Demonstrate how EU funding tackles societal challenges.**

- **Include specific timelines and deadlines** for concrete activities.
- Describe how you will **manage and monitor communication measures** throughout the project.

Further information and practical tips can be found in the Fact Sheet “The Plan for the Exploitation and Dissemination of Results in Horizon 2020” developed by the European IPR Helpdesk.



### **Dissemination**

- **Define targeted audiences/stakeholders** that will potentially use your results.
- **Analyse, select, describe and disclose key exploitable project results** by appropriate means, including scientific publications, in order to get them used (exploited).
- **Choose relevant tools** to disseminate results according to the interests/needs of your defined target audiences during and after the project.
- **Define a coherent strategy** for knowledge management addressing background knowledge used by the project as well as new results generated by the project – including proper measures to capture, manage, assess and protect the project’s key assets.
- **Develop a Data Management Plan, in line with EC Open Access and Open Data policies**, in which the data that will be open is specified: what data the project will generate, whether and how it will be exploited or made accessible for verification and re-use, and how it will be curated and preserved.
- Consider possible ways **to ensure active stakeholder involvement/management**; i.e. through workshops with potential users interested in project results.
- Outline the significance of your results for future policy making and define concrete measures to **bring your project/results to the attention of decision makers and funding sources** (public and private) on European, national, and regional level.

- Describe how you will **manage and monitor dissemination activities** throughout the project and after project completion.

### **Exploitation**

- **Perform a characterisation/mapping of potential valuable and exploitable results**, i.e. identify different types of results and their potential user groups – on partner and/or consortium level.
- Describe your plans on how to **get the expected innovations “out of the lab”** and into (or at least closer to) the market.
- **Identify possible, most appropriate exploitation routes** for the expected key exploitable results corresponding to the nature of the different results and their target users.
- Describe where and how the innovations will be deployed. **Will new markets be created?**
- **Choose concrete exploitation measures to ensure that results will meet real needs** and thus will be taken up. What are the relevant steps within the project’s lifetime and beyond?
- **Reflect on potential barriers/obstacles**, and how to overcome them.
- **Identify any further conditions for market deployment**, i.e. financial investments, regulatory affairs, business development, marketing.
- Consider including dedicated formats (workshops, questionnaires, etc.) to **capture and assess exploitation opportunities** in the project.
- **Demonstrate how interested parties will get access to results**, and under which terms.
- **Plan and describe adequate internal structures** safeguarding effective knowledge, IP and innovation management, helping to create, capture and manage research results.

#### 4. Management and Monitoring

As soon as the project kicks off plans need to be implemented, monitored and elaborated.

##### *Communication*

- **Set well defined goals, pick your audiences, choose your messages and adequate communication tools and channels.** You **cannot reach out to the whole society**. It is far better to **make a selection** and concentrate on doing that well.
- **Highlight the benefits of your project for society** for example by showing the impact of your project on everyday lives e.g. with better quality products or because the specific research is improving our life-style .
- **Tell a story, don't just list facts** – a story that can be understood by your neighbour, your grandmother or your ten-year-old son; a story that relates to the interests of the target audience you want to reach.
- **Use existing resources in your consortium** to increase outreach on international, national, and regional level – for example rely on your project partners' already existing contacts and networks, turn to the institutions' communication departments, involve your consortium's business partners who may have more experience in pitching themselves and their products.
- **Monitor and constantly update** the communication strategy and activity plan:
  - Have you chosen the **right message and communication channel for a specific audience?**
  - **Do you systematically monitor feedback** to measure the effectiveness of communication activities and adapt accordingly?
  - **Do you tell a story** instead of sticking to the mere (scientific) facts? Are you able to **visualise and make complex data/information attractive** and more "digestible" for the general public/ layman audience?
  - Have you been able to reach your communication objectives? What

lessons have been learned and/or **what could be improved?**

- **Document and demonstrate** communication activities and outcomes in periodic reports.

### **Dissemination**

- **Disseminate results** that emerge throughout the project in a targeted manner **through effective dissemination channels/platforms** according to the information needs of the envisaged user group – for example through:
  - Scientific publications/posters
  - Open Access/Data repositories
  - User workshops
  - Training and teaching materials
  - Cluster meetings
  - Conferences
  - Brokerage events/Investor pitches
  - Policy Briefs/Recommendations
- Constantly **monitor, evaluate and potentially adjust** the dissemination plan:
  - Do the actual results still meet the initially anticipated needs of a specific target group? Are there “new” stakeholders that need to be taken into account?
  - Have you picked the right measures for the right audiences?
  - What have been concrete follow-up actions/results of certain dissemination measures?
  - Have novel, unexpected results emerged? How can these be effectively disseminated?
  - To what extent have stakeholders been actively involved/contacted?
- **Update and review the Data Management Plan** when necessary and/or with the periodic reports
- **Assess the compatibility of IP policies/management** strategies and dissemination activities:
  - Do the IP policies and managing structures conceived at the beginning

of the project fit the dissemination and exploitation interests within the consortium?

- Have conflicts of interests among project partners occurred in this regard?

- Document and demonstrate dissemination activities and achievements in periodic reports.

### **Exploitation**

- **Raise awareness** among all partners concerning good research practice and the importance of IP management (incl. confidentiality, ownership, access rights, responsibilities).
- Assess, balance and moderate the possibly varying exploitation interests of project partners (e.g. through exploitation or innovation questionnaires) and **come up with a common strategy** that responds to the general objective of the project, which is to jointly address the specific call's challenges and its expected impacts.
- **Systematically plan, prepare and implement appropriate activities** to identify, assess and prioritise key exploitable results – for example with:
  - Follow-up research
  - Demonstrators and prototypes
  - Designs/Design studies
  - IP rights, such as patents
  - FTO analysis/Market analysis
  - Licences
  - Transfer agreements
  - Policy change
  - Products and/or services
  - Standards
  - Business plan
  - Start-ups/Joint ventures
- Establish procedures to **recognise, capture and characterise project outputs** (e.g. notification of partners of any publication or disclosure).



- Establish proper arrangements to **ensure that legitimate interests of project partners will not be compromised** (e.g. filing a patent, or the need to keep results confidential) – such as pre-publication reviews.
- **Identify market opportunities**
  - Use strategic intelligence to identify and assess competing technologies, market competitors, future trends, etc.
  - Describe the main target groups/customers including their needs, expectations and potential benefits
  - Provide details about the size and readiness of the market (including time plan, risks, barriers) to deploy the innovation
- **Effectively use appropriate exploitation strategies (commercial or non-commercial)**
  - Describe how the project results will be accessed and used (i.e. for further research, policy issues or licensing, new products/services, start-ups, joint ventures, standards, etc)
  - Define the expected terms for access and use

Keep in mind: The final Plan for the Dissemination and Exploitation of Results is critical and *the* most important deliverable at the end of your project!



# Helpful Documents & Resources

## General



- Horizon 2020 Programme: Annotated Model Grant Agreement

## Communication Activities



- Horizon 2020 Participant Portal Online Manual "Communicating Your Project"



- Guide: Communicating EU Research & Innovation



- Videos: The EU Guide to Science Communication



- Webinar: 60-minute Communication Workout

- Social Media Guide for EU-funded R&I Projects *(coming soon)*


## Dissemination & Exploitation



- Horizon 2020 Participant Portal Online Manual "Dissemination & Exploitation of Results"



- European IPR Helpdesk Fact Sheet: The Plan for the Exploitation and Dissemination of Results in Horizon 2020



For regular updates on our communication, dissemination and exploitation training activities, please visit our website under [www.iprhelphdesk.eu/training](http://www.iprhelphdesk.eu/training)

## IP Management



- European IPR Helpdesk Guide: Your Guide to IP in Horizon 2020

## Open Access & Data Management



- Horizon 2020 Participant Portal Online Manual “Open Access & Data Management”



- Guidelines: Rules on Open Access to Scientific Publications & Open Access to Research Data in Horizon 2020



- Guidelines: Data Management in Horizon 2020



- Infographic: Open Access



- European IPR Helpdesk Fact Sheet: Open Access to scientific publications and research data in Horizon 2020: Frequently Asked Questions

## Acknowledgement of EU Funding



- Horizon 2020 Participant Portal Online Manual: “Acknowledgement of EU Funding”



## European IPR Helpdesk

### European IPR Helpdesk Training Team

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