NeurotechEU
The European University of Brain and Technology

Description of the Alliance: NeurotechEU is the European University of Brain and Technology (www.theneurotech.eu), founded in 2020 under the European Universities Initiative. NeurotechEU aims to establish a trans-European network of excellence in the field of brain and technology to increase Europe's competitiveness in education, research, and innovation. By bringing together leading European universities and associated partners, NeurotechEU creates a unique educational environment where the next generation of researchers, professionals, and citizens can cooperate and work across different European and global cultures.

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[D5.1] – Comprehensive communication and dissemination strategy

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D5.1 Comprehensive communication and dissemination strategy

Executive summary

The NeurotechEU Communication Strategy supports the mission of the European University of Brain and Technology to advance neurotechnology education, research, and societal impact. Connecting eight top European universities, NeurotechEU aims to create a leading network in brain research and technology by 2040.

Purpose

The strategy ensures clear, consistent communication to raise awareness, attract talent, build partnerships, and promote the importance of neurotechnology in addressing societal challenges like healthcare, AI, and smart technologies.

Key Points

- Unified Message: Position NeurotechEU as a leader in neurotechnology education and research.
- Tailored Audiences: Reach both internal groups (students, researchers, staff) and external audiences (industry, lifelong learners, public).
- Effective Tools: Use websites, social media, newsletters, and local university networks for communication.
- Branding and Inclusion: Ensure consistent identity, EU recognition, and inclusive, multilingual communications.

Goals

- Boost awareness of neurotechnology's impact.
- Highlight NeurotechEU's role in innovation and education.
- Foster collaboration among partners and stakeholders.
- Measure communication success and continuously improve efforts.

Outcome

With clear and impactful communication, NeurotechEU will strengthen its role as a transformative leader in education and innovation, shaping the future of neurotechnology across Europe.

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Correspondence

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1 Background

Neurotechnology plays a crucial role in addressing some of the most pressing challenges faced by European society today, ranging from health and healthcare to learning and education. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) initiated the Brain Capital initiative in order to recognize neuroscience as being crucial to our economy and society. Beyond the health domain we can observe an increasing need for new brain-based technologies in the microprocessor, computer architecture, communication and control domains. Additionally, the rapidly evolving field of artificial intelligence (Ai) introduces fundamental challenges to efficiency and transparency, which is an obstacle to its broad adaptation. It is also believed that a neuroscience-grounded Ai can provide a path forward, opening new avenues of applications from smart cities and space exploration to the 'Internet of Things' and nanorobotics. This landscape of opportunities and challenges is the interface of neuroscience and technology or Neurotechnology - technology for, from, and within the brain. NeurotechEU - the European University of Brain and Technology, is a university alliance and part of EU's initiative 'European Universities' which aims to build a trans-European network of excellence in brain research and technologies by 2040. In order to succeed, the project must rest on a mutual understanding of the project and a uniform way of communicating efforts and outcomes both internally and externally.

2 Basic terminology

- **Information** includes strategic messages that will lead to increased knowledge.
- **Communication** is the process of messaging that is based on interactivity between those involved in the process and should lead to new attitudes or behaviour.
- **Relation** is the mutual involvement or joint commitments that lead to actions and results.
- **Dissemination** is the process of distributing information to a wider audience.
- **External communication** is the exchange of information, events, or data between an organization (NeurotechEU) and individuals or entities outside of that organisation. This includes communication to stakeholders who are not directly part of the internal structure of the NeurotechEU.
- **Internal communication** involves the flow of information within a single partner university or within the alliance among its employees, students and levels of management.
- **Project communication** involves the flow of information within a project (NeurotechEU) related to the project among its employees, and levels of management. This type of communication is essential to ensure that everyone involved in the project is aligned. Project communication can take various forms, including emails, meetings, minutes, memos, newsletters and intranet platforms, and it plays a crucial role in maintaining a healthy organisational culture and fostering a sense of unity among team members.

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3 Description/analysis of the current situation

With the diversity of partner institutions from different countries, several work packages (WP), work groups (WG), associated partners and several internal and external target groups, there is a need for a streamlined, clear, concise and easy-to-follow communication strategy.

There is a great need to coordinate and disseminate information from, between and about:

- the management and coordination office (MCO)
- partner staff involved in the project
- the NeurotechEU Student Council
- relevant events and information from WP
- main target groups e.g. students, doctoral students, researchers and lifelong learners
- outcomes in forms of learning activities, trainings, networks, access to platforms and corporate collaboration
- other stakeholders e.g. European Commission
- associated partners

It is necessary to establish clear channels and to plan communication to **harness interest and to create awareness** among all stakeholders that will benefit from NeurotechEU.

By communicating NeurotechEU in a consistent and structured way, the alliance will strengthen knowledge of the project development but also create awareness and engagement, and ultimately the project is likely to be more successful and the outcomes more sustainable. Both NeurotechEU and NeurotechRI strive to follow the principles of Open Science and operate according to the FAIR principles, which serve as a relevant foundation for the communication plan.

3.1 Definitions

Abbreviations

EUI	European University Initiative
COO	COOrdinating partner
MCO	Management and coordination office
BEN	BENeficiary partner
WP	Work Package
WG	Work Group

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RU	Radboud University
UMH	Miguel Hernandez University of Elche
KI	Karolinska Institutet
UBO	University of BOnn
BOUN	BOgazici UNiversity
ULille	University of Lille
HR	Reykjavik University (Háskólinn í Reykjavík)
UMF	iuliu haţieganu University of Medicine and PHarmacy
UD	University of Debrecen
BoG	Board of Governors
BoR	Board of Rectors
NeurotechEU or NTEU	The name of the university alliance is NeurotechEU - The European University of Brain and Technology.
NeurotechRI	The name of this project consortium NeurotechRI – The European University of Brain and Technology– Research and Innovation, and is related to NeurotechEU but focuses on multi-institutional research, development and innovation.

3.2 Limitations

Developing partner-specific communication plans is the responsibility of each partner institution. Any complementary communication plans should align with this document, the main communication strategy for the entire NeurotechEU project.

4 Purpose and goals

4.1 Purpose

Communication is a strategic tool to support the achievement of the NeurotechEU joint mission statement (JMS):

- **Realising a joint long-term strategy for education and research** capitalizing on the synergy of the eight dimensions of Neurotechnology.

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- **Increasing the competitiveness of European education, research, economy, and society** in the high-impact research-intense domain of Neurotechnology.
- **Transforming universities with a joint long-term vision and action plan** that is modular and scalable, that crosses academic, faculty and organisational boundaries. **Seamless mobility for students, researchers and staff** to study, train, teach, research and innovate, reaching 35% of students and 15% staff through innovative mobility programs, including both physical, virtual and blended mobility programs driven by curiosity and opportunity.
- **Flexible curricula** tailored to each student's needs, de-constrained from institutional and/or national capabilities and borders.
- **Promoting European identity** among students and researchers through delivering multicultural, multilingual, international and intersectoral academic experiences across the European continent.
- **Sustainable close collaboration between partners** for a trans-European network of excellence in brain and technology, further removing borders and obstacles in mobility and exchange.
- **Creation of the European Neurotech ecosystem**, supporting our students during their formative years in the university, and afterwards to transition into becoming responsible, ethical and global citizens with an impact on society.
- **Actively contributing to reducing inequalities within the European Research Area** and society by promoting excellence in education and research throughout Europe and strengthening research and innovation capacity to mitigate brain drain and to strengthen brain capital.
- **To inform about the ethical, legal and societal challenges and potential of neurotechnology**.

In short:

Our mission is to develop a unified, sustainable strategy for education and research, leveraging the multidimensional potential of Neurotechnology. We aim to boost European competitiveness and to inspire transformative visions for universities, transcending boundaries to enable seamless mobility and to provide adaptable curricula catering to individual needs. Through fostering multicultural experiences, we will promote European identity and establish sustainable partnerships to build the NeurotechEU ecosystem, guiding students towards responsible global citizenship. In parallel, we will address inequalities and raise ethical awareness throughout our development.

4.2 Objectives

The objectives of the **external communication** are:

- Increased awareness and knowledge of neurotechnology
- Increased familiarity with NeurotechEU

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- Increased knowledge of European Universities initiative
- Increased funding and extension of current funding
- Increased number of partnerships and networks
- Increased knowledge of concrete results resulting from the alliance activities and initiatives.
- to attract talent at all levels

The objectives of the **internal communication** are:

- To ensure a transparent flow of information
- To create engagement
- To enable internal recruitment to the project
- Increased knowledge of the outcomes of the cooperation
- Stronger and better networks
- Access to and sharing of infrastructure and expertise
- Opportunities for collaboration in education, research and industry

3. Strategy

- **A uniform visual identity** will be implemented throughout the project and used for all communication related to NeurotechEU
- **Each WP will assign a person responsible for communication**. This person is in contact with the lead of Impact and Dissemination WP (WP5) on a regular basis.
- **WP5 is responsible for communication but will rely on the work in several WGs**. The WGs will be manned with representatives from WP5 and other relevant WPs for managing specific actions related to communication (time-limited or long-term).
- **Guidelines and templates for communication will be available via the internal project platform**.
- **A 'newsroom' will be open to partners** for access to use and to share NeurotechEU content.
- **NeurotechEU will rely on the partners well-established communication channels** for raising awareness and engagement.

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5 Message and profile text

5.1 Main message

The European University Alliance of Brain and Technology NeurotechEU is the first and only university alliance to focus on education and research in Neurotechnology - the interface between neuroscience and technology. NeurotechEU will train future generations of students, researchers, innovators and entrepreneurs that will implement the potential of neurotechnology into a reality for European society and beyond. The synergy between science, technology and society is central - technology for, from and within the brain.

Mission: build a trans-European network of excellence in brain research and technologies to increase the competitiveness of European education, research, economy and society.

Vision: establish neurotechnology as an applied science and provide society with brain-centred and brain-inspired solutions by educating the next generation of scientists, engineers and health professionals.

5.2 NeurotechEU elevator pitch examples

- "In NeurotechEU, we're not just merging disciplines; we're forging connections to change lives. Our ecosystem fosters groundbreaking collaborators between neurotechnology, AI, medicine and more disciplines, empowering students, staff, and researchers to drive meaningful advancements in neuroscience."
- "As part of the European University Alliance initiative, NeurotechEU unites eight top universities across Europe to transcend borders and tackle neurological challenges through education, research, and exchange. Our goal is to pioneer breakthroughs in neurotechnology and neuroscience."
- "NeurotechEU redefines the university experience, leveraging local expertise to enrich learning and propel research forward. Unlike traditional institutions, we're driven by a clear social mission, actively addressing pressing medical challenges facing our communities. Join us in reshaping education and making a tangible impact on society."
- "NeurotechEU is the premier interdisciplinary alliance of European universities dedicated to solving future challenges in neuroscience and neurotechnology. By harnessing the collective expertise of our partners, we drive innovation and progress in this critical field."
- "NeurotechEU revolutionizes higher education by leveraging local expertise and social responsibility to enhance learning and research. We prioritize addressing pressing medical issues while providing a cutting-edge educational experience."

5.3 Name

The European University of Brain and Technology – NeurotechEU. If the context makes it clear that it is a European university or an alliance, NeurotechEU or NTEU for short.

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6 Visual entity of the alliance and its partners

Guidelines and templates for visual identity are accessible via the internal project platform. Partner universities logo policies are described on their respective websites and their use is carefully considered in combination with the alliance logo.

7 Visibility – European flag and funding statement

"Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, communication activities of the partner institutions related to the action including: media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, in electronic form, via traditional or social media, dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded by the grant, must acknowledge the EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate):

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The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text. Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support. When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. of partner institutions or sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos."

(From Grant agreement Project number 101124386 — NeurotechEU; article 17.2)

7.1 Quality of information – Disclaimer

"Any communication or dissemination activity related to the project must use factually accurate information and must indicate the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate):"

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

(From Grant agreement Project number 101124386 — NeurotechEU; article 17.3)

8 Language and accessibility

NeurotechEU is a multilingual alliance. Communication should always align with the shared values in the Values Charter where equity, diversity and inclusiveness of opportunities are central. Language use within the alliance should rest on four pillars:

- **Language awareness** - means having adequate skills in two or more languages and an awareness that people have different abilities to understand and use language.
- **Parallellingualism** - means the simultaneous (parallel) use of two or more languages in a way that no one language replaces or infringes upon another.
- **Equal opportunities** - entail supporting inclusion, participation, transparency, equality and diversity by ensuring that language requirements are made in relation to work or studies.
- **NeurotechEU is a global alliance** - which means that it should be an attractive and welcoming network as much for national as for international students and employees, an ambition for which linguistic inclusion is a precondition.

9 What message and to whom?

An essential aspect in communicating the NeurotechEU project is that the target group addressed understands **what and how they are to gain**. Raising interest is necessary to create engagement.

Language and/or channel might vary depending on the target group and the message that is being communicated. Each partner institution best understands its cultural context and will have to adapt to the context of its institution to achieve the best result. It is recommended that this is done with the support of each partner institution's communication department.

A WP responsible for any activity and/or communication carried out in the name of NeurotechEU must have defined the following before disseminating:

- Sender
- Recipient/target group
- Purpose. Establish SMART objectives: Specific, Measurable, Agreed upon, Realistic and Time-based
- Channel(s)
- Timeline (and deadline)
- Monitoring and evaluation.

In order to carry out an activity in the name of NeurotechEU, it must have been agreed upon in discussion with the MCO and BoG.

1. The main messengers

- Members from WPs and WGs, participants promote the impact of NeurotechEU
- Principal/Dean/Vice-chancellors of the alliance

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- Project managers/implementers of NeurotechEU
- Students from the Student's Council
- (Associated partner organisations)

10 Target group/entities

10.1 Internal target groups (within the alliance)

- Members of WPs
- Members of WGs
- Undergraduate students
- Graduate students
- International students
- Doctoral students
- Postdocs
- Teachers
- Researchers from areas related to neuroscience and neurotechnology
- University administration
- University leadership

10.2 External target groups (outside the alliance)

- Lifelong learners
- Associated partners
- Other EUIs
- Private sector
- General public

11 Channels/choice of media

The main communication channels to be used (depending on purpose and target group) are:

- NeurotechEU channels
- NeurotechEU website

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- NeurotechEU platform (Campus+)
- Newsletter (project version (MCO), public version)
- NeurotechEU activity calendar
- LinkedIn, X, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook

11.1 To post on NeurotechEU social media accounts

For posting in NeurotechEU's social media channels please confer with WP5 Dissemination and impact and use the resources accessible via the internal project platform.

11.2 Printed material

Part of the visual identity offers templates for printed material. When planning physical communication materials such as printed brochures or promotional items, it is crucial to prioritise sustainability as a guiding principle. This involves careful consideration of material choices, design techniques, lifespan, distribution methods and disposal practices. By embracing eco-friendly practices at each stage of the process, we can minimize the negative environmental impact and contribute to a more sustainable future.

11.3 NeurotechEU activity calendar

In order to reach out through the alliance and the network, activities should be posted in the calendar on the NeurotechEU website.

11.4 Arranging a NeurotechEU activity

For arranging an activity within the alliance please confer with WP1 Management and Coordination and use the resources shared by WP5 Dissemination and impact in the internal project platform.

11.5 Local channels

Partners are requested to engage in a comprehensive and proactive communication strategy that involves utilizing their organisations' communication channels. Each university within the alliance has the possibility to use local channels to raise awareness and create engagement:

- Social media
- Website
- News
- Local calendars
- Screens or billboards on campus
- Internal newsletters
- Direct emails

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- Internal events
- Student's Whatsapp groups

11.6 Other platforms

Teams is the assigned platform for the project documentation and is administrated by the MCO. Teams, Google Meet or Zoom can be used for meetings.

12 Media contacts

Media relations and societal collaboration are vital to an effective alliance communication strategy. Engaging with the media ensures the widespread dissemination of information about the alliance, shaping public perception and enhancing credibility. Each partner in the alliance bears the responsibility to actively contribute to these efforts, involving the most suitable competencies within their organisation. Moreover, partners must inform and confer with the NeurotechEU Management and Coordination Office (MCO) to ensure coherence and alignment of the messages and the tonality of the text or photo/video. It is also important that a media release does not clash with other communication activities from NeurotechEU. When we coordinate our efforts it not only enhances the NeurotechEU's messages but also creates a foundation for sustainable and impactful partnerships.

13 Website

13.1 NeurotechEU website

The project website is the primary source of communication and should always be referred to for further information on all communication channels. All WPs can contribute ideas for content to the website though the assigned person in the WP. The website will be integrated with the Campus+ platform and managed by WP5.

13.2 Template website page partner universities

Every partner university of NeurotechEU should have information on their university website about NeurotechEU. The information should to a minimum include general information about NeurotechEU and a link to the main NeurotechEU website. Contact details for responsible persons at NeurotechEU partner institutions and a unique paragraph per partner about their contribution to NeurotechEU is recommended. A template is shared on the internal project platform.

14 Measurements and follow-up

The agreed metrics for communication and activities should be filled in continuously in excel. Google Analytics and systems for analysing traffic will be used. Each university will be responsible for sending out surveys and collecting them after NeurotechEU activities. Annually, the person responsible should deliver a report to WP5 for further informing the project management on outcomes of dissemination and communication impact.

<u>At a minimum, we should find out:</u>

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- Has information been distributed and received correctly?
- Has information been clear, relevant, and correct?
- Was the information understood and has it accomplished the needs for information?

15 Handling of privacy issues

The NeurotechEU Privacy Statement is in line with the GDPR and applies to all persons for whom NeurotechEU processes personal data. NeurotechEU respects personal data (e.g. contact lists, subscribers to the newsletter) and ensures that the personal information provided to NeurotechEU is treated confidentially. NeurotechEU does not store personal data for longer than is strictly necessary for the execution of the purpose. If legal regulations apply to its storage, the personal data will not be kept longer than prescribed by law.

16 Distribution of responsibilities

First point of contact for communication questions is lead and co-lead of WP5 Impact and dissemination.

17 SWOT analysis of NeurotechEU communication

The SWOT analysis of NeurotechEU's communication needs was informed by findings from the project's initial phase report, NeurotechEU Best Practises Survey Results. This report summarizes insights from 64 in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with students, staff, and researchers across member universities.

- Strengths: Highlighted adaptability, strong international networks, and engagement through diverse communication tools.
- Weaknesses: Revealed initial difficulties in virtual collaboration and a need for improved internal communication flow.
- Opportunities: Identified potential for joint degree programs, increased mobility, and stronger interdisciplinary cooperation.
- Threats: Noted challenges in aligning diverse institutional priorities and managing complex administrative processes.

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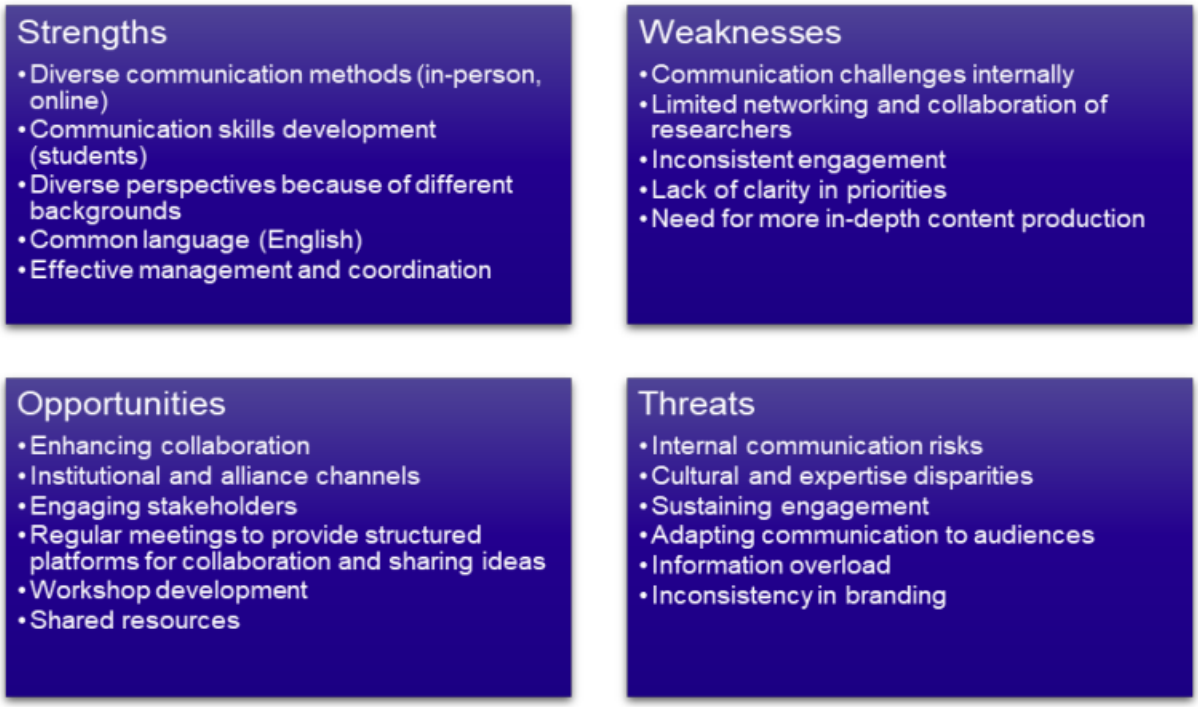

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