



D8.5 Common Dissemination and Communication Strategy for the Cluster

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Executive Summary

The Micro- and Nanoplastics Cluster – now known as CUSP “The European Research Cluster to Understand the Health Impacts of Micro- and Nanoplastics” - has been formed to facilitate collaborations between five research projects funded under Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, SC1-BHC-36-2020 - Micro- and nanoplastics in our environment: Understanding exposures and impacts on human health.

These initiatives are working together to enhance impact by synergizing communication and dissemination strategies, and sharing expertise such as analytical methods, exposure assessments, inter-lab comparisons, representative materials, and data exchange. The cluster will also collaborate closely with the JRC, and annual cluster meetings will be organized to report on joint activities within and beyond the cluster.

This document describes the CUSP Common Dissemination and Communication Strategy (henceforth termed ‘CDP’ – Communication and Dissemination Plan), developed as a common deliverable of the five CUSP projects.

¹Nature:

R = Report, P = Prototype, D = Demonstrator, O = Other

¹Dissemination level:

PU = Public

PP = Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)

RE = Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)

CO = Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)

Restraint UE = Classified with the classification level "Restraint UE" according to Commission Decision 2001/844 and amendments

Confidential UE = Classified with the mention of the classification level "Confidential UE" according to Commission Decision 2001/844 and amendments

Secret UE = Classified with the mention of the classification level "Secret UE" according to Commission Decision 2001/844 and amendments

Abbreviations

A/C	Adsorbed contaminants
ADME	Absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion
CSO	Civil society organizations
CDP	Communication and Dissemination Plan
CUSP	The European Research Cluster to Understand the Human Health Impacts of Micro- and Nanoplastics
DESCA	Development of a Simplified Consortium Agreement
DSS	Decision Support System
EP	Exploitation Plan
FAIR	Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GI	Gastro-intestinal
IATA	Integrated Approaches to Testing and Assessment
ILS	Inter Lab Studies
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
KER	Key Exploitable Results
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MNPs	Micro-/ Nanoplastics
MS	Member States
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PC	Physicochemical Characterization
PEDR	Plan for Dissemination and Exploitation of Results
PMCDS	Prospective Multi-Criteria Decision Support System
QSAR	Quantitative Structure-Activity Relationship
SME	Small-/ Medium-sized Enterprise
SOP	Standard Operation Procedure

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1. Introduction

1.1 An Overview of CUSP

CUSP is a cluster of micro- and nanoplastics (MNPs) research projects comprising 75 organizations from 21 countries forming five large-scale projects funded by the European Commission with EUR 30 million. Partners include multidisciplinary teams of scientists, researchers, industry, and policymakers who will collaborate in this unprecedented research effort over the next five years. Within CUSP, the five different projects will investigate different aspects of the complex relationship between MNPs and human health, focusing particularly on exposure routes, hazard and risk assessment, and the development of new analytical tools to measure, characterize and quantify MNPs. This will improve our present understanding of the impact of MNPs and associated additives/adsorbed contaminants (A/C) in the human body.

The five projects are:

- AURORA - Grant No. 964827
Actionable eUropean ROadmap for early-life health Risk Assessment of micro- and nanoplastics
- ImpTox - Grant No. No. 965173
An Innovative analytical platform to investigate the effect and toxicity of micro and nano plastics combined with environmental contaminants on the risk of allergic disease
- PLASTICHEAL - Grant No. No. 965196
Innovative tools to study the impact and mode of action of micro and nanoplastics on human health: towards a knowledge base for risk assessment
- PlasticsFatE - Grant No. No. 965367
Plastics Fate and Effects in the human body
- POLYRISK - Grant No. No.964766
Understanding human exposure and health hazards of micro- and nanoplastic contaminants in our environment

This work entails the development of human health hazard and risk assessment methodologies, including preliminary investigations into long-term impacts. CUSP research results will contribute to the health-relevant aims of the European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy and the Bioeconomy Strategy, as well as the REACH restrictions on intentionally added MNPs to products, by providing new evidence for effective preventive policies.

1.2 Communication and Dissemination Strategy Objectives

The overriding objective of the CDP is to maximize and sustain the visibility and impact of the CUSP projects among target audiences in support of the European Plastics and Bioeconomy Strategies¹ at European and international levels during and beyond the projects’ lifespans. The CDP aims to set the foundations for long-lasting relationships between partners and relevant stakeholders, and to establish active partnerships and contact networks by informing all relevant stakeholders of CUSP developments. This is a strategically planned process to be continued throughout the projects’ lifespans and requires targeted measures to communicate messages to a wide range of audiences, and to foster multi-directional exchanges.

From the outset, each cluster project is individually compiling effective, clear, concise, project-specific Plans for Exploitation and Dissemination of Results (PEDR). Each plan aims to increase the visibility of that project among target audiences and relevant stakeholders at both European and international levels and to maximize impact. Each plan includes detailed communication and dissemination strategies and defines how output and outcomes will be implemented and how they will impact future developments and policy making. Specific emphasis is placed on capturing the interest of target stakeholder groups, including industry, academia, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), regulators, policymakers, and civil society. This CDP aims to complement and streamline these project-specific PEDRs by focusing on cross-cutting issues that can be promoted through an overall strategy that maximizes visibility, awareness, and impact for the cluster. This CDP will amalgamate the common Communication and Dissemination Strategy (CDS) goals, messages, and audiences from each project’s PEDR to inform a joint strategy for maximum impact. Importantly, by implementing the CDP, the projects will ensure that a coordinated approach is realized for the dissemination and exploitation of project results, thereby reinforcing complementarities, and preventing duplication of effort and repetition of messages from different sources.

From the start of each cluster project, partners will create awareness of and generate interest in their aims and the work to be executed. As the projects develop, dissemination activities will be implemented to publicly disclose results through appropriate means. Communication and dissemination therefore run in tandem and are inextricably intertwined. Once the projects begin to produce results, the targets of dissemination will be those who will benefit from the generated outcomes. Successful engagement of these stakeholders may then lead to exploitation measures and the utilization of results in further research activities other than those covered by the action concerned. Exploitation may then instigate the development of processes or innovative and standardized methodologies and technologies (see Figure 1).

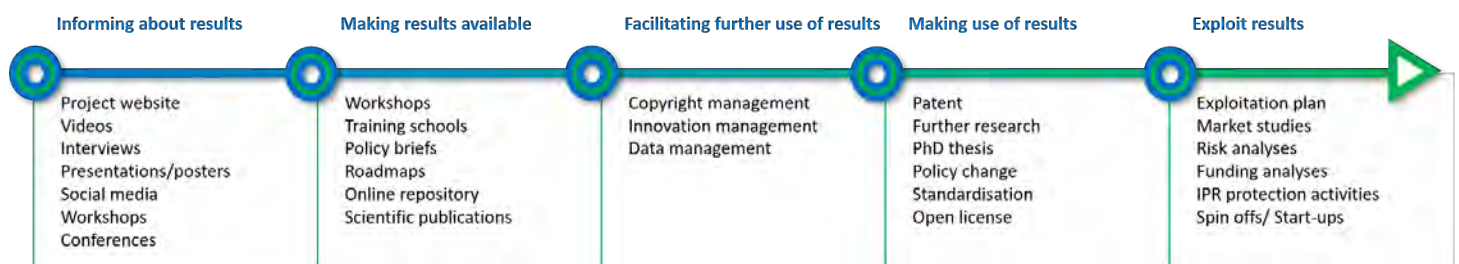


Figure 1 Progressive development of communication, dissemination, and exploitation activities

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1516265440535&uri=COM:2018:28:FIN>

Ultimately, it is intended to have engaged and familiarized a wide audience with the projects' concepts and promoted the final outputs to ensure sustainable impact. Furthermore, the final outputs are expected to reach policymakers to fulfil the objective of making concrete progress in civil society regarding effective MNPs risk assessment and management.

In sum, the objectives of the CDP are thus to mirror and reinforce the common communication and dissemination strategies of each CUSP initiative to maximize sustainable impact in the following ways:

- Provide guidance to raising awareness of CUSP and its component projects within different stakeholder groups
- Describe and deliver the expected outcomes, results, and progress to identified stakeholder groups for their own use, using effective tools and means of communication
- Provide guidance to engage relevant stakeholders with the activities of the project and promote future collaborations
- Provide guidance to encourage knowledge exchange and mutual learning within the stakeholder groups
- Facilitate the transfer knowledge and results to enable the use and uptake of results
- Describe the ways and means of capturing audiences that are interested in the potential use of the results, e.g. the scientific community, policymakers
- Provide strategies to foster public awareness, engagement and understanding of nanotechnology
- Facilitate collaboration with affiliated projects and initiatives examining the human health impacts of MNPs.

1.3 Communication and Dissemination Strategy Scope

As regards the scope of this plan, as a CDP rather than a PEDR, it will focus on Communication and Dissemination strategies as opposed to strategies for the exploitation of outcomes and results. These distinctions are described in Table 1.

Table 1 Dissemination vs Communication vs Exploitation

	Dissemination	Communication	Exploitation
Definition	The disclosure of the project results to the public	Process aiming at promoting the action and its results	Utilization of the project results in further activities in research, development or standardization
Objective	Transfer knowledge and results to stimulate joint efforts and enable the use and take-up of results	Showing society the impact and benefits of the EU-funded R&I activities	Effectively use project results, turning them into concrete value and impact for society
Focus	Describe and ensure results are available for others to use	Inform and promote the project AND its results/success	Make concrete use of each project's research results (not just commercial)
Target Audience	Audiences with interest in the potential use of the results, e.g. the scientific community, policymakers	Audiences beyond the project community, such as media and the wider public	Stakeholders, including project partners, that make concrete use of the project results

Figure 2 shows the cut-off point of the CDP, whereby its purpose is not to touch on exploitation strategies, but to describe:

- the dissemination and exploitation mission and vision
- the distribution of responsibilities
- the messages and subjects of dissemination and exploitation
- the target audiences and stakeholders to benefit from the work
- the dissemination methods required to maximize and extend the reach of the project
- the timing of dissemination and exploitation activities

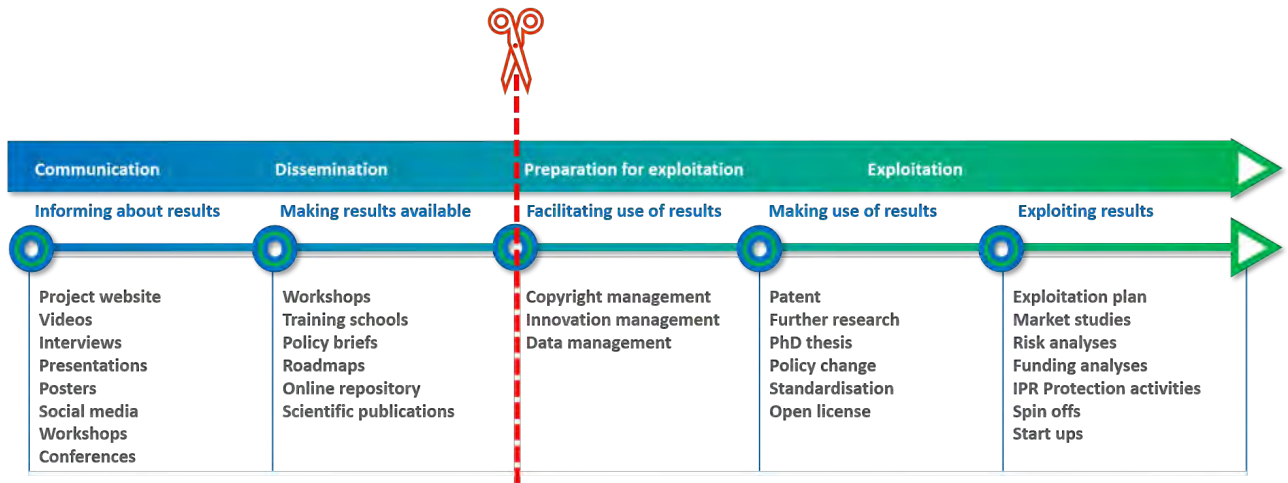


Figure 2 Communication, dissemination, & exploitation activities with CDP cut-off

This CDP will therefore examine and address the questions shown in Figure 3:



Figure 3 Key questions for the CUSP communication and dissemination strategy

Addressing these questions forms the foundations of the CDP.

2. Strategy and Implementation

2.1 Actions

To meet the communication and dissemination objectives outlined in Section 1 and to achieve maximum sustainable impact requires the implementation of a common strategy based on the following fundamental actions:

- **What:** identify joint outcomes, results, information, best practices and a common narrative with content tailored using consistent language to be disseminated to target audiences at appropriate times (see section 2.3)
- **Who:** Identify and capture key stakeholders and target audiences for ongoing engagement and consultation (see section 2.4)
- **Why:** Identify the benefits of outcomes and results in alignment with stakeholder interests to inform benefits recognition and encourage uptake
- **How:** Develop and deploy tools, channels, materials, and platforms to promote activities and outcomes to a large, wide-ranging audience of relevant stakeholders (see section 2.5)
- **When:** Identify events and opportunities for joint communication of CUSP activities; plan and implement further external outreach events and activities (see section 2.6)

2.2 Working Group

Prior to the launch of the projects, meetings were held between the EC, JRC and the Project Coordinators to discuss the cluster infrastructure and delegation of responsibilities to facilitate its implementation. CUSP Working Group 6 (WG6) for Communications and Dissemination has been established and meets every month during the early growth of the cluster. Meetings are recorded, and minutes taken prior to upload to Microsoft Teams. Members comprise one communication and dissemination expert per project to ensure a focused and dynamic approach with added support from additional experts as and when required.

WG6 will focus on the actions outlined in 2.1, as well as:

- Liaise with all other CUSP working group leads to ensure that joint narratives and messages are tailored and communicated to target audiences at appropriate times
- Execute delegated tasks (see 2.2.1)
- Report to the EC

2.2.1 Delegation of Tasks

Although WG6 is coordinated by PlasticsFatE, individual projects have specific responsibilities (see Table 2).

Table 2 CUSP WG6 tasks and delegation of responsibilities

What	Who	When
Social media	PlasticsFatE	M6
Communication and Dissemination strategy	PlasticsFatE	M6
Stakeholder list	All projects	
Cluster web portal	POLYRISK/AURORA – in consultation with PlasticsFatE and with the technical/graphical support of Imptox	M6
Visual identity	POLYRISK/AURORA – in consultation with PlasticsFatE and with the graphical support of Imptox	M6
Brochure/flyer	Imptox in collaboration with AURORA and POLYRISK	M6
Press releases	All projects in consultation with WG6 editorial board Projects to produce translations.	
Newsletters (biannual)	ImpTox in consultation with WG6 members	M6,12,18,24,32 etc
Policy briefs	PlasticsFatE [development of template]. WG6 to determine focus for each policy brief and the lead	M18,36, 42
Launch event	ImpTox	M3
Annual Event	JRC, Ispra, IT (Spring) with WG6 support	2022
Annual Event	PlasticsFatE in Frankfurt, DE	2023
Final Event	POLYRISK and AURORA	2024/2025
Technical report	PlasticsFatE in collaboration with all CUSP projects will produce a common text to report on WG6 activities. This common content will be included by all CUSP projects in their respective technical periodic progress reports	Periodic

In addition, the following are open to discussion and consideration as CUSP evolves

- Poster template
- Official presentation
- Project video
- Webinars and workshops including round tables
- Training events

2.2.2 Common Repository

To facilitate strategic planning and collaboration of all CUSP working groups as well as communication and dissemination activities, a secure common repository has been established on Microsoft Teams. All dissemination and communication materials and documentation, press releases, newsletters, policy briefs and reports, as well as records of meetings and activities, will be uploaded here and made available to all CUSP projects.

2.3 Dissemination Messages

Common key messages from each project will be identified from each project’s PEDR and disseminated through joint activities. The following categories of dissemination subjects and messages have been identified. These will become more granular as the projects develop:

- The projects in general, including aims and objectives, scope, and milestones
- Common narrative
- Events
- Published research
- Research impacts: methodologies and techniques
- Results, output, tools, and technologies developed within the projects
- Policy briefs
- Potential innovations
- External news (EC, JRC, affiliated initiatives)

Transmission of these messages will be carried out in a systematic way by addressing the most relevant target groups through the most appropriate communication channels.

2.4 Target Audience

The capture and effective engagement of stakeholders is vital to ensuring sustainable impact. CUSP will therefore aim to engage with a broad range of external stakeholder organizations to achieve maximum visibility. Given the varying foci and diverse remits of the projects, CUSP communications and dissemination activities will target stakeholders associated with cross-cutting and overlapping issues common to all projects.

It is important to note here that as the projects develop, CUSP's reach can extend to the USA and North America, China, South America, the Middle East, Africa, India, and Asian countries, in a similar fashion to the NanoSafety Cluster and H2020 Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) projects that have international cooperation actions. Moreover, harmonizing and aligning beyond the EU borders would be a constructive approach for global regulatory purposes at OECD/WHO levels. The strategy for targeting and engaging stakeholders is therefore an organic one that will initially be developed from the commonalities of the stakeholder engagement strategies derived from each project's PEDR. The strategy will be revisited, reviewed, and developed over the duration of the projects.

Notwithstanding the uniqueness of each project, there may be groups of stakeholders that all projects have compiled that may be useful for CUSP as potential targets for joint engagement and consultation. All projects are invited to share their stakeholder lists, provided this is in full compliance with GDPR regulations.

Table 3 describes the different groups of target stakeholders and explains the rationale behind their selection as stakeholders for dissemination actions. Additional audiences have been identified for training activities as opposed to more general dissemination. The training targets are described in Training events (section 2.5.13). Overall, these entities will be kept apprised of CUSP developments and where appropriate will be consulted for input, requirements, expectations, and expertise. In return, CUSP will identify what is currently of interest to them and help define ways in which CUSP can support their work.

Table 3 CUSP target groups, underpinning rationale, and examples of entities

Target Group	Rationale	Examples
Policy Makers	To enable them to provide direct opinion and policy support to parliaments across the EU as key conduits to policy makers and politicians. Organizations that regularly inform EC policy will also be involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Commission • European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) • European Panel for the Future of Science and Technology (STOA) • National parliamentary science and technology assessment committees such as POST (UK), OPECST (France), TAB (Germany) and the Rathenau Instituut (The Netherlands), etc. • Science Advice for Policy by European Academies (SAPEA)
Agencies and Associations in Member States (MS)	The aim is to capture and maintain the interest and involvement of relevant stakeholders and organizations in different MS through dialogue with individuals and by providing context to CUSP output relevant to their interests. CUSP will reach and engage with high-level stakeholders in all MS through direct relations with individuals in supranational agencies and associations, and through partner connections with relevant stakeholders in each MS at external stakeholder events attended by a wide variety of different stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (BEUC), • European Association for the Coordination of Consumer Representation in Standardisation (ANEC) • European Committee for Standardization (CEN), • European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), • FoodDrinkEurope (FDE), etc.
Regulatory Agencies (Key Stakeholder)	To support the development of scientific or technical know-how in nanotechnology interests and to bring together different interest groups to facilitate dialogue at European and international level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Medicines Agency (EMA) • Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) • European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)
Industry players (companies, entrepreneurs, clusters)	Industrial players including companies, entrepreneurs, and clusters should be made aware of the project to provide their insights regarding the project aims, and later to be part of the project activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EU NanoSafety Cluster • Industry associations, such as CEFIC and FDE • PlasticsEurope • European Bioplastics • Various large companies in different sectors
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) / NGOs, Unions	CSOs concerned with environmental and consumer aspects, women’s groups, and trade unions should be made aware of the project to provide their insights regarding the project aims, as well as convey their expectations, concerns, and requirements; and later to be part of the project activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Environmental Bureau (EEB) • The International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN) • BEUC, ANEC, Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS) • European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) • Women Engage for a Common Future (WECEF)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other relevant environmental and consumer organizations, and trade unions
Other initiatives	To raise awareness of our work and establish collaborative relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PolyCE, PlastiCircle, JPI Oceans, NanoSafety Cluster (NSC), Birmingham Plastics Network
Scientific community	Universities, research institutions, technology providers, consultants; multidisciplinary context for a wide range of professionals; critical assessment of deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universities in Europe Student associations in Europe Science students' societies
General (Wider) Public	Increase the level of society education and awareness, directly reaching citizens in the relevant areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Society at large in Europe

Sections 2.5.9 and 2.5.15 describe how the data for stakeholders will be captured, stored and used.

2.5 Dissemination Tools, Platforms, and Channels

2.5.1 Visual Identity

The cluster name 'CUSP': "The European Research Cluster to Understand the Human Health Impacts of Micro- and Nanoplastics" was selected from a number of suggestions proposed by each project, and voted for by a majority of partners, Project Coordinators, the EC and JRC. Based on this, a visual identity for the project has been developed and established to aid its recognition for all stakeholders. The mainstay of the visual identity is the CUSP logo (see Figure 4), again selected by a majority vote. The logo is based on the title 'C' and incorporates depictions of micro- and nanoparticles using the colours from each of the founding projects' logos.



Figure 4 CUSP logo and colour scheme

2.5.2 Brand Identity Manual

A brand identity manual describing the correct use of the logo has been produced. CUSP's visual identity will be used to brand all CUSP communication and dissemination materials, tools, channels, and platforms where possible, in terms of logo, fonts, and colours. This tool will facilitate the creation of a coherent image around CUSP, helping to increase cluster visibility among its target audiences. The brand identity manual will be shared with all consortia.

2.5.3 Web Portal and Email

The CUSP web portal has been launched at www.cusp-research.eu as a cornerstone of the cluster’s dissemination and communication activities (see Figure 5). It is designed to be intuitive and user-friendly, compliant with existing regulations, and will be made more visible through Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques. A common email address at hello@cusp-research.eu has been implemented - to be used when communicating with external entities on behalf of all CUSP projects.

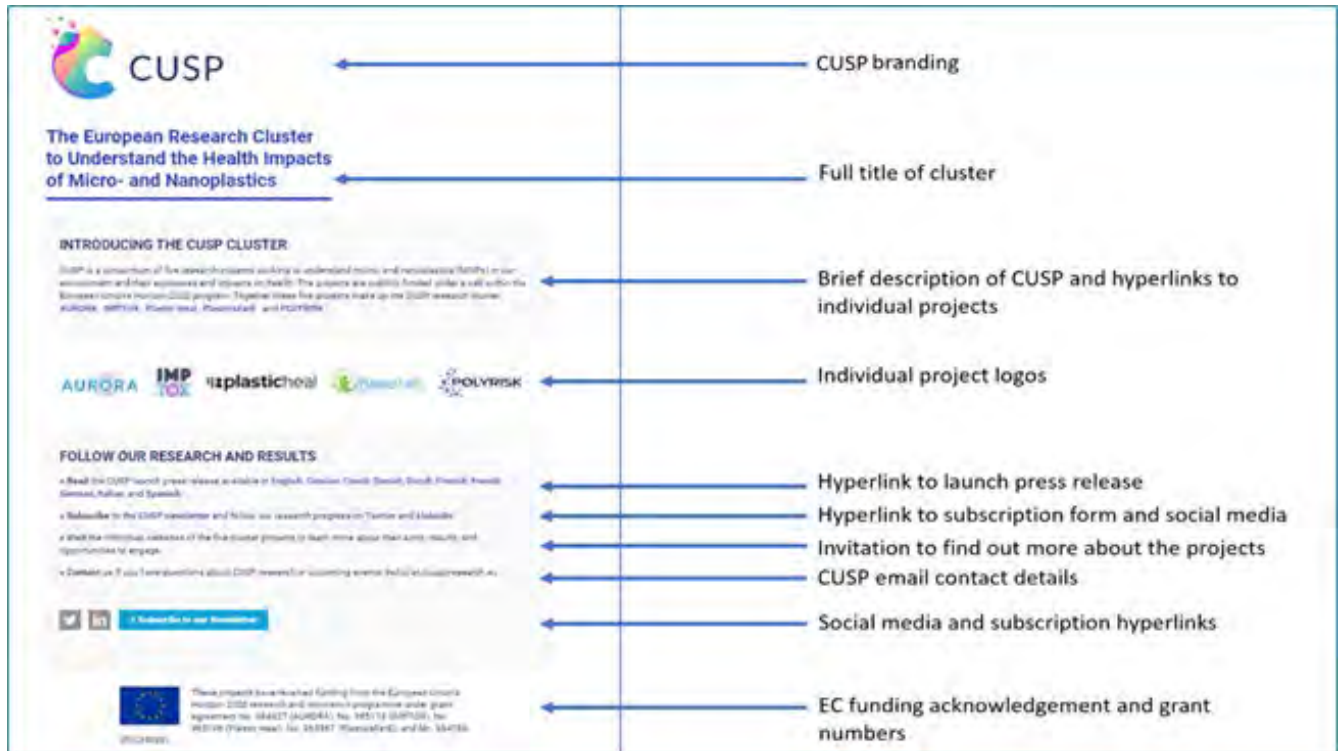


Figure 5 The CUSP website

CUSP WG6 will continue to plan the development of the website and will discuss the incorporation of the following features:

- News and announcements
- Events announcements and a calendar
- Information about the projects with contact details
- Information about the CUSP working groups
- Education and training links
- Links to the news pages on each project’s website with a title to indicate their specialization
- Social media feeds
- EC news and announcements
- Meet the researchers feature

2.5.4 Brochure/Flyer

Among the promotional materials to be developed to support dissemination and communication is the CUSP brochure/flyer. This will be updated through the course of the projects and will be made available in electronic form to partners to complement online activities and to distribute at live events. The brochure/flyer will convey essential information and contact details using the CUSP branding and will be published in English but translatable to other languages.

2.5.5 Poster Template

A poster template will be created using the CUSP branding. It will convey similar information to the brochure/flyer and will also accommodate text and graphics describing and illustrating scientific results and project output. Posters will be accessible via the CUSP web portal and on Zenodo. Responsibility for this is to be assigned.

2.5.6 Official Presentation

CUSP will develop an official presentation to be jointly used by projects to ensure consistency of message and to save duplication of effort. The presentation will succinctly describe the cluster in sufficient but not too much detail and provide contact details and links for further information.

2.5.7 Video

An animation will be created to describe CUSP's objectives, mission, and vision, as well as providing a brief overview of its component projects. Details of ways to obtain further information and engage with the cluster will be included. It will be designed to target an extensive, eclectic audience and will therefore be relatively generic but engaging enough to capture viewers. The video will be hosted on the CUSP web portal and on its YouTube channel. Further videos of webinars, events, and stakeholder engagement will be uploaded to the channel to extend project reach. WG6 will discuss and plan which CUSP project will oversee this activity.

2.5.8 Social Media and Online Platforms

Social media accounts have been created on LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube so that CUSP can communicate and disseminate the following:

- CUSP activities and events with invitations and links to registration forms
- Project findings and results
- Publications
- Partners' own activities relevant to the cluster
- Footage of events, including webinars and workshops
- Other relevant opportunities and initiatives

Although PlasticsFatE has overall responsibility for regular maintenance and updating of content, all projects will provide content to ensure the relevance, quality, and popularity of these online spaces.

Twitter <https://twitter.com/CuspResearch>

The CUSP engagement strategy on Twitter includes regular posting of relevant information about the projects, partners, events, and cluster news. The reach of the posts will be extended using specific hashtags such as #microplastics, #nanoplastics, #H2020, #project, #EUScienceInnov, #Research and by tagging key users using '@ + user handle' including the CUSP projects, PlasticsEurope, as well as CUSP's target groups. Social media posts will include attention-grabbing images and will tailor the tagging of further accounts to support the promotion of the project to wider audiences. All projects are encouraged to interact on social media by tagging each other as well as CUSP in their posts.

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cusp-research/>

The CUSP LinkedIn platform has been created and will support communication between the projects and their stakeholders. It will also act as a place for discussion of cluster activities in the context of

other (global) events. The hashtags used in Twitter posts as mentioned above will also be used in LinkedIn posts.

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCy77g2JfVxTai1fXWnBlkA>

The CUSP YouTube channel has been set up and is currently populated with three videos from the launch day:

- a) Welcome and introduction to MNP issues and the political landscape
- b) The Five CUSP Projects – an overview of each initiative
- c) The Panel Discussion

Zenodo <https://zenodo.org/communities/cusp-research>

To ensure sustainable impact, a CUSP Zenodo account (see Figure 6) has been set up where all partners from all projects can upload peer-reviewed publications, posters, press releases, newsletters, policy briefs, and various other documents and media. The CUSP Zenodo account will host these beyond the lifespans of the projects. Moreover, when uploading any documents or media, partners have the option to link them to other relevant communities. It is envisaged that this will enhance impact by sharing expertise across disciplines and topic areas, such as analytical methods, exposure assessments, inter-lab comparisons, representative materials, and data exchange.

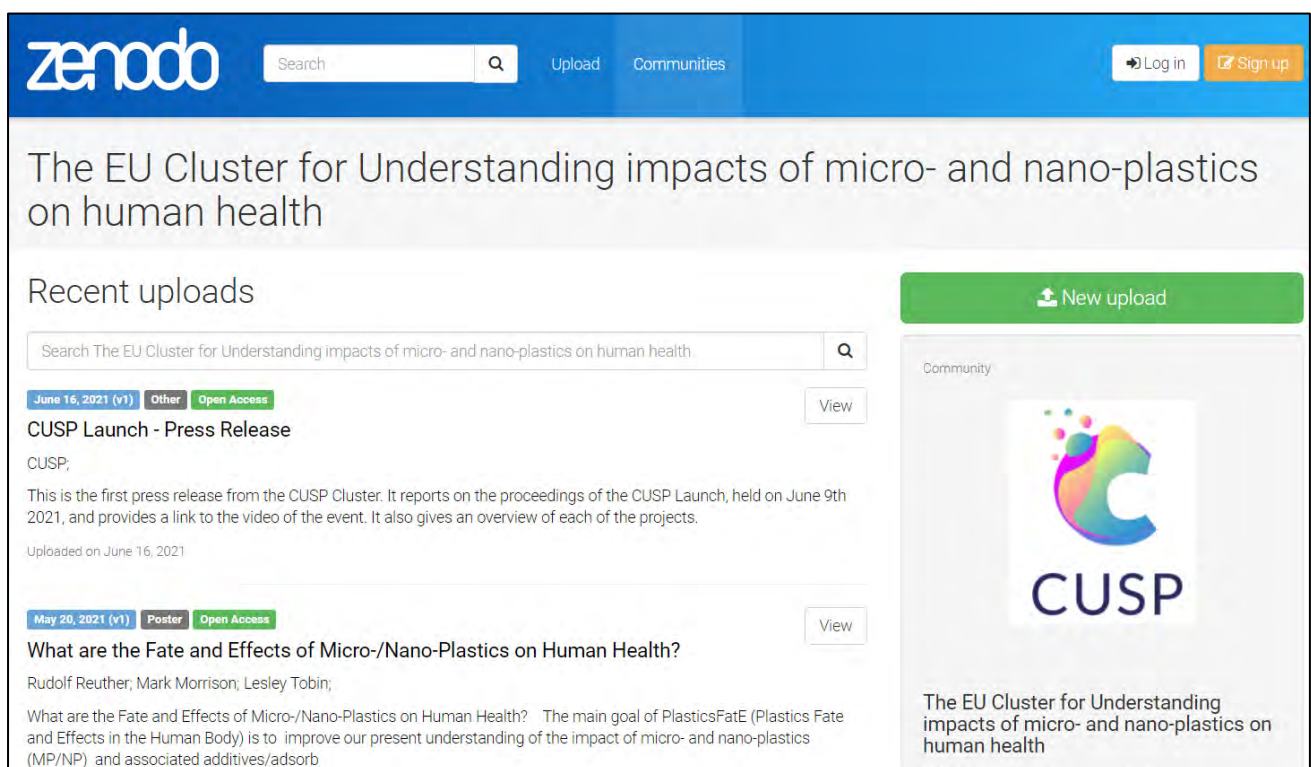
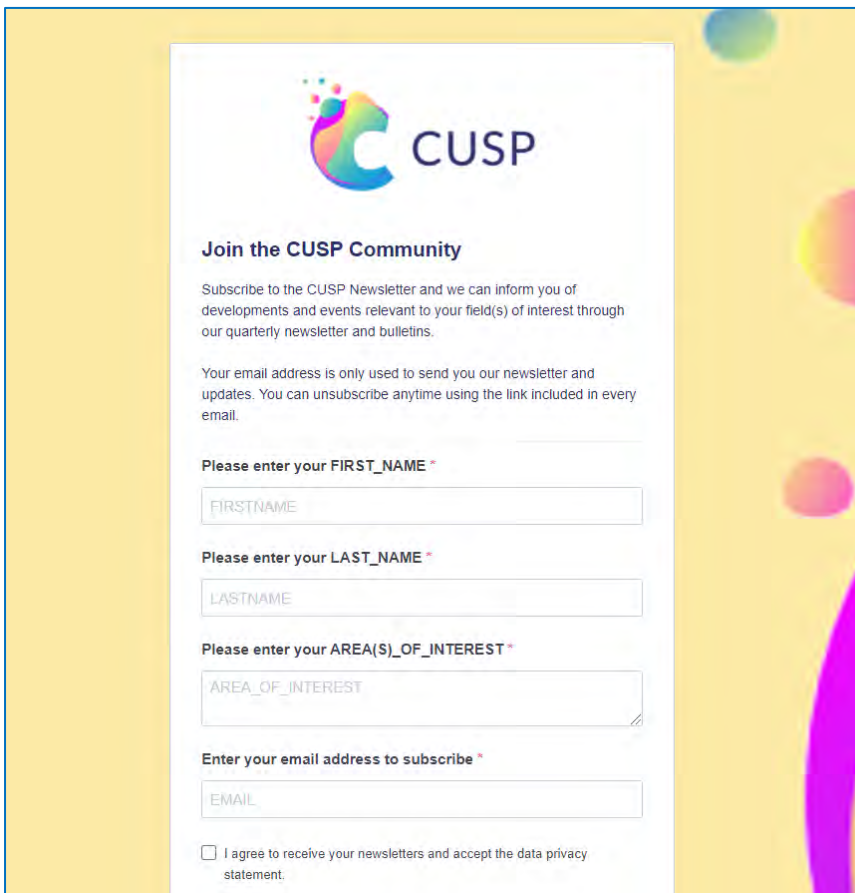


Figure 6 CUSP Zenodo account

2.5.9 Newsletter and subscriptions

A newsletter subscription form (see Figure 8) will be created in strict compliance with GDPR and privacy policies. This will auto-populate a CUSP mailing list on SendInBlue – Software As A Service (SAAS) for relationship marketing https://bit.ly/CUSP_COMMUNITY. The registration form incorporates a captcha and double opt-in for increased security. Subscribers indicate consent to receiving newsletters and acceptance of the data privacy statement by ticking a box and can

unsubscribe at any time (see 2.5.15 and Figure 7 below). The form will be embedded in the CUSP website as well as linked to from social media and project websites, etc. Stakeholders will be invited to subscribe to the newsletter. The data provided will autopopulate a list of subscribers in a mailing program – SendinBlue – throughout the duration of the projects. Every six months, a call for news will then be issued by each WG6 representative to their respective consortia and by the WG6 Lead to the leads of the other five CUSP Working Groups². The call will invite them to submit updates of project and Working Group developments, followed by a reminder two weeks before publication. An e-newsletter communicating these updates and other relevant information will be issued to the SendInBlue mailing list and to all relevant stakeholders. The newsletter will be uploaded to the project website, to Zenodo, and promoted through Twitter and LinkedIn. The newsletter will also feed into the common dissemination and communication activities of CUSP.



The image shows a draft of a registration form for the CUSP community. At the top left is the CUSP logo, which consists of a stylized 'C' made of colorful dots followed by the text 'CUSP'. Below the logo is the heading 'Join the CUSP Community'. The text below the heading reads: 'Subscribe to the CUSP Newsletter and we can inform you of developments and events relevant to your field(s) of interest through our quarterly newsletter and bulletins.' This is followed by a privacy notice: 'Your email address is only used to send you our newsletter and updates. You can unsubscribe anytime using the link included in every email.' The form contains four input fields: 'Please enter your FIRST_NAME *' with a placeholder 'FIRSTNAME', 'Please enter your LAST_NAME *' with a placeholder 'LASTNAME', 'Please enter your AREA(S)_OF_INTEREST *' with a placeholder 'AREA_OF_INTEREST', and 'Enter your email address to subscribe *' with a placeholder 'EMAIL'. At the bottom of the form is a checkbox labeled 'I agree to receive your newsletters and accept the data privacy statement.'

Figure 7 Draft of CUSP Community Registration and Newsletter Subscription form

2.5.10 Press Releases

Regular press releases will be compiled to report on key events, outcomes, and project developments with the first being issued to promote the CUSP launch. The press releases will be sent to targeted stakeholders with media contacts being prioritized, and to the SendInBlue mailing list. The releases will be uploaded to the CUSP website and project websites, as well as sent to partners to upload to their institution websites. They will also be sent to complementary initiatives. Established contacts that partners have with popular media will be used to raise awareness of project output and to foster wider recognition of the importance of human health impacts of MNPs. The press releases will be promoted through Twitter and LinkedIn.

² The CUSP Working Groups are: WG1 Analytical methods and representative materials; WG2 Data sharing; WG3 Inter-laboratory comparisons; WG4 Exposure assessment; WG5 Risk assessment; WG6 Communication and Dissemination

2.5.11 External Events

Participation in external events will facilitate CUSP’s aim to secure and maintain engagement with relevant stakeholders and organizations in different member states, through dialogue with individuals and providing context to CUSP output relevant to their interests. The five projects will jointly participate in scientific and non-scientific events throughout the project period with the aim of presenting and discussing CUSP’s aims, mission and vision, key findings, project outcomes and results to help shape policy recommendations. This type of engagement will also help enhance the projects’ visibility and provide valuable feedback.

Joint activities will be implemented whenever possible to maximize opportunities, avoid duplication of effort, and present a unified approach to addressing common issues. Where appropriate, different projects may take greater responsibility for certain activities or in certain geographic or application areas – depending on their focus. In this way we aim to ensure as comprehensive and broad a coverage and engagement as possible. The means by which this is achieved will be tailored for each stakeholder group at suitable events, including conferences, dedicated workshops, and webinars, taking into consideration time, capacity, and budget constraints that stakeholders may be experiencing.

All partners will be invited to record relevant events for CUSP to target on a joint CUSP calendar that has been created on Teams to maximize reach and engagement. Targeted engagement is planned to take place from the second year onwards, when there are emerging results to communicate and discuss. Key external events identified so far are listed in Table 4.

Table 4 Key events to be targeted for dissemination

Event Title	Approx. Date	Location	URL
International Conference on Microplastics and Urban Plastic Pollution	19-20 August 2021	London	https://waset.org/microplastics-and-urban-plastic-pollution-conference-in-august-2021-in-london
European Researchers Night	September 2021	Online	TBC
REACH Stakeholders’ Day	6 th October 2021	Online	https://echa.europa.eu/-/safer-chemicals-conference
European Environmental Bureau (EEB) Annual Conference	11 October 2021	Paris	https://conference.eeb.org/
IEEE Global Humanitarian Technology Conference	19-23 October 2021	Seattle	https://ieeeghtc.org/
Development & Climate Days	6-7 November 2021.	Glasgow	https://www.iied.org/development-climate-days-history
UNIDO General Conference	29 November-3 December 2021	Vienna	https://www.unido.org/resources-policy-making-organs-general-conference/general-conference-19th-session
Helsinki Chemicals Forum	30-31 March 2022	TBC	https://helsinkichemicalsforum.messuk.eskus.com/
ACHEMA	4-8 April 2022	TBC	https://www.achema.de/en/

OECD Global Science Forum	May 2022	TBC	https://www.oecd.org/sti/inno/global-science-forum.htm
AIDA Europe annual conference	18-20 May 2022	Zurich	https://aidainsurance.org/events/xvi-aida-world-congress-2022-10-10
European Research and Innovation Days	June 2022	TBC	https://ec.europa.eu/research-and-innovation/en/events/upcoming-events/research-innovation-days
EFSA one health conference 2022 Conference website	21-24 June 2022	Brussels	https://www.one2022.eu/
Microplastics 2022	6-11 November 2022	TBC	https://microplastics2021.ch/
Euroscience Open Forum	TBC 2022	TBC	https://www.euroscience.org/esof/

2.5.12 Webinars and Workshops

CUSP will organize online workshops periodically to support cross-cutting activities by engaging with and consulting specific stakeholder groups, thereby contributing to the development of respective project outputs. Each workshop will last a maximum of two hours. Relevant information - including the agenda, presentation material by the consortium and specific inputs requested from the stakeholders - will be sent out before each webinar. Each webinar will result in minutes and recordings (with participants' consent). The minutes will be sent to the stakeholders for their confirmation. The different working groups, projects, partners, and WPs can be involved in the development of webinar/workshop content as appropriate. Topics and themes for the webinars will be determined at Working Group and Project Coordinator meetings.

2.5.13 Training Events

Although not all CUSP projects have a training element as part of their workplan, it may be possible to develop and deliver training events as a means of engaging different stakeholder groups in cross cutting issues, for example industry and regulators. PlasticsFateE and ImpTox both have plans for physical and virtual workshops, which may support the dissemination of results from other projects. The main stakeholder groups targeted for training activities are:

- **Early career researchers** within MNP research, including PC characterization, exposure and fate assessment, hazard assessment, risk assessment and management, for the purpose of ensuring that they consider wider issues of standardization and protocols for material handling, waste management, sample preparation, and testing of exposure, fate, and hazard when planning their research.
- **Industry and regulators** so that their practice can be underpinned by a tailored risk assessment strategy for MNPs based on two decision support systems. These are a prospective multi criteria decision support system (PMCDs), which will be a tool for early guidance and technology governance on the potential risk of plastic applications; and a web-based Decision-Support System (DSS) to assist industries and regulators in risk management and compliance with existing regulations. Delivering training in these tools will facilitate the implementation of proper risk assessment, management, avoidance, mitigation, and control to support the European Plastics and Bioeconomy strategies.
- **Secondary/High School pupils** to raise awareness of the importance of MNPs risk management and how it can be implemented, and to encourage young people – especially girls - to consider careers in science and technology in general, and particularly in regulations

and standards. In addition, it is expected that adult engagement will be influenced by the participating young people.

- Interested stakeholders in relevant organizations that will be provided with training materials to train others (e.g., teachers, research managers, those responsible for health and safety).

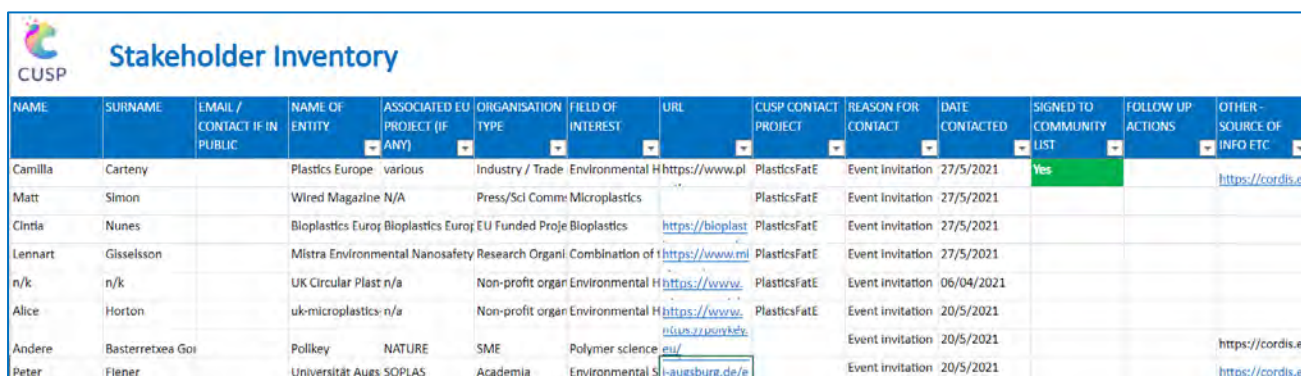
Open training materials and commissioned educational videos introducing results and tools can be shared with all CUSP projects and uploaded to Zenodo.

2.5.14 Policy Briefs

As part of CUSP’s contribution to standardization, policy, and regulation; policy briefs will be compiled and issued at months 18, 36 and 42. WG6 will determine the focus and lead for each policy brief. Possible content and foci may include a review of current regulations and literature, including REACH, the Waste Framework Directive (WFD), and various EC DGs including JRC, aimed at identifying knowledge gaps and understanding the state-of-the-art research and analytical tools that can be used for early indication of hazard and exposure. Policy briefs could also focus on defining policy relevant scientific data and the identification of information requirements under different legislations to provide information and support for decision making. All data and analysis will be made Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable in accordance with the FAIR principles. A key output of the knowledge generated within each CUSP project will be concrete recommendations for EU policymakers regarding future strategy on Plastics and the Bioeconomy. WG6 and CUSP partners will work closely with policy makers to validate and secure support for these recommendations through a series of roundtables. We may also produce a short animation of these recommendations to inform wider society through social media channels.

2.5.15 Stakeholder Inventory and Community Registration

Stakeholder Inventory: An inventory of contacts and stakeholders has been set up on Microsoft Teams (see Figure 8). The data to be recorded in the inventory will enable WG6 and other users to filter the database for the type of organization, field of interest and any affiliated initiatives. This will facilitate more targeted engagement. There are additional filterable columns titled ‘CUSP contact project’, ‘reason for contact’, ‘date of contact’, ‘signed to community list’, and ‘follow up actions’, which are designed to prevent stakeholders being contacted more than once by different projects for the same purpose (e.g., receiving duplicate invitations).



NAME	SURNAME	EMAIL / CONTACT IF IN PUBLIC	NAME OF ENTITY	ASSOCIATED EU PROJECT (IF ANY)	ORGANISATION TYPE	FIELD OF INTEREST	URL	CUSP CONTACT PROJECT	REASON FOR CONTACT	DATE CONTACTED	SIGNED TO COMMUNITY LIST	FOLLOW UP ACTIONS	OTHER-SOURCE OF INFO ETC
Camilla	Cartery		Plastics Europe	various	Industry / Trade	Environmental H	https://www.pl	PlasticsFatE	Event invitation	27/5/2021	Yes		https://cordis.eu
Matt	Simon		Wired Magazine	N/A	Press/Sci Comm	Microplastics		PlasticsFatE	Event invitation	27/5/2021			
Cintia	Nunes		Bioplastics Euroj	Bioplastics Euroj	EU Funded Proje	Bioplastics	https://bioplast	PlasticsFatE	Event invitation	27/5/2021			
Lennart	Gisselsson		Mistra Environmental	Nanosafety Research Organi	Combination of		https://www.mi	PlasticsFatE	Event invitation	27/5/2021			
n/k	n/k		UK Circular Plast	n/a	Non-profit organ	Environmental H	https://www.	PlasticsFatE	Event invitation	06/04/2021			
Alice	Horton		uk-microplastics	n/a	Non-profit organ	Environmental H	https://www.	PlasticsFatE	Event invitation	20/5/2021			
Andere	Basterrebea Goi		Pollkey	NATURE	SME	Polymer science	eu/		Event invitation	20/5/2021			https://cordis.eu
Peter	Flener		Universität Augsburg	SOPLAS	Academia	Environmental S	l-augsburg.de/e		Event invitation	20/5/2021			https://cordis.eu

Figure 8 CUSP Inventory of Stakeholders on Teams

With the permission of subscribers, this database will be used for CUSP communication to maximize our outreach. This will result in a more efficient approach to stakeholder engagement and

consultation and will lead to the identification of potential end-users of results and outcomes for more sustainable impact.

The database is fully compliant with GDPR whereby permission to store contact details is, and will be sought, and the purpose and use of data clearly explained. Accordingly, personal data will not be made public or shared with a third party without the express consent of the individual.

Community registration: At all events and in all communication and dissemination materials, tools, platforms and channels, stakeholders will be invited to register their interest through the secure subscription form described above. The link to the signup form will be inserted in social media, emails, and other channels. Additional contacts may be captured through their registration at events if they have provided permission to be contacted in the future. All contacts will be stored in the inventory to be used for disseminating updates, results, and outcomes, as well as for issuing invitations to relevant events. The inventory and registration form will be amalgamated and regularly cleansed to remove redundancy and repetition.

3. Action Plan

3.1 Common Principles

As part of the Communications and Dissemination strategy, CUSP WG6 has agreed on common principles. According to the Article 29.1 of the EC-GA³ “Each beneficiary must – as soon as possible – ‘disseminate’ its results by disclosing them to the public by appropriate means (other than those resulting from protecting or exploiting the results), including in scientific publications (in any medium).” Therefore, every possible opportunity will be exploited by WG6 representatives to raise awareness of CUSP among all stakeholder groups as and when appropriate to maximize impact and encourage uptake of outcomes and results.

All WG6 members will support the CUSP communication and dissemination tasks and activities in accordance with their assigned responsibilities and as described in each project’s Grant Agreement. WG6 tasks and activities will be coordinated by the WG Leader and the WG member responsible for that action with the support of WG6 members to ensure coherence and cohesion, whereby tailored content is shared with target audiences using the most impactful channels at the optimum time.

3.2 Public Outcomes

The CUSP projects will produce various public outcomes throughout their lifespans. These include the following joint deliverables:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| • Cluster web portal and visual identity | month 6 |
| • Cluster brochure | month 6 |
| • Common Dissemination and Communication Strategy | month 6 |
| • Joint policy briefs 1 | month 18 |
| • Joint policy briefs 2 | month 36 |
| • Joint policy briefs 3 | month 47 |

In addition, potential outcomes for dissemination may emanate from the work performed by the five technical WGs, which may be intrinsically linked to the key messages to be disseminated by the projects since they represent their contributions to the development of knowledge regarding the human health impacts of MNPs. WG6 will therefore work closely with the five technical WGs to support their identification of outcomes and results to be disseminated, and provide the necessary tools, platforms, and channels to achieve this.

- Report with relevant outputs of the collaboration with other projects/activities related to material selection and physicochemical characterization.
- Report on results from the Inter Lab Studies (ILS) on methods developed for hazard assessment of MNPs and A/C in the human body
- Joint activities with other relevant projects and programs on risk assessment of MNPs

WG6 will facilitate the identification of joint public outcomes for dissemination as the projects develop.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf

3.3 Dissemination Content

- All WG6 members are responsible for procuring and providing content for communication and dissemination.
- Common key messages from each project will be identified from each project's PEDR and disseminated through joint activities, subject to partner consent - thereby respecting IPR and confidentiality.
- Messages will be tailored to the target audience and the chosen medium by adapting tone and language.
- Dissemination and communication efforts will focus on CUSP's key stakeholders and align with their information needs.
- Communications, such as press releases and newsletters, will be reviewed, and approved of by the WG prior to publication.
- The defined common graphic identity will be used in all dissemination tools and activities to ensure branding consistency, enhanced visibility, further recognition of the project and compliance with EC regulations. This should include:
 - the name of the cluster: CUSP
 - the link to the project website URL (www.cusp-research.eu)
 - the CUSP logo
 - acknowledgement of EU funding, including the official EC logo and the following sentence: "These projects have received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreements No. 964827 (AURORA), No. 965173 (IMPTOX), No. 965196 (PLASTICHEAL), No. 965367 (PlasticsFatE), and No. 964766 (POLYRISK)".
 - A disclaimer: "This reflects only the authors' view, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains".

3.4 Target Audiences

- WG6 members will identify and capture stakeholders and update the stakeholder inventory accordingly. Personal data usage will be compliant with principles of GDPR and treated in the strictest confidence.

3.5 Tools, Channels, and Platforms

- The website and social media will be kept current and up to date with the latest news, events, and outcomes.
- WG6 members will cross-pollinate messages. For example, a website news item or a Zenodo publication can be tweeted using project hashtags and promoted on LinkedIn, and a YouTube video can be promoted via the website and social media.
- WG6 will gather details of relevant events and publish these on the CUSP calendar and make partners aware of these.
- The WG will create and support opportunities for common events, such as webinars and workshops.

3.6 Schedule

The scheduling of actions to be taken is shown in Table 5.

3.7 Summary

Table 5 below aligns the respective tools, platforms and channels, with the different stakeholder groups, the actions to be taken by WG6, and the expected impacts.

Table 5 Summary of tools, channels, & stakeholders; actions; and expected impacts

Dissemination Tools and Channels	Target Stakeholder Groups	WG6 Action	Scheduling	Expected Impacts
Web portal	All stakeholders	Keep up to date with news, events, developments, results and output. Promote through social media and on all communications at all events	Live by month 6 and developed through the projects' lifespans. Reviewed in WG6 monthly meetings	Increased awareness of CUSP, its objectives, and results.
Brochure / Flyers	Mainly policy makers, industry, research, NGOs, regulatory agencies, also wider public	Distribute project and topic related materials at events. Update flyers as the projects develop. Display current flyer on websites	Produced by month 6 Reviewed every 6 months	Detailed information on cluster activities, including open invitations to contribute and to join events
Poster template	Scientific community	Update and present/display at events and conferences. Display current posters on websites and Zenodo	Produced by month 6 Updated for specific events	Enable partners to raise awareness of the issues and CUSP's role in addressing them
Official presentation	All	Create a joint presentation. Embed in CUSP website. Show the presentation at events and conference booths	Created by month 6 Updated annually to reflect CUSP developments	Greater awareness of the issues and CUSP's role in addressing them
Project video	All stakeholders	Create a video. Upload to YouTube and embed in CUSP website. Promote through all channels. Show the video at events and conference booths	Created by month 12	Provide updates on project results and their importance to our understanding of the impacts of MNPS on human health. Greater awareness of the issues and CUSP's role in addressing them. Greater awareness of CUSP's input to policymaking. The number of videos is contingent on budget.
Social media	Mainly relevant professionals as well as all stakeholders	Keep all social media accounts (CUSP and Projects) connected	Created by month 6	Promotion and discussion of project activities in the context of other (global) events.

		<p>through hashtags and tags</p> <p>Post at least once a week on Twitter and LinkedIn</p> <p>Include social media feed on the website</p> <p>Use social media to promote website content, events and publications, including newsletters and encourage respective partners to do the same</p> <p>Tag affiliated entities where appropriate</p>	Updated every week as a minimum	Increased awareness of CUSP, its objectives and results.
Stakeholder database and community registration list	All stakeholders	<p>Include links to the website, registration form, and social media in press releases, publicly available reports, announcements of events</p> <p>Ensure that it is GDPR compliant</p> <p>Ensure that data is current and clean</p>	<p>Created by month 6</p> <p>Updated and cleansed on a regular basis</p>	Increased number of subscriptions from individuals who require further information or wish to remain updated
Newsletter	All stakeholder groups	<p>Issue a call for news followed up by a reminder every six months to all Working Groups and Projects (WG reps responsible for own projects)</p> <p>Issue the newsletter to the mailing list and stakeholder database</p>	<p>First issue published in month 6 and every 6 months thereafter</p>	Increased public knowledge of key project developments. Wider recognition of the importance of understanding the impacts of MNPs for strategies to govern their use. Greater awareness of project progress and developments
Press releases	All stakeholders, particularly the wider public	Disseminate timely mass mailings, including bulletins and press releases at key stages and promote through social media and websites as well as partner channels.	<p>First press release issued in conjunction with CUSP launch</p> <p>Press releases to be issued at key stages to reflect cross-cutting developments throughout the projects' lifespans</p>	Increased public knowledge of key project developments. Wider recognition of the importance of understanding the impacts of MNPs for strategies to govern their use.
External events	Policy makers, industry	WG6 to identify events and record them on the CUSP calendar on Microsoft Teams	ImpTox organizing first external event during CUSP launch	Increased support for project activities by engaging with specific stakeholder groups and acquiring feedback on expectations, concerns, recommendations and

		Announce events to partners Identify concrete opportunities for stakeholder engagement and pursue them	WG6 support JRC in hosting Annual Events in 2022 PlasticsFatE organizing Annual Event in 2023 POLYRISK and AURORA organizing Annual Events in 2024 and 2025	needs to feed into project developments. Heightened awareness of key project findings.
Webinars and workshops including round tables	Specific stakeholder groups according to event topic	Create, host and/or support WG webinars and workshops to bolster the dissemination of cross-cutting output and results to specific stakeholder groups	As required – to be discussed and decided	Increased support for project activities by engaging with specific stakeholder groups and acquiring feedback on expectations, concerns recommendations and needs to feed into project developments.
Training events	Early career researchers, Industry, Secondary/High School pupils Interested stakeholders	Identify training opportunities. Create training events for cross-cutting issues	To be discussed and decided	Awareness of the importance of MNP risk management and how it can be implemented
Policy briefs	Policy makers	Identify different foci for policy briefs in consultation with other WGs and Project Coordinators Publish policy briefs on CUSP platforms Send policy briefs to key stakeholders.	PlasticsFatE to coordinate - months 18, 36 and 42	Increased awareness of project results within the context of existing policy priorities.

Through these activities CUSP WG6 intends to establish, maintain, and strengthen connections with relevant organizations across the EU and beyond, raise awareness of the salient issues concerning the impacts of MNPs on human health and how the CUSP projects are addressing them, as well as gather information regarding people’s expectations, concerns, opinions, requirements, and recommendations.

4. Evaluation

An evaluation strategy for dissemination will inform the impact assessment of these activities for the ongoing effective implementation of CUSP’s dissemination and communication efforts. This evaluation will be carried out on a continuous basis to monitor trends and to identify where modifications and improvements need to be made in terms of the utilization of tools, channels, and platforms; the crafting of messages, alignment of media and message with the target audiences; and timeliness.

The evaluation strategy can be broken down into:

- 1) Key performance Indicators (KPI) and Targets
- 2) Monitoring and Reporting.

4.1 Targets and KPIs

Dissemination KPIs and target numbers to help monitor and measure success of impact are shown in Table 7.

Table 6 Dissemination indicators and targets

Key Performance Indicator	Means of measuring / Source of metrics	Target per annum
Number of stakeholders recorded in inventory and registered on SendInBlue	Database metrics	500 per year
Total number of followers on Social Media	LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube statistics	250 per year
Number of posts, tweets/retweets on Social Media	LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube statistics	750 per year
News published on non-CUSP websites	Other networks’ reports	20 items per year
Number of targeted e-mails	SendInBlue statistics	1000 per year
Number of joint events organized with other initiatives	Events registered in dissemination record	3 per year
Number of external events (scientific/technical) attended by project partners	Partner reporting on Scientific/Technical events in dissemination record	25 per year
Number of unique visits to the project website	Project website statistics (webalizer / google analytics) which provide metrics and statistics.	1,500 per year
Number of CUSP flyers distributed	Analysis of the projects’ dissemination plans. Numbers recorded in dissemination record	500 per year

Additional KPIs could include the number of downloads or views of PDFs, flyers, and educational materials as well as the number of queries sent to the CUSP email address or comments posted on other media such as YouTube comments and reactions to videos; comments and reactions to LinkedIn posts, retweets, etc.

4.2 Monitoring and Reporting

To facilitate the accurate monitoring and assessment of dissemination activities, and to gauge and understand the impact of the actions performed, all WG6 members will:

- prepare their activities in accordance with this plan
- record their dissemination and communication activities
- report all CUSP specific dissemination activities for the periodic reports on the template provided and stored on Teams for this purpose (see Figure 9)
- save evidence of the activities conducted



Date(s)	Location	Project(s) Leading Activity	Role	Title of Activity	Type of Activity	Purpose of Activity	Type of Audience	Audience Size	Gender balance (where recorded)	Countries Addressed	Other Information Brief description	Related URL(s)	Key Words
06/09/2020	online	ImoTox, AURORA	Convener/host	Science to Policy: understanding the health risks of micro	Organisation of a conference	Raise awareness	Scientific community (higher education and research), Policy Makers, Media	200 - 500	NA	International	hosted in conjunction with launch of CUSP		

Figure 9 Template for reporting Dissemination, Communication & Training activities

At key intervals and during reporting phases, there will be a review of the impact of these activities to assess whether they are being carried out to maximum effect and in a timely manner. The conclusions will be used to inform and improve future actions, with recommendations for further activities.

5. Summary

This CDP describes the strategies for the communication and dissemination of CUSP activities and developments to ensure maximum and sustainable impact throughout and beyond the lifespan of its constituent projects. Adherence to and development of this integrated plan will ensure that CUSP activities and developments will be given maximum visibility by all WG6 members and involved partners as the CUSP initiatives evolve and mature.

When combined with the effective deployment of exploitation strategies, the overall impact will be to improve the knowledge base and understanding of stakeholders in public agencies, industry, business, research, and NGOs to make informed decisions regarding the use and impact of use on human health of the most common types of plastics.