

POSITION STATEMENT  
**SCIENCE COMMUNICATION  
FOR GREATER  
RESEARCH IMPACT**  
2022

A large, stylized white graphic of a plant with several leaves is centered on the page. The background is a vibrant blue with a pattern of thin, white, curved lines that create a sense of depth and movement, resembling a stylized sunburst or a series of overlapping waves. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and scientific.

SCIENCE  
**EUROPE**  
Shaping the future of research

# Colophon

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June 2022

## **Position Statement 'Science Communication for Greater Research Impact'**

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This position statement is the result of a consultation within the membership of Science Europe and with the members of its Working Group on Communication.

Science Europe would like to thank in particular the co-chairs of its Task Force on the Statement on Science Communication, Thomas Evensen (RCN) and Anna Maria Fleetwood (VR), for their engagement.

### Image credits

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# Preamble

## Great science does not speak for itself

**Research and innovation systems have the crucial role of generating new knowledge and can transform fundamental scientific knowledge into concrete applications. Societal challenges, such as pandemics, artificial intelligence, big data, food security, or energy and climate threats highlight the importance of investment in research and of research-informed evidence.**

However, great science does not speak for itself: it is critical that scientific evidence is readily available and easy to understand. Governments, businesses, and citizens are demanding more of such evidence to make informed decisions and act. Political environments are increasingly polarised, and fundamental changes in how information is communicated through the media have created great opportunities for information sharing, but also opened the door to mis- and disinformation about contentious issues.

Communication tools are often not designed for science-based content, especially for audiences that may not be familiar with it. Reaching out to such audiences is an essential task for science communication, alongside tackling misinformation and conveying results in attractive and useful ways.

The role of researchers and research institutions is changing and so is their engagement in science communication, which now often includes stakeholder involvement and public engagement.

Science Europe views science communication as an essential element in strengthening the “role and contribution of science in tackling societal challenges”<sup>1</sup> and believes that citizens, businesses, and governments will be more likely to act upon science-informed evidence if science communication is improved and addresses the diversity of audiences.

Building on the experience of its members, this statement aligns Science Europe Member Organisations around a vision, a series of principles, and framework actions to foster better and more effective science communication.

1. [Science Europe Strategy Plan 2021–2026](#)

# Vision

## Science communication in a European context

Science Europe envisions a science communication system that:

1. considers science communication as an important part of the research culture we want to build.
2. embeds science communication processes in a research framework based on open science and ethical standards.
3. informs and engages citizens in research, developing public understanding of research.
4. provides timely evidence relevant to societal challenges, to foster science-informed societal debates and policy making, and to stimulate future support.
5. demonstrates how our passion for science can inspire citizens, as well as new generations to achieve higher education.

# Principles

## How to achieve the vision

**Science Europe is committed to working with its Member Organisations to strengthen their capacity and to support their efforts in equipping researchers with tools to communicate research more effectively and with high standards of ethics and integrity.**

To move forward on this priority, Science Europe builds on the following principles:

- We recognise that communication and interaction with various audiences, including other research stakeholders and citizens, takes place at all stages of the research process and contributes to excellent science.
- We promote the importance of providing incentives and ways to recognise communication activities by research organisations and researchers.
- We emphasise that appropriate science communication is key to research-informed policy making, which contributes to improving the relationships with stakeholders in education, policy, industry, and civil society.
- We acknowledge that an appropriate leveraging of resources is required to facilitate purposeful and meaningful and relevant activities to enhance effective science communication.
- We acknowledge the importance of media as a key vehicle to foster trust in science.

# Framework Actions

## Contributing to fostering science communication

**This statement aligns Science Europe Member Organisations in the initiation of actions that contribute to foster science communication.**

Science Europe commits to supporting research funding and research performing organisations to:

- **Strengthen the role that research institutions have in science communication** to better share scientific knowledge to foster democratic debate. This includes involving researchers in the development of communication outputs and processes, and shifting from a focus on the individual scientist, towards making it part of collective work.
  - **Create pan-European opportunities** to develop awareness, enhance relevance, and build trust in science. This includes different forms of science communication and knowledge transfer (such as European-wide social media campaigns, events with EU institutions, and so on).
  - **Build partnerships with science communication stakeholders** and intergovernmental bodies that are already active in science communication, addressing misinformation and fighting fake news in Europe and worldwide.
  - **Develop institutional tools for researchers** to better communicate research. This includes creating toolkits and guidelines; organising training activities for researchers; acknowledging scientists for their communication work; and, incorporating communications plans into the strategic plans of institutions, research groups, and projects.
  - **Employ new and diverse forms of knowledge communication** to improve the quality of science communication, keeping abreast with latest tools and trends in the communication sphere, and using social media effectively to diversify and expand information networks. Such improved knowledge of communication practices should be used to support scientists, who must remain the crucial actors undertaking science communication.
- Now is the time for the scientific community to act and improve science communication.
- Science Europe will work with its members along the principles and action lines in this statement.



**Science Europe AISBL**

RUE DE LA SCIENCE 14, 1040 BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Science Europe is the association of major research funding and research performing organisations in Europe.

Our vision is for the European Research Area to have the optimal conditions to support robust education and research & innovation systems.

We define long-term perspectives for European research and champion best-practice approaches that enable high-quality research for knowledge advancement and the needs of society.

We are uniquely placed to lead advancements to the European Research Area and inform global developments through participation in research initiatives where science is a strong and trusted component of sustainable economic, environmental, and societal development.

More information is available at [www.scienceeurope.org](http://www.scienceeurope.org)

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