

Rights and obligations related to communication and dissemination actions of H2020 projects

Aspects in the Grant Agreement¹

Section 3, Art. 29 – Dissemination of results – Open access – Visibility of EU funding

29.1 Obligation to disseminate results

“Unless it goes against their legitimate interests, 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).”

Section 4, Art. 38 – Promoting the action – Visibility of EU funding

38.1.1 Obligation to promote the action and its results

“The beneficiaries must promote the actions and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner.”

Rights, obligations and recommendations

Visibility of EU funding

The beneficiaries **must** — during the action and afterwards — ensure the visibility of EU funding for any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.) and on any infrastructure, equipment or major result (including prototypes) funded by the grant, by:

- Displaying the EU emblem²:



When displayed together with another logo, the EU emblem must have appropriate prominence. For the purposes of their obligations, the beneficiaries may use the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from the Commission / Agency.

- Including the reference to EU funding set out in the Grant Agreement:
 - For communication and dissemination activities:

“This project has received funding from the [European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme] [Euratom research and training programme 2014-2018] under grant agreement No [number]”.

¹ [AGA – Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#)

² For guidance on using the EU emblem, see the [Guide to using the EU emblem](#)

- For infrastructure, equipment and major results:

“This [infrastructure] [equipment] [insert type of result] is part of a project that has received funding from the [European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme] [Euratom research and training programme 2014-2018] under grant agreement No [number]”

Best practice: Where possible, beneficiaries should make this reference in the language of the communication activity or, for infrastructure, equipment or major results, the official language(s) of the country where they are located (using the text of the GA language version available on Participant Portal Reference Documents³).

The EU emblem and reference to EU funding should be displayed in a way that is easily visible for the public and with sufficient prominence (taking also into account the nature of the activity or object).

- Including a disclaimer excluding responsibility:

Any communication activity related to the action or any dissemination of results must indicate that it reflects only the author’s view and that the Commission / Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains. The text to include is the following:

“The present action reflects only the author’s view and it does not engage in any way the views of the European Commission”

Promotion of the action and its results

The beneficiaries **must** promote the action and its results by:

- Defining a comprehensive communication plan that defines clear objectives (adapted to various relevant target audiences) and sets out a concrete planning for the communication activities (including a description and timing for each activity — throughout the action duration).

Beneficiaries may freely choose the type of communication activities (produce a press release for the general public, organise a workshop, produce a brochure...)

Activities must however:

- Be effective (i.e. suited to achieving the action’s communication goals)
 - Be proportionate to the scale of the action (e.g. activities carried out by a large-scale action with beneficiaries coming from several different countries and a large budget must be more ambitious than those of a beneficiary in a mono-beneficiary grant)
 - Address audiences that go beyond the action’s own community(including the media and the public)
- Communicating the research in a way that is clear and understandable by a non-specialist, non-scientific audience and include the public policy perspective of EU research and innovation funding, by addressing aspects such as:
 - Transnational cooperation in a European consortium (i.e. how working together has allowed to achieve more than otherwise possible)
 - Scientific excellence
 - Contributing to competitiveness and to solving societal challenges
 - Impact on everyday lives (e.g. creation of jobs, development of new technologies, better quality products, more convenience, improved life-style, etc.)

³ [Participant Portal Reference Documents](#)

- Better use of results and spill-over to policy-makers, industry and the scientific community

Any communication activity that is expected to have a major media impact (i.e. media coverage (online and printed press, broadcast media, social media, etc.) that will go beyond having a local impact and which could have the potential for national and international outreach) must be first notified to the Commission/Agency.

Dissemination of results

The beneficiaries **must** - as soon as possible (but not before a decision on their possible protection) - disseminate their results (i.e. make them public). Aspects to take into consideration:

- Timing: Results that are disclosed too early (i.e. before the decision on their protection) run the risk to be invalidated.

Example: If a result is disclosed (in writing (including by e-mail) or orally (e.g. at a conference) before filing for protection—even to a single person who is not bound by secrecy or confidentiality obligations typically someone from an organisation outside the consortium).

- NO dissemination at all may take place, if:
 - The results need to be protected as a trade secret (i.e. confidential know-how) or
 - Dissemination conflicts with any other obligations under the GA (personal data protection, security obligations, etc.).
- Beneficiaries may freely choose the form for disseminating their results.

Standard forms of dissemination are: website, presentation at a scientific conference, peer-review publication.

The dissemination measures should however:

- Be consistent with the Plan for the exploitation and dissemination of the results
- Be proportionate to the impact expected from the action.
- When deciding on dissemination, the beneficiaries must also consider the other beneficiaries' legitimate interests. The beneficiary that intends to disseminate must give the other beneficiaries - unless otherwise agreed - at least 45 days advance notice (together with sufficient information on the dissemination). Any other beneficiary may object to dissemination - unless otherwise agreed - within 30 days of receiving notification, if it can show that it would suffer significant harm (in relation to background or results). In this case, the results may not be disseminated - unless appropriate steps are taken to safeguard the interests at stake.

Examples (significant harm): Disseminating the results would lead to disclosure of valuable background held by another beneficiary as a trade secret or would make protecting another beneficiary's results more difficult. Appropriate steps could include omitting certain data or postponing dissemination until the results are protected.

Best practice: Beneficiaries should foresee arrangements (either in the consortium agreement or in separate agreements) to ensure that decisions on dissemination take due account of the interests of all beneficiaries concerned (and yet allow for publication of results without unreasonable delay).

If the GA provides for additional dissemination obligations, these must also be fulfilled. Such additional dissemination obligations will already be mentioned in the work programme/call.