









NEWROAD Dissemination and Communication Plan

EU4Health Programme EU4H-2021-PJ2-16

Action grants for the Computer-aided Drug Repurposing for Cancer Therapy Project

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document outlines the Dissemination and Communication Plan, a significant milestone in the NEWROAD project. The plan summarises the consortium's approach and specific actions to publicise, leverage, and safeguard the project's outcomes. It will serve as a guide for all NEWROAD project activities. In addition, the plan will be publicly accessible, highlighting the project's contributions and positive impact on the European Union.

Dissemination efforts will continue throughout the project's duration to promote the project widely throughout Europe. The plan outlines the management, tools, and activities involved and clarifies the roles of each partner. Given the limited resources available for dissemination, the consortium has selected cost-effective methods to maximise publicity for the project and its results. The document encompasses the following:

- 1. External Communication Plan
 - a. Planning of communication activities
 - b. Communication tools
 - c. Online dissemination tools
 - d. Offline dissemination tools
 - e. Open access policy
- 2. Internal Communication Plan
 - a. Internal communication tools
 - b. Internal rules and procedures for the proper use of communication tools
 - c. Working internal templates
- 3. Evaluation and Monitoring of Dissemination Activities
- 4. Obligations and Requirements for Communication Actions

2. Introduction

NEWROAD aims to establish a Systematic Drug Repurposing (SDR) capacity across the European Union. The project intends to accomplish this by creating an open and collaborative in silico platform for drug repurposing. The NEWROAD platform will have a triple function: 1. The development of novel therapies based on the repurposing of drugs (initial focus on oncology); 2. the sharing of clinical data by entities in the European Community; 3. the development of an open, collaborative platform for SDR.

The NEWROAD project is committed to disseminating and communicating its findings to various audiences, including the pharmaceutical industry, academia, patient associations, health authorities, policymakers, and society.

The project has created separate plans for dissemination and communication activities, which will be integrated throughout the project's lifecycle. Communication activities will be strategically planned from the outset and will continue to promote the project's activities and outcomes to a diverse audience, including the media and the public. Engagement and two-way communication will be encouraged where appropriate. Dissemination activities will involve publicly disclosing the project's results through appropriate channels, including scientific publications and other relevant media. The project will adhere to guidelines for protecting and exploiting the results where appropriate.

To achieve its dissemination goals, NEWROAD has created a dedicated work package (WP1) that will employ standard dissemination methods tailored to various audiences, such as scientists, researchers, public authorities, patient associations, and civil society. Additionally, NEWROAD will utilise new media technologies, such as web 2.0 platforms, including blogs, video communication, social networks, and website uploads. The project considers dissemination a critical component of its overall success and is committed to ensuring that its findings reach a broad and diverse audience.

WP1 is a crucial component of the NEWROAD project due to its transversal nature. UNISA leads the WP, with support from other consortium partners. The implementation of WP1 includes the development of a Dissemination and Communication Plan, which outlines a standardised procedure for planning, using, and disseminating knowledge generated by the project. In addition, the plan aims to provide a user guide to ensure a common understanding of the objectives of the dissemination activities and to prevent any interference with Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).

The Dissemination and Communication Plan also regulates using different dissemination and communication channels within the project to avoid misuse, improvisation, and optimise resources. Overall, WP1 plays an essential cross-cutting role in the project's implementation, and the Dissemination and Communication Plan is a critical tool for achieving the project's goals while maximising its impact.

The primary aim of the Dissemination Plan is to establish a clear dissemination strategy that outlines measures and priorities for spreading the project consortium's solutions to end-users and interested stakeholders. The plan will include the following:

- Communication activities that have been planned and partially or fully executed.
- Activities for identifying and engaging stakeholders.
- A common framework for identifying knowledge items for exploitation.

The specific objectives of the dissemination strategy are as follows:

- To ensure maximum visibility of the project key facts, objectives, activities, and findings among all identified stakeholders and society.
- To broaden the NEWROAD stakeholder base from researchers in multiple disciplines to the pharmaceutical industry, patient associations, Health Authorities, and policymakers.
- To disseminate the project's findings amongst the scientific community.
- To promote the most comprehensive exploitation of the project's results.
- To facilitate the long-term, self-sustainable adoption of NEWROAD beyond the project by transferring the acquired knowledge to the scientific community and industry.

The NEWROAD consortium has identified the following groups of stakeholders likely to be interested in the project's outputs and, therefore, targeted for communication and dissemination activities:

- Scientific community.
- Researchers in the addressed topics (cancer, drug discovery, bioinformatics, computer-aided drug design).
- Industry, specifically pharmaceutical companies, biotech companies, and investors.
- Policymakers and Health Authorities.
- Related projects and initiatives.
- People in general, civil society.

3. DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

The NEWROAD project aims to disseminate its objectives, partnerships, activities, and intended impacts to stakeholders, including the general public, reputable researchers, and professionals, through a strategic communication process. The consortium will leverage a dedicated website, international meetings, and a future open symposium to raise awareness of the research being performed. Communication actions will also target general media, scholars, and professionals to promote social awareness of the project's goals. All publications generated by the consortium will be freely accessible through the project website using gold open-access schemes. The communication activities will commence from the project onset to ensure all audiences are adequately informed at each stage. Additionally, the consortium will organise training activities to improve researchers' skills and disseminate NEWROAD knowledge in scientific communities.

The NEWROAD project consortium will employ the following dissemination tools and strategies:

- Development of a comprehensive website that includes information about the project, the consortium, and relevant scientific and technical resources and events. The website will be launched in the first month of the project.
- Presentation of project results at relevant research meetings and conferences.
- Distribution of newsletters, fact sheets, and brochures to stakeholders and interested parties.
- Submission of articles to scientific and technical journals and issuing of press releases.
- The organisation of a workshop after the platform is complete if the results are positive.

The consortium will also offer users the option to join a distribution list to receive scientific publications, reports, and presentations related to the project results and development by consortium members. The dissemination effort will begin early in the project to ensure that stakeholders and interested parties are informed at each stage.

The consortium has already identified a preliminary list of conferences, scientific meetings, and events of interest for the dissemination of the activities and results of the project:

- Discovery & Neuroscience Drug Development Europe
- FEBS Congresses
- Discovery Europe Congresses
- COST Conferences
- National and international Congresses

In addition, the main results of the project will also be presented at leading Biopharmaceutical events such as BIO International Convention, BioEurope, BioEurope Spring, and Biotrinity, among others.

3.1. External Communication Plan

3.1.1. Communication Strategy

This section focuses on planning communication actions for the NEWROAD project and all associated activities. These actions include creating divulgation articles, a project webpage, a brochure, news updates, and participation in academic and industrial forums. The table below provides a detailed overview of the specific communication actions planned for each activity.

Table 1: Dissemination plan illustrating the strategy and target dissemination stakeholders for the three years of the project.

TIME	OBJECTIVE	APPROACH
Year 1	Define a "corporate brand" for the project. Create awareness of the NEWROAD project.	Design of a project logo and graphical layout of the website. Publication of brochures and launch of the website. Definition of a project presentation template.
Year 2	Increase awareness and promote the use of the NEWROAD platform.	Attendance to seminars and congresses. Aligning events with similar or complementary EU or national projects. Publish in peer-reviewed journals after appropriate protection (open access, green and gold). Website enrichment. Use of social media for dissemination purposes. Production of a video about the project for the general public.
Year 3	Increase the use and dissemination of the platform. Pave the way to further developments of the proposed technology to develop new drugs.	Newsletter to stakeholders and potential biopharmaceutical industries. Preparation of commercial brochure. Promotion in commercial fairs and scientific conferences. Newsletter to targeted industry associations. Organisation of a workshop and a theory-practice training course for young researchers. Publication of results in high-impact journals. Final workshop with Key Opinion Leaders.

Strict measures will be implemented for data curation to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of clinical data shared within the NEWROAD project. Only properly anonymised clinical data will be uploaded onto the platform, prioritising maximum privacy protection. These precautions are in place to safeguard sensitive information and uphold the highest data security and privacy standards for all project participants.

The following data protection principles will be observed:

- Patient clinical data will be kept confidential.
- Patient identifiers will be kept to a minimum.
- The clinical data will be adequately pseudo-anonymised, i.e., the standard personal identifiers will be replaced by an artificially created identifier (sequential identification number), so the patient's identity will be concealed.
- Only the staff at the local clinical site responsible for the upload can link the sequential identification number to the patient.

The consortium will also ensure that:

- Data are fairly and lawfully processed.
- Data are used only for the specified research purpose.
- All reasonable efforts are taken to ensure data accuracy.
- Data are stored securely.

The platform will ensure that the pseudo-anonymised data uploaded by users remains accessible only to project partners and the scientific community through controlled access. Before granting access to the data, the project Steering Committee will carefully verify the applicant's credentials, research purposes, and commitment to maintaining data confidentiality. This verification process will involve signing a formal statement. The data available in open access will be structured to prevent any association with specific individuals. In certain circumstances, representatives from regulatory authorities may be granted access to records on specific studies. Furthermore, stringent measures will be in place to protect the data stored in the central database, including password protection and limited access.

3.1.2. Target Audience

NEWROAD aims to disseminate project advancements to various stakeholders, including patients, clinicians, researchers, politicians, teachers (university and high school), and the general public. To cater to different audiences, we will prepare materials with varying levels of technical detail: high technical data for researchers and clinicians, low technical data with impact for policymakers and teachers, and low technical data for the general public and patients.

The project will collect good practices, potential contributions to standards, and lessons learned, which will be compiled in proceedings, manuals, and/or white papers to be shared with the scientific community. In addition, standard operating procedures and training materials will be developed and provided for partner organisations and other companies and researchers.

To ensure effective dissemination, we will create annual brochures and documents tailored explicitly for each of the three target groups, with relevant project information. While digital versions will be preferred to minimise paper waste, printed copies will be produced and personally delivered during meetings and seminars as necessary. All documentation will also be accessible on our website. Additionally, the consortium will create short presentations and videos highlighting the project's progress, freely available on the website. Finally, social media channels will further enhance public awareness of the project.

3.1.3. Communication Tools

UNISA is responsible for creating a wide range of communication tools, both online and offline, that are essential for NEWROAD partners to carry out their communication efforts effectively.

NEWROAD Corporative Design

The initial result is the creation of the NEWROAD logo, which incorporates the project name and aims to establish a unified visual identity across all communication materials, whether internally or externally.

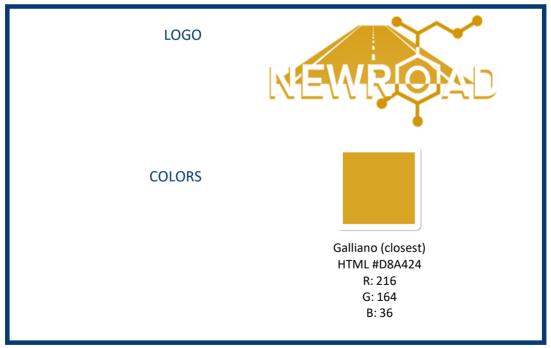


Figure 1. NEWROAD Corporative Design.

NEWROAD Website

UNISA has developed the NEWROAD project website, serving as the primary platform for sharing information about the project. To maximise the visibility of the project's objectives and outcomes, a dedicated website has been created under the ".eu" domain, featuring an intuitive URL to enhance website traffic: https://NEW-ROAD.eu/. The website's effectiveness will be ensured through the following criteria:

- Usability: A clear and easily navigable structure.
- Regular content updates.
- Ensuring accuracy and relevance of the provided information.



Figure 2: NEWROAD Website

The website is composed of the following sections: **Home** and **News**.

Home: the home page of the website shortly introduces the NEWROAD project and gives essential, relevant information. The EU funding is duly acknowledged, not only by the inclusion of the relevant logos (i.e., EU, EU4H Programme) but also claiming that "This project is cofunded by the European Union EU4 Health Programme (EU4H) under grant agreement No 101080024 - NEWROAD".

The home page is divided into the following sections:

• Overview: this section presents the project plan, describing the main goals of each work package.

- <u>Project</u>: on this page are described the aims and objectives of the project, as well as the approach taken.
- <u>Consortium</u>: this section briefly describes the project partners, their logos, and the links to the respective websites.
- <u>Contact</u>: this page provides direct contact to the NEWROAD coordinator through email.

News: this page shows the latest updates and events related to the project.

Social Networks

Social media has emerged as a highly popular platform for rapid information dissemination among diverse target audiences. These channels provide convenient access to content anytime, anywhere, and on any digital device. In order to broaden the reach of the project's target audience, particularly engaging the general public rather than just sector experts, NEWROAD is strategically integrating these media tools into its communication activities.

To achieve this, the project partners will utilise their social media channels to promote the project's outcomes. In addition, UNISA will closely monitor the participating partners' social media activities, ensuring the published information's appropriateness and relevance.

Partners Websites

Most project partners frequently publish newsletters and updates on their respective websites. These communication channels will disseminate information regularly and consistently about the project's activities.

Furthermore, a comprehensive overview of the NEWROAD project will be created and featured as a static information point on all partners' websites. This description will be linked to the official NEWROAD website, giving visitors easy access to further details.

Offline Dissemination Tools

Printed Promotional Material

Creating brochures, posters, and roll-ups in various national languages can significantly broaden the reach of communication activities, ensuring that other interested stakeholders and the general public are informed about the NEWROAD project.

One of our key objectives is to develop a brochure that focuses on specific aspects of the NEWROAD project, such as the consortium, target audience, events, and the Open Platform. This brochure will be available in electronic format for effortless distribution via e-mail and website downloads. Additionally, printed versions will be produced for conferences and live

events, if necessary. When designing the brochure, careful attention will be given to engaging and clear language and a visually appealing and friendly design that effectively represents the project through attractive images and key visuals.

The information presented in the brochure will be adapted for other formats, such as posters and roll-ups. These materials will be printed and made available to partners for use in targeted dissemination activities at events or workshops promoting the NEWROAD project.

Upon completion of the final stage of the NEWROAD project, special attention will be given to developing new promotional materials that specifically highlight the achieved outcomes and results throughout the project. These materials will serve as a focused representation of the project's final deliverables and achievements.

It is important to note that printed materials will only be produced if deemed necessary to reduce paper waste and promote an eco-friendly approach.

Participation in External Events

As part of the global dissemination strategy, all partners will allocate resources to actively participate in external events organised by third parties specifically targeted towards potential audiences for the NEWROAD project. These events will align with the objectives of NEWROAD and provide valuable opportunities to disseminate project-related information and engage with relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, by participating in these events, partners aim to reach a wider audience and promote the objectives and outcomes of the NEWROAD project effectively.

3.1.4. Open Access Policy

NEWROAD has implemented an Open Access Policy to ensure that research and innovation activities are built upon previous works and are accessible to the broader public. The success of these endeavours relies on scientists' efforts and ability to share and access information and results. By adopting this policy, NEWROAD aims to maximise the return on investment for the current project and future research endeavours.

Under the Open Access Policy, NEWROAD commits to providing free and open access to any scientific information generated within the project to the general public. However, in line with the project's exploitation strategy, any foreground generated during the project will undergo a thorough analysis to evaluate its potential for exploitation before any dissemination occurs.

Once the foreground's intellectual property rights (IPR) have been secured, any scientific and technical results suitable for publication will be submitted to Open Access journals. Initially, the published articles or final peer-reviewed manuscripts will be archived in an online repository, following the "green" open access requirements. However, if the scientific publisher imposes an embargo period that exceeds the 6-month limit set by the European Union, the publication will be shifted to "gold" open access. In this case, the scientific publisher will provide immediate open access, and the project's allocated budget will cover the associated costs.

This approach ensures that valuable research outputs are made openly accessible while considering the potential for commercial exploitation. By balancing the principles of open access and intellectual property rights, NEWROAD aims to foster collaboration, innovation, and the advancement of scientific knowledge.

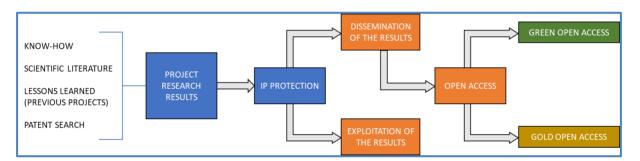


Figure 3: Scheme of the open access policy of the NEWROAD project.

Furthermore, per the guidance provided by the European Commission, the partners involved in the NEWROAD project will make every effort to deposit the research data necessary for validating the findings presented in the published scientific papers. This data will be deposited into an online repository that promotes open access. It is important to note that this data deposition will be carried out while adhering to the data management and protection policies outlined in the previous sections.

NEWROAD will strive to utilise Creative Commons licenses whenever possible to address copyright concerns. These licenses will allow the project to retain its copyright while granting appropriate permissions to publishers.

It should be emphasised that specific data, particularly protected or sensitive data, may not be suitable for open access and will be handled according to the prescribed data protection protocols. The commitment to open access extends to the extent that it does not compromise the privacy and security of individuals or violate any legal or ethical obligations associated with data handling.

By implementing these measures, NEWROAD demonstrates its alignment with the vision of the European Commission, which recognises knowledge as a crucial source of competitive advantage and views open access as the most suitable tool for achieving several important goals:

- Accelerating the research and discovery process, resulting in higher returns on investment in R&D.
- Preventing the duplication of research efforts, leading to cost savings in R&D expenditures.
- Facilitating opportunities for multidisciplinary research and collaborations between institutions and sectors.
- Increasing the possibilities for the adoption and commercialisation of research findings, thereby generating greater returns on public R&D investments and fostering the emergence of new industries based on scientific information.
- Promoting openness and transparency, which contributes to informed policymaking and ultimately benefits society and its citizens.

Through its commitment to open access, NEWROAD actively supports these objectives, recognising the transformative potential of accessible knowledge and its positive impact on scientific progress, innovation, and societal well-being.

3.2. Internal Communication Plan

3.2.1. Internal Communication Tools

WP1 plays a crucial role in maintaining the quality of internal communication throughout the project. In collaboration with the consortium members, UNISA is responsible for ensuring efficient, smooth, and controlled communication among all the partners involved in NEWROAD.

To achieve this, WP1 will employ various mechanisms throughout the project's duration. One such mechanism involves organising periodic planned meetings where the coordination of communication aspects in each country will be addressed. These meetings will also serve as a platform to assess the performance of the dissemination plan and implement corrective measures as necessary.

The essential tools that will be utilised to facilitate effective internal communication among the project partners are regular e-mails and Steering Committee periodic meetings. Regular e-mails will be used to exchange information, updates, and important documents among the consortium members. It will enable quick and reliable communication, ensuring all partners stay informed and connected. In addition, steering Committee periodic meetings will be held

regularly and involve representatives from each partner organisation. These meetings will aim to discuss and make decisions regarding the project's strategic direction, monitor progress, and address any communication-related challenges that may arise.

By employing these mechanisms and utilising the tools above, WP1 aims to uphold a high standard of internal communication throughout the NEWROAD project. Furthermore, this collaborative approach ensures effective information sharing, smooth coordination, and timely decision-making among the consortium members.

3.2.2. Internal Rules and Procedures for the Proper Use of Communication Tools

NEWROAD Website

The primary means of communication and news dissemination with our target audience for the NEWROAD project will be through the dedicated project website. All partners have the opportunity to propose content for publication on the website. However, to maintain consistency and ensure appropriateness with the project's progress, UNISA will serve as the website administrator.

As the website administrator, UNISA will be responsible for reviewing, uploading, and approving the content suggested by the partners before it is made public. This role ensures that content is suitable, relevant, and aligned with the project's current stage.

By exercising this approval process, UNISA guarantees that the information shared on the NEWROAD website maintains a high standard and effectively represents the project's goals and achievements. It also ensures that the website serves as a reliable source of information for the project's stakeholders and the wider audience.

Partners' Social Media Profiles

In terms of social media communication, the project partners will be sharing two distinct types of information on their profiles:

- 1. <u>Updates on Project Progress</u>: Partners will regularly post updates regarding the project's progress. To ensure that our audience is not overwhelmed with excessive posts and to maximise the reach of our publications, the timing of these posts will be determined based on the level of project activity during each season.
- 2. <u>Strategic Sharing of Supporting Content</u>: Partners will actively monitor the press and strategically share content that aligns with the project's main ideas. Partners are encouraged to repost and reshare this content through their corporate profiles, amplifying its reach and impact.

When defining key messages, it is essential to consider the purpose and target audience. In addition, the following communication principles should be kept in mind:

- Clarity and Simplicity: Messages should be clear, easy to understand, and expressed in non-technical language whenever possible. The language used should be appropriate for the intended audience.
- Tailoring to Recipients: It is crucial to carefully consider what the target audience should know about the project and tailor the messages accordingly.
- Coordination for Impact: Messages from different projects related to the same subject can be coordinated to enhance their collective impact, fostering a more comprehensive understanding among the audience.
- Accuracy and Realism: Information shared should be correct, factual, and grounded in reality to maintain credibility and trust with the audience.

By adhering to these communication principles, the project partners can effectively engage their audiences, deliver clear messages, and ensure the dissemination of accurate and impactful information through their social media channels.

3.2.3. Working Internal Templates

Standardising formats for project deliverables, documents, presentations, and other items is crucial for effective communication. UNISA has created templates for NEWROAD partners to ensure consistency, coherence, and a professional appearance. These templates streamline the creation process, maintain cohesive brand identity, and make information more accessible to stakeholders. Partners can utilise these templates to produce high-quality materials aligned with the project's guidelines and objectives.









Figure 4: NEWROAD Presentation Templates.



Figure 5: NEWROAD Deliverable Template.

3.3. Evaluation and Monitoring of Dissemination Activities

The effectiveness of communication activities will be assessed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative success indicators. The evaluation aims to gauge how much communication objectives have been achieved and understand the relationship between outcomes and the efforts invested in reaching those goals. By analysing this data, the project can gain insights into the factors that contribute to successful communication and identify any obstacles that may hinder its effectiveness. These findings will refine and enhance communication activities, ensuring continuous improvement throughout the project.

A set of indicators has been specifically designed to monitor the successful deployment in terms of efficiency and effectiveness of dissemination activities:

Table 2: Indicators to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of dissemination activities.

Indicators	Measurement Unit	Target Value
Project corporative design	-	1
Project website	-	1
Project brochure	Nr of project brochure produced	4
Project poster	Nr of project posters produced	3
Project communication strategy	-	1
International NEWROAD e-newsletter	Nr of newsletters produced	4
Number of regional local events organised for external audiences	Nr of events organised	3
Number of European events organised for external audiences	Nr of events organised	1
Number of events attended representing the project	Nr of events attended	5
Presence at tradeshows and business events	Nr of events attended	4
Communication with SMEs for participation in events or calls	Nr of SMEs contacted	5
Scientific publications in peer-review journals, international conferences, and workshops	Nr of publications	5
Activity and dissemination on the NEWROAD	Nr of entries or publications	10
External audience of NEWROAD website	Nr of unique visitors	50
Number of references to NEWROAD on other websites	Nr of entries or publications	5
Scientific publications as Open Access		100%

3.3.1 Dissemination Log

NEWROAD dissemination log will be used to monitor the dissemination activities of its partners throughout the project duration. This log is located in the Continuous Reporting section of the EU Funding & Tender Portal.

Whenever a NEWROAD partner undertakes a dissemination activity, such as organising an event, publishing content on their website, or attending a third-party workshop to promote

NEWROAD, they must add the details of the action to the dissemination log. This includes essential information such as the date of the action, the specific channel used for dissemination, the location, and a brief description of the action itself.

By maintaining this comprehensive log, the project can effectively track and document the dissemination activities carried out by each partner. This information is a valuable resource for assessing the reach and impact of the project's dissemination efforts. It also helps to ensure transparency and accountability in the dissemination process, allowing for better evaluation and reporting of the project's overall progress.

3.4. Obligations and Requirements for Communication Actions

3.4.1. Information on EU Funding – Obligation and Right to Use the EU Emblem

Unless the Agency requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any dissemination material on any media must indicate that the project received funding from the European Union's EU4Health Programme.

In particular, it should display the European Union flag,



Figure 6: EU Emblem.

and the acknowledgement of funding:

- For communication activities:
 - "This project is co-funded by the European Union EU4 Health Programme (EU4H) under grant agreement No 101080024 NEWROAD."
- For infrastructure, equipment, and major results:
 - "This [infrastructure] [equipment] [insert type of result] is part of a project that is cofunded by the European Union EU4 Health Programme (EU4H) under grant agreement No 101080024 – NEWROAD."