Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation Plan (CoDEP)

The Wide-field Spectroscopic Telescope (WST)

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- Editorial, formatting, and spelling
- Clarification

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v. 2.0	06/06/2025	Lorenza Vianello	Drafting of the communication plan
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v. 3.0	20/06/2025	Rev. Lorenza Vianello, Maria Cristina Fortuna, Letizia Cassarà, Roelof de Jong	Addressed selected comments, streamlined content, and reviewed target audience and social media strategy
v. 3.1	04/07/2025	Lorenza Vianello	Preliminary final version
v. 3.2	04/07/2025	Rev. Flora Paganelli	AD, EDI and other edits and comments
v. 4.0	25/07/2025	Rev. Lorenza Vianello, Maria Cristina Fortuna	Addressed comments, revised tables and reviewed stakeholders.
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v. 4.2	29/07/25	Rev. Lorenza Vianello, Maria Cristina Fortuna, Sofia Randich	Added some details in the website map, further reviewed the stakeholder mapping and the website section. Revised chapter 11.

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1. Introduction to The Wide-field Spectroscopic Telescope

The Wide-field Spectroscopic Telescope (WST) is an ambitious international project aimed at developing the conceptual design of the next-generation ground-based facility for wide-field spectroscopy. Built on a strong European-Australian partnership, the WST will play a crucial role in enabling transformative science in many areas of astrophysics and cosmology, such as the formation, evolution, and chemical enrichment of galaxies (including the Milky Way); the origin of stars and planets; astrophysics of transient and time-variable events; and multi-messenger astrophysics.

With its extensive field of view, high multiplexing capacity, and state-of-the-art instrumentation, the WST is designed to complement current and upcoming observatories, including the Extremely Large Telescope of the European Southern Observatory (ESO), the Vera Rubin Observatory, the Gaia and Euclid ESA space missions, the Square Kilometer Array Observatory, and the Einstein Telescope.

The scientific mission of the WST is founded on a community-driven approach that emphasises open collaboration, transparency, and the early involvement of scientists, particularly early-career researchers, in shaping the survey strategy and science cases.

Beyond its scientific excellence, the WST also serves as a model for responsible research infrastructure. The project includes a dedicated work package on sustainability, aiming at minimising its environmental impact through energy-efficient design, the use of green data centres, and long-term operational planning. The WST additionally actively promotes equity, diversity and inclusion across all levels of the consortium and communication, and it has an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Work Package that aims to embed EDI throughout its evolution. It helps the consortium and broader community uphold these principles through transparency, fair leadership pathways, and equitable sharing of responsibilities and resources.

As part of the ESFRI landscape and a candidate for ESO's post-ELT new facility, the WST is not just a technological and scientific milestone — it is a strategic endeavour that embodies the values and vision of the European Research Area in the 21st century.

1.1 Applicable Documents

AD1 – Horizon Deliverable: The WST Code of Conduct - WP6.5 EDI, D23, D6.4, Public

AD2 – The WST Publication Policy – WST Doc. Ref. ID: WST-1.1-SRA-01.001

1.2 Acronyms and Definitions

CoDEP	Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation Plan
CT	Communication Team
EAS	European Astronomical Society
EDI	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
ELT	Extremely Large Telescope
ESFRI	European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures
ESO	European Southern Observatory
ETC	Exposure Time Calculator
FAIR	Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
SKAO	Square Kilometre Array Observatory
SPIE	International Society for Optics and Photonics
SyGMA	The WST System and Governance Management Archive
TBD	To Be Defined
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
WP	Work Package
WST	The Wide-field Spectroscopic Telescope

2. The WST Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Plan (CoDEP)

This document has been prepared as part of the WST initiative, coordinated by a European-Australian consortium dedicated to the concept study of the Wide-field Spectroscopic Telescope.

It presents the initial version of the Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation Plan (CoDEP), created at Month 7 as part of Work Package 6.3 – Outreach, Communication, Dissemination, and Training. The CoDEP offers strategic guidelines for all communication and dissemination activities throughout the project's lifecycle. It outlines the project's identity standards, the primary tools and channels available, and the actions planned to maximise stakeholder engagement, visibility of results, and long-term impact.

By adopting a multidimensional strategy that combines digital platforms, publications, events, and policy-focused communication, the CoDEP advances the project's main scientific and institutional goals. It guarantees that the WST's vision, progress, and achievements are communicated clearly and effectively to the Consortium, the wider scientific community, institutional stakeholders, industry partners, and the general public.

2.1 Definitions and terminology

The foundations of the WST CoDEP are based on a structured system of communication and knowledge-sharing established from the project's early stages. This process improves the visibility, accessibility, and long-term value of the WST by clearly distinguishing between communication, dissemination, and knowledge transfer activities.

The WST adopts a working definition of these concepts inspired by established European research practice:

- **Communication** is a strategically planned, ongoing activity that starts in the early stages of the project and continues throughout its entire duration. It aims to promote the WST initiative, raise awareness of its objectives and progress, and engage various audiences, including the broader WST collaboration itself, the scientific community, policymakers, industry professionals, educators, the media, and the broader public. Communication relies on a two-way exchange of information and values, using tools such as the project website, magazines, brochures and newsletters, social media channels, public events, audiovisual materials, and storytelling formats that make the project's mission tangible and relevant to society.

- **Dissemination** involves publicly sharing the WST's results through suitable and targeted channels. It ensures that the knowledge and tools developed by the project are accessible and reusable by relevant parties, including researchers, instrumentation specialists, academic institutions, industry, science communicators, and public authorities. Dissemination encompasses scientific publications, technical reports, conference presentations, and contributions to open-source tools and repositories. It is planned from the beginning and adheres to principles of openness, transparency, and long-term usability. Dissemination activities targeting the scientific community and academic institutions have already been initiated, while those addressing institutions and industry are expected to begin in the second half of 2026.

- **Knowledge transfer** and **exploitation** involve identifying the users and beneficiaries of WST's outputs and implementing mechanisms that maximise their uptake and application, with particular attention to accessibility to a diverse audience. Although the WST is not a commercial initiative, knowledge transfer is essential to ensure that the technical solutions, data products, and methodologies developed can be utilised by the astronomical community, instrumentation and software developers, and future large-scale research infrastructures. An effective knowledge transfer targeted to a diverse community is an essential ingredient to attract and engage a broader pool of individuals, also in the operation of the project, and hence have a truly diverse community that can drive innovative ideas and bring forward transformative science. These efforts contribute to the WST's long-term impact and sustainability, extending beyond the lifetime of the preparatory project phase.

Considering the above, we have decided to include the word 'communication' in the title of the document itself, which was initially intended as a Dissemination & Exploitation Plan.

3. Communication positioning

Positioning is a strategic process through which a project determines how it wants to be perceived by its target audiences, identifying its unique role, values, and contribution within a broader context. It is not just about visibility but about shaping a clear and recognisable identity that resonates with stakeholders and stands out in the communication landscape. This will serve as the foundation for developing a coherent

narrative (storytelling) and selecting the most appropriate media and communication tools based on different target groups.

To define this positioning, consultations and discussion sessions will be conducted within WP6.3 and, more broadly, across the consortium. Representatives from the WPs will be involved. These are initial steps that will take place once the communication plan is outlined in its main features.

The key messages that will be developed are intended to confirm and reinforce the WST's positioning across all target audiences. They will serve as anchors for a consistent communication strategy, helping the project clearly convey its value and mission.

While the current inputs are preliminary, they already begin to sketch what the WST aims to communicate and what we want each audience to remember. For example, the WST's high potential to enable transformational scientific discoveries in the 2040s and afterwards, its complementarity with other infrastructures like Vera Rubin, SKAO, Euclid, and the Einstein Telescope, its commitment to minimising environmental impact, and all elements that contribute to shaping a distinct and compelling identity.

4. Communication Objectives

The Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation Plan (CoDEP) aims to ensure that the activities, results, and outcomes of the WST project are visible, accessible, and valued by a broad range of stakeholders at local, national, and international levels. The dissemination strategy adopts a global perspective while remaining firmly anchored in the European framework, which constitutes the core of its outreach and impact.

Communication and dissemination will be integral to the entire project lifecycle. This continuous effort will support the development of a vibrant community around the WST, strengthen collaboration among partners, encourage external stakeholder engagement, and foster the replicability and scalability of the tools and solutions developed.

Through a strategic combination of digital platforms, events, editorial materials, and targeted actions, the plan pursues the following overarching objectives:

- **Build and maintain an active community** around the project to foster sustained engagement with researchers, technologists, research institutions, and universities;
- **Facilitate knowledge exchange and transfer** to enable effective dissemination of insights, methodologies, and technological developments;
- **Enhance partner visibility** and expertise. Highlight the contributions of consortium members and affiliated organisations;
- **Promote replicability and scalability** to support the reuse and adaptation of the WST tools, processes, and approaches;
- **Foster dialogue with key societal actors,** including policymakers, industry representatives, educators, and public audiences, in discussions on the scientific and societal relevance of the WST.

The communication objectives and implementation modalities will remain open to revision as the project develops, reflecting the evolving needs and priorities that may arise.

In support of the project's scientific and strategic ambitions, the communication strategy will also pursue the following specific goals:

- **Foster awareness and recognition of the WST**

  Establish it as a transformative facility for astrophysical research and a compelling candidate for post-ELT infrastructure. The project will actively communicate its vision and progress to the international astronomy community.

- **Foster participation within the scientific community**

  Reach researchers worldwide, including early-career individuals and researchers from marginalised groups, who may be especially vulnerable to barriers to access resources, through targeted dissemination of scientific outputs, participation in key conferences, and development of accessible simulation tools. This will encourage the co-construction of the science case and survey strategy.

- **Secure strategic support from ESO decision-makers and opinion leaders**

  Ensure targeted outreach to ESO governance bodies, member state representatives, and influential voices in the astronomy community to build awareness, endorsement, and alignment around the WST's scientific and strategic value ahead of the upcoming infrastructure call.

- **Maximise the visibility and impact of project results**

  Disseminate key deliverables through coordinated digital, editorial, and media actions, using language and formats adapted to different stakeholder groups, from policymakers to students.

- **Promote early engagement with industrial and societal actors**

  Initiate early dialogue with industry stakeholders to pave the way for future procurement and innovation transfer. Efforts will also target the public and educational institutions to enhance scientific literacy and foster a deeper understanding of large-scale research infrastructures.

- **Contribute to an inclusive research culture**

  Showcase the WST's efforts to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) through inclusive training, outreach, and communication activities in collaboration with the EDI WP and compliance with the released WST Code of Conduct (AD1).

  The strategy will highlight the distinctive features and requirements of the project as defined across the various Work Packages, giving visibility to their contributions and specific focus areas. To this end, a regular contact procedure will be established with the coordinators of each Work Package (or their designated representatives) to ensure that all relevant information is shared and can be effectively incorporated into the communication activities.

5. Stakeholders and target audience

As outlined in the WST project proposal, the communication and dissemination strategy is designed to engage a wide range of stakeholders beyond the consortium itself. This has led to a stakeholder mapping and prioritisation process based on the principles and methods of the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984) and the AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard (AccountAbility, 2015), shown in Figure 1.

Stakeholders have been categorised into four groups — key, institutional, operational, and potential — according to their level of influence, interest, and expected involvement. The following stakeholder map and wheel are currently in an initial development phase. They will be further revised and refined once specific actions and available resources have been assessed—most importantly, once Consortium members have gained greater familiarity with the WST impact and related placement in the mapping tool.

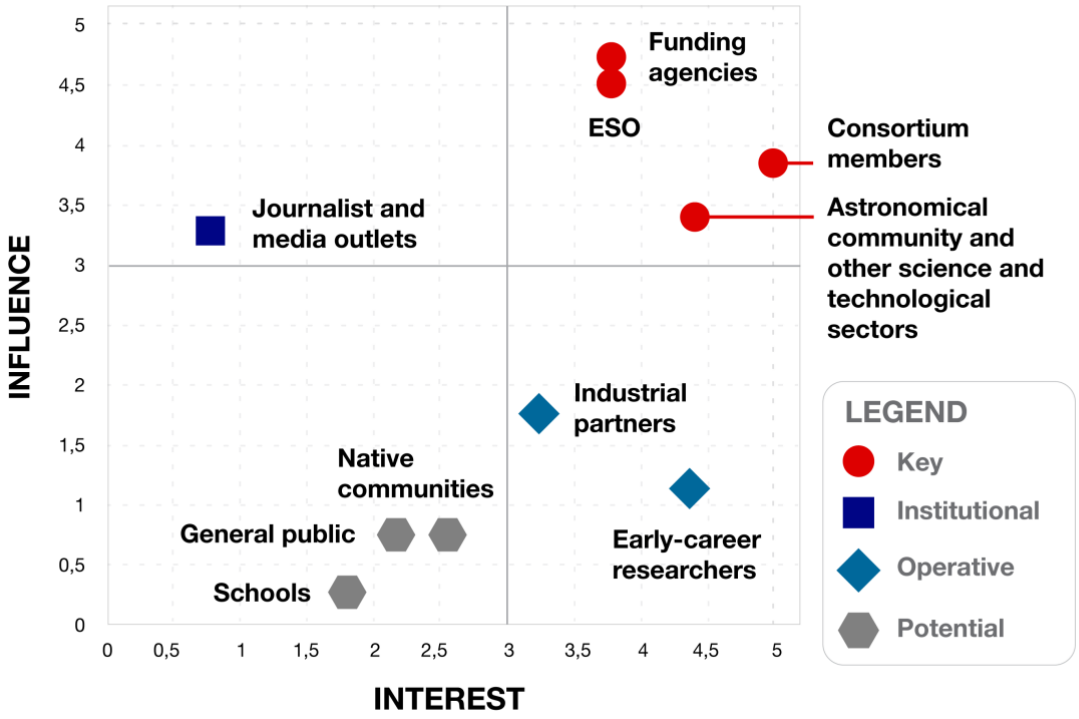

Figure 1. The WST stakeholder map.

This classification, inspired by stakeholder theory and adapted to the needs of the WST project, aims to support strategic and differentiated engagement throughout the project's lifecycle.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

(high interest / high power)
They play a central role in the project's life, as they are directly interested in its results and hold a strong influence. These stakeholders must be "closely managed," with careful attention to the relationship in all its aspects.

INSTITUTIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

(low interest / high power)
These are the actors who shape the context through regulatory and supervisory activities. It is important to “acknowledge their role” and take their input seriously.

OPERATIVE STAKEHOLDERS

(high interest / low power)
These are entities that are actively and significantly involved, despite having limited influence. They require “active consultation” to ensure their expectations are understood and addressed.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS

(low interest / low power)
These are individuals or groups who are indirectly affected by the organisation's activities, but with limited capacity to influence or be significantly influenced. They should be “kept informed,” but no specific action is required.

The degree of influence assigned to each stakeholder is based on an internal strategic assessment, whereas the level of interest reflects a prospective engagement objective rather than the stakeholder's current level of involvement.

For each stakeholder group, the most relevant touchpoints and meaningful opportunities for engagement have been identified and are shown in Figure 2. Please note that their appearance in the figure is not ranked in order of importance.

Figure 2. "Engagement wheel" - Stakeholder communication objectives and touchpoints.

A subsequent phase of stakeholder engagement will be undertaken to also reach potential stakeholders, such as local communities and individuals or groups identified through consultation with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) working group, to ensure that a broad spectrum of perspectives and lived experiences is meaningfully represented. For these target groups, the relevant touchpoints and coherent engagement activities will therefore be specified and incorporated within the engagement wheel described above.

To ensure effective dissemination and engagement, the WST's communication strategy must be tailored to the platforms best suited to the age groups and roles of its diverse target audiences. Please refer also to Section 9 for the recommended media by audience segment.

Similarly, the WST website is not primarily a public-facing portal, but rather a key infrastructure for engaging the scientific community and institutional stakeholders. It will be designed to support multiple functions, with different content paths tailored to distinct audiences (Section 9.1). In addition, the website will serve as the repository for all open-access project documentation, products, and software, thereby fulfilling one of the project's core requirements regarding transparency and accessibility.

In order to effectively carry out engagement activities with key stakeholders, institutional actors, and the media, the plan includes the definition of press office and public relations actions, aimed at identifying the individuals or entities that will take on this role. This activity is scheduled to take place in the last quarter of 2025.

5.1 Stakeholder Contact Management

To support effective and targeted communication throughout the project, a series of strategic contact lists will be developed and maintained. These tools will facilitate timely outreach to key stakeholders, ensure coordination within the Consortium, and strengthen the visibility and impact of dissemination and knowledge transfer actions. In particular, the following lists will be implemented:

- A **database** including individuals and organisations, outside the Consortium, with interest in the project or the ability to act as supporters and amplify the impact of the WST Chronicle (see Table 1) distribution, beyond the Consortium.
- A **spokesperson list**, identifying official representatives at both the national and international levels, who can respond to press enquiries and ensure coherent and consistent messaging.
- A **targeted company list** for potential involvement in **knowledge transfer** activities, including relevant industrial partners and actors from the innovation ecosystem.
- A list of **designated contacts, managed** by the Project Scientist, for each of the main international facilities (e.g., Gaia, Vera Rubin, Euclid, SKAO, ELT, the Einstein Telescope), aimed at fostering synergies with existing and upcoming research infrastructures.

These lists will be regularly updated and used strategically across different phases of the project to ensure inclusive, efficient, and goal-oriented engagement.

6. Press room and external relations

To effectively carry out engagement activities with key stakeholders, institutional actors, and the media, the plan emphasises the need to establish dedicated procedures and actions aimed at setting up a press office function. This includes outlining the framework for media relations and identifying individuals or entities who may serve as official spokespersons. This initiative, to be launched in the last quarter of 2025, will contribute to several strategic objectives of the communication plan, including fostering awareness and recognition of WST, maximising the visibility and impact of project results, and building long-term relationships with journalists and media professionals.

6.1 Crisis Communication and Risk Mitigation

While no significant reputational risks are currently anticipated for the WST project, a basic protocol for managing potential communication issues may be adopted as part of the overall strategy. Situations such as delays in deliverables, critical feedback from stakeholders, or misunderstandings in public or media communication may occasionally arise and should be handled in a coordinated and transparent manner.

The Communication Team (WP6.3-CT, see Section 8), in close collaboration with the Project Office, Project Manager, the mentoring EDI leads, and relevant Work Package leads, will monitor emerging issues and propose appropriate responses when needed. In case of external criticism or controversy, the guiding principles will be timeliness, factual accuracy, and tone moderation. For both, internal and external controversy or issues related to code of conduct, the WST Code of Conduct (AD1) policies and guidelines will be applied in collaboration with the WP6.5 EDI team.

To support preparedness, it is highly recommended that the project develop pre-approved statements, Q&A templates, and internal briefing notes for foreseeable scenarios. These materials would help ensure a consistent and coherent response across channels. If necessary, a designated spokesperson could be identified to interface with media or institutional audiences, in coordination with the project's press office function.

7. Guidelines

7.1 Visual identity

As part of the WST communication strategy, a comprehensive set of communication guidelines and a coherent visual identity have been developed to ensure consistency and recognisability across all project outputs and channels. These resources include standardised PowerPoint presentation and poster templates, along with practical instructions on the layout and styling of graphics, tables, and charts to be used in scientific presentations and public-facing materials, also following the recommendations of the publication policy document (AD2). Additional templates will be released according to community and project needs (see also Presentations guidelines). To support internal alignment and external dissemination, the visual identity package also features logo variants, colour palettes, typographic guidance, and sample layouts for brochures, posters, and social media cards. These tools are intended to facilitate high-quality, professional communication throughout the consortium and to reinforce the WST’s presence in both scientific and institutional contexts.

7.2 Communication guidelines

In addition, the communication team is working to provide editable templates for key formats, including press releases, a boilerplate, event announcements, and policy briefs, ensuring that all partners can contribute to the WST’s visibility in a coordinated and impactful manner. Please refer to Annex 1.

7.3 Presentations guidelines

A dedicated effort is being made to ensure that the WST presentations convey information in a clear, accessible, and visually coherent manner. The communication team is working on internal guidelines that provide practical recommendations and tools to this end. Particular attention has been given to making the WST communication inclusive of the diverse cognitive and sensory needs of the audience, also through the design of standardised PowerPoint presentation and poster templates that satisfy accessibility requirement and will undergo revision by the EDI working package before distribution within the community.

7.4 Publication policy

Although not strictly part of the communication strategy, it is worth noting that a Publication Policy is available to all Consortium members (AD2).

8. Communication Input

Science and engineering working groups will be the primary sources of input and content for communicating the WST's progress, achievements, and strategic developments. Their contributions are essential to ensure the accuracy, relevance, and scientific integrity of all communication and dissemination efforts.

A dedicated Communication Team (WP6.3-CT), established within the framework of the WP6.3, is responsible for developing and implementing the CoDEP. This team coordinates content collection, curates communication outputs, and ensures consistency and strategic alignment across all activities and channels. The WP 6.3-CT will act as both facilitator and content partner for all work packages. Below are outlined the baseline interactions.

- **Liaison system within the Work Packages**

Each Work Package will be invited to nominate a communication liaison**,** who will serve as a point of contact with the WP6.3 Communication Team. This person will help flag relevant updates, identify dissemination opportunities (e.g., publications, prototypes, milestones), and contribute to the validation of content prior to publication.

- **Regular check-ins and content requests**

The WP6.3-CT will establish a quarterly check-in system with the WP leaders to gather updates and plan content across channels (e.g., newsletter items, Chronicle articles, social media posts, public deliverables).

- **Shared content repository**

A centralised online workspace (e.g., SharePoint) will be maintained to collect templates, photos, videos, diagrams, presentation slides, and draft texts submitted by project teams. This repository will be used to disseminate various outputs while ensuring consistency.

- **Editorial calendar and submission calls.**

A regular editorial calendar will be circulated to all partners, highlighting upcoming opportunities and deadlines for contributions (e.g., special issues of the Chronicle, campaign launches, and international days relevant to the project themes).

- **Two-way communication**

The CT will also support the WPs by providing templates and assistance in preparing content, fostering a collaborative process that recognises both scientific leadership and communication best practices.

The team will communicate the most appropriate contact procedures for submitting materials and/or requesting support.

9. The WST Media Strategy

The media strategy plays a central role in ensuring the visibility and outreach capacity of the WST project across all its target audiences. The selected tools and channels reflect a multilevel approach that combines institutional communication, scientific dissemination, and public engagement. Particular attention has been paid to aligning each medium with the specific objectives and audiences defined in the stakeholder mapping, and to ensuring flexibility across different phases of the project lifecycle.

The main media tools that will be activated or further developed as part of the WST communication strategy are summarised Table 1. For each tool, a brief description is provided, outlining its function, target audience, and expected contribution to the dissemination and exploitation of project outcomes. This structure is intended to support a coordinated and impactful implementation of media activities across the Consortium.

Media tools and channels will be periodically reviewed to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness. Adjustments may be made as the project evolves, in response to changing needs, audiences, and opportunities for outreach.

Among all the media, the WST website plays a key role, particularly in the early stages of the communication strategy, serving as a central hub for information and interaction. It will be essential in building and engaging the scientific community around the WST, providing access to project updates, technical content, and opportunities for collaboration.

Table 1. Media tools

Tool / Channel	Description
WST website (.eu domain)	Main communication platform for the main stakeholders. A revised and fully operational version of the website will serve as the central hub for project documentation, updates, event announcements, and media materials.

Tool / Channel	Description
WST social media	To be activated at a later stage, see Section 9.2 for timeline and rationale.
WST Chronicle magazine (bulletin)	Tri-monthly A4 PDF publication, covering articles, milestones, interviews, etc. The bulletin will be distributed through the WST website and mailing lists for wide outreach across the scientific and technical communities.
WST Newsletter	A digital newsletter - planned for activation upon website restyling completion. It will provide regular updates to the WST community, including news on project milestones, public releases, job and collaboration opportunities, upcoming events, and open calls. It will also serve as a key channel for engaging both internal and external stakeholders in the ongoing development of the WST initiative.
Science conferences	WST-dedicated international events.
Training school	Targeted at PhDs and postdocs, hands-on sessions on simulations and survey planning.
Outreach programmes	Via consortium institutes: school activities, public conferences, public festivals, media stories.
Industry workshop	One event dedicated to technical presentation and co-design with suppliers.
Brochure and press kits	Material for funders, policymakers, and media (digital and printable).

9.1 Website Restyling Strategy

As part of a broader effort to position the WST in the scientific landscape and to properly showcase the project, we are initiating a restyling of the WST website. The object is to enhance both the design and the functionality of the website by making it more intuitive and accessible. A specific effort will be dedicated to complying with the WCAG guidelines.

We identified four long-term goals: to engage with the scientific community, to explore potential partnerships with industries, to establish a dedicated media channel, to serve as project repository for open access material. At this stage of the project, the primary target is the scientific community; consequently, the new structure is being designed primarily with this audience in mind. However, given the aforementioned goals, we are also laying the groundwork for future developments, including sections such as a press area and public engagement.

The restyling will involve a transition from the current platform to a more flexible and widely supported one, such as WordPress. Alternative platforms are also being considered to ensure the best long-term solution. We defer this and other decisions concerning technical and structural aspects to an external contractor that will oversee the task and release the WST website by the end of 2025.

The new website will be organised to provide both discoverability and in-depth information. Figure 3 illustrates the new structure of the website after restyling. However, we will identify the best solutions when all the technical aspects are sorted. This should thus be considered as the general direction of the project rather than its definitive implementation.

9.1.1 Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

To ensure the WST website achieves optimal visibility and credibility among its target audiences, especially within the scientific and institutional ecosystem, basic Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) practices will be integrated into the restyling process. These include the adoption of a clean and hierarchical content structure, the use of meaningful and descriptive metadata (titles, alt-texts, meta-descriptions), the inclusion of accessible and semantic URLs, and the implementation of internal linking strategies to facilitate navigation and indexing. These elements will contribute to making the website more discoverable by search engines and enhance its overall usability and impact. Specific guidelines for SEO-friendly content creation will be developed in collaboration with the web development team.

9.2 The WST social media

The WST will not launch its social media channels immediately, although it recognises their importance for communication, dissemination, and the promotion of technology transfer. Careful consideration must be given to the management strategy and content planning for these platforms. For this reason, the WST will adopt a gradual, phased approach, initially prioritising more institutional channels that foster dialogue with institutions, the scientific community, and industry stakeholders. More mainstream social media platforms may be introduced at a later stage. The WP6.3-CT will continue to develop and refine the social media strategy throughout the website's restyling period, ensuring it is ready to act as soon as the revised website becomes available.

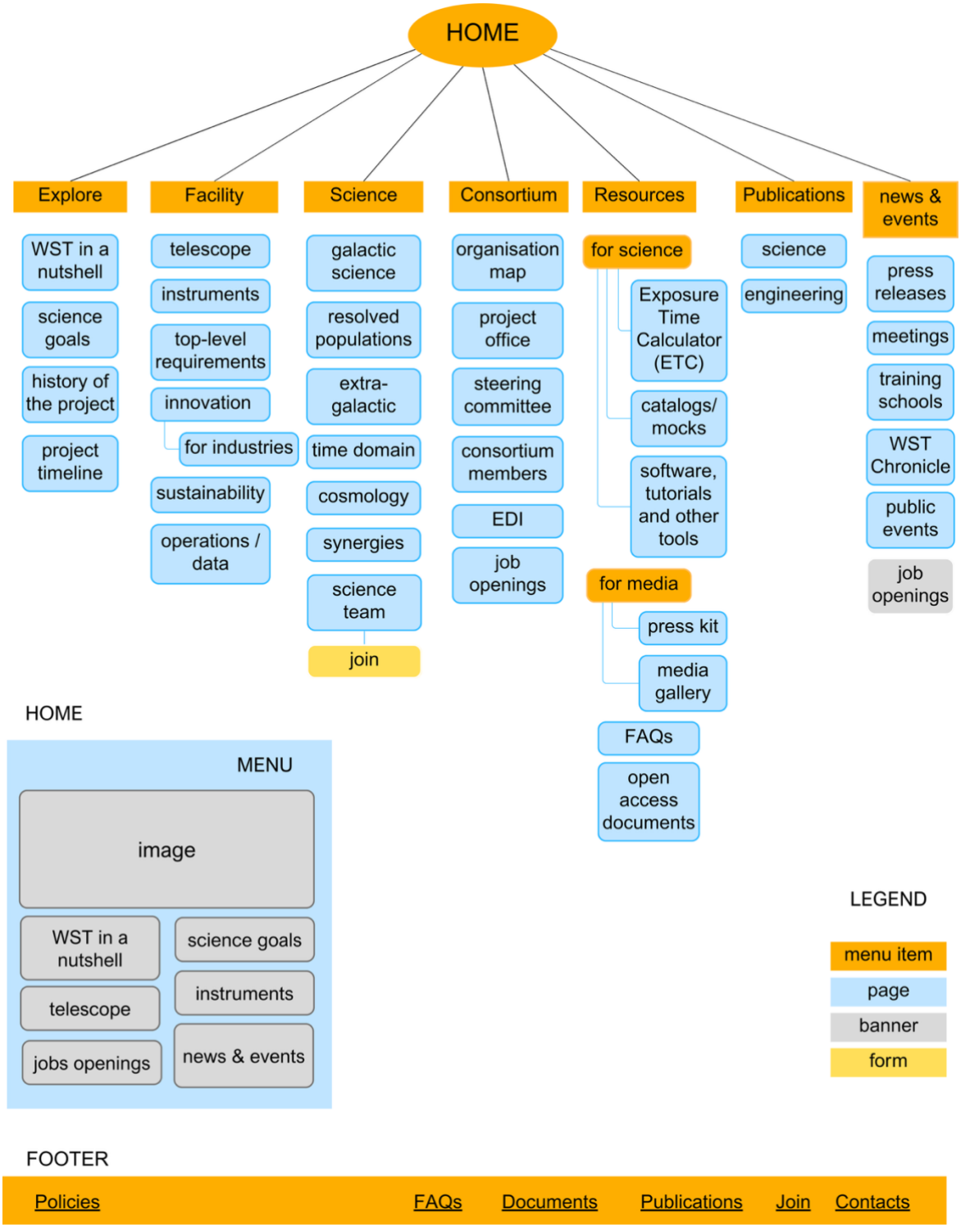

Figure 3. Provisional WST sitemap - after restyling

10. WST Communication Work Plan

The WST CoDEP encompasses several activities throughout the life cycle of the WST project to support the dissemination of the WST project progress, results and WST Consortium communication reports. The work plan is outlined in Figure 4.

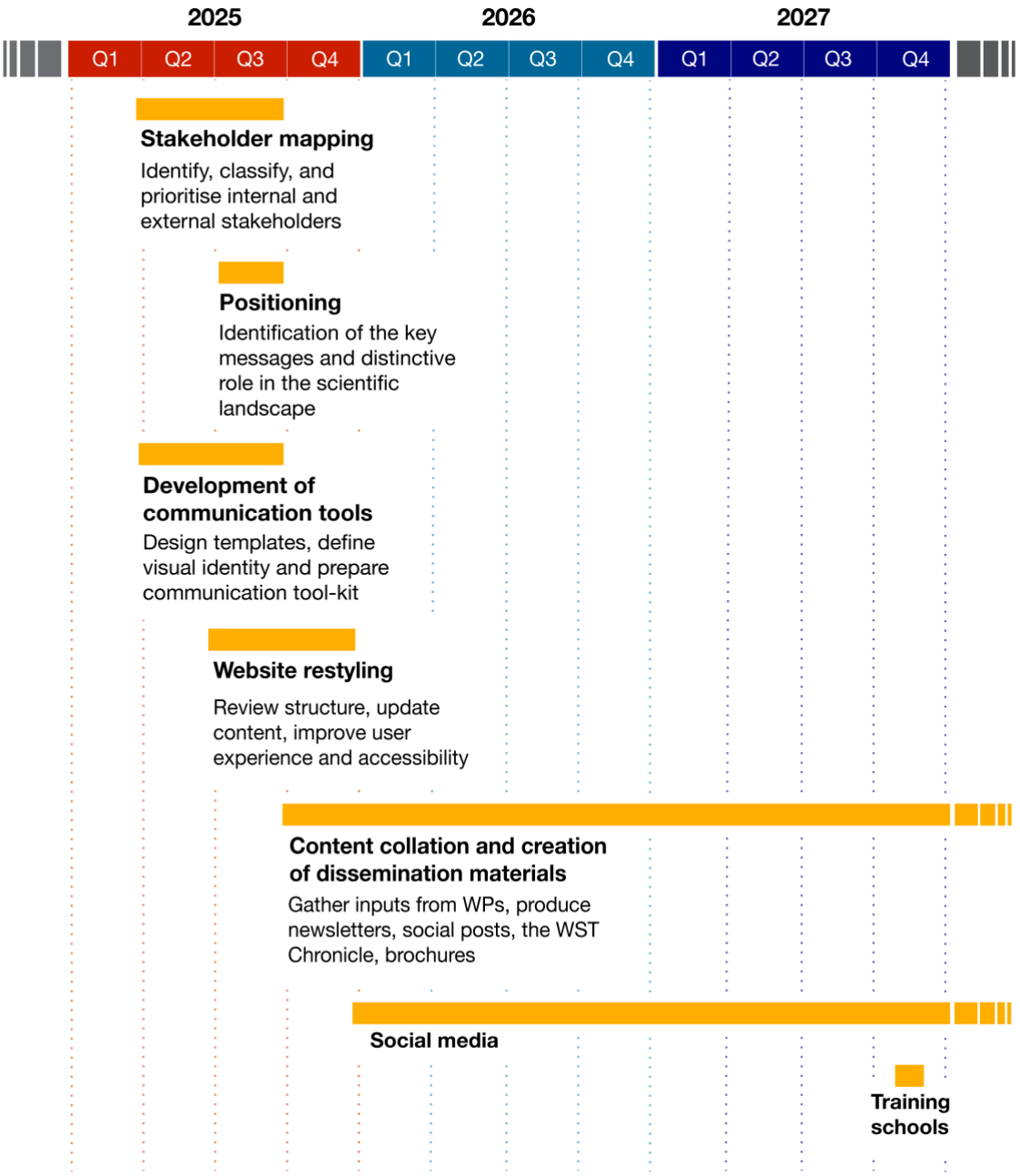

Figure 4. Communication Work Plan.

11. Impact assessment of the activities

The impact of the WST communication strategy will be assessed through a combination of quantitative metrics (e.g., number of visits, downloads, media reach) and qualitative indicators (e.g., stakeholder feedback, perceived value, engagement levels). However, evaluating communication effectiveness goes beyond measuring visibility—it requires assessing whether communication efforts have contributed to the project's broader strategic goals.

In this context, we distinguish between:

- Outputs: the direct, tangible products of communication activities, such as newsletters published, social media posts, events organised, or training materials produced. These are measurable and usually short-term indicators of implementation efficiency.
- Outcomes: the medium- to long-term changes or effects that result from communication efforts, such as increased awareness among stakeholders, stronger community engagement, improved uptake of the WST tools, or enhanced credibility of the project in the eyes of funders and policy-makers.

The evaluation framework will therefore include both levels:

- Output monitoring will track the timely delivery and reach of planned communication products.
- Outcome assessment will examine whether those outputs resulted in meaningful engagement, knowledge transfer, or behavioural change among target groups.

Ultimately, the goal is to understand to what extent communication activities have been supported:

- The co-construction of the scientific vision with the community,
- The positioning of WST as a future-ready infrastructure,
- and the long-term sustainability and relevance of the project within and beyond the consortium.

11.1 Output Monitoring and KPIs

Table 2 outlines the output and sample metrics, the latter as TBD based on output impact monitoring frequency through the 3-years study.

Table 2. Output monitoring and KPIs.

OUTPUT AREA	SAMPLE METRICS
Website monthly traffic	TBD
Social media engagement	TBD (if activated)
Newsletter metrics	TBD (if available)
Chronicle downloads	TBD (if available)
Conference participation	TBD
Industry contacts established	TBD
Press mentions / articles	TBD

Some indicators may reflect both output and outcome dimensions, depending on context and interpretation (e.g., external mentions may signal both reach and reputational impact). This strategic alignment work will be undertaken once the activities and realistically achievable objectives have been defined in greater detail. Providing further specification at this stage would lack consistency.

11.2 Outcomes Monitoring and KPIs

Table 3 outlines the outcomes and KPIs in detail, along with the expected monitoring frequency.

Table 3. Outcomes monitoring and KPIs.

OUTCOME AREA	SAMPLE METRICS	DATA SOURCE	MONITORING FREQUENCY
Awareness and Recognition	% of stakeholders who can correctly describe the WST's objectives; Mentions of the WST in external publications;	Stakeholder surveys, media monitoring, citation tracking	Annually
Engagement and Community Building	Participation rate in the WST workshops; Recurrence of engagement across activities; Diversity of active contributors;	Event participation logs, website analytics, workshop feedback	Bi-annually
Knowledge Transfer and Uptake	Number of research projects using the WST tools; Citations of the WST materials; External user registrations;	User statistics from the WST platforms, publication databases, GitHub usage data	Annually
Institutional and Strategic Positioning	References to the WST in policy documents; Endorsements or support letters; Presence in strategic meetings	Policy analysis, stakeholder interviews, official meeting records	Annually
Learning and Perception Shift	Survey-based changes in stakeholder perception; Perceived usefulness of communication materials.	Pre/post surveys, focus groups, feedback forms	Bi-annually

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Mitchell, R. K., Agle, B. R., & Wood, D. J. (1997). "Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience". Academy of Management Review.

Appendices

Annex 1 – The WST Visual Identity

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