



D1.9.1 LSST:UK Communications Plan

Phase C W1.9 Communications

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Author(s) inc. institutional affiliation	Eleanor O’Kane (Edinburgh)
Reviewer(s)	Martin Hendry (Glasgow) Kathy Romer (Sussex)

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1 Executive Summary

This document outlines how we will increase awareness of LSST:UK through external communication and defines our key audiences. There is great potential for interest in the project beyond the astronomy community and several key audiences are outlined in this Communications Plan.

Our plan also covers internal communication activities. A key part of the plan is to equip members of the research team, as ambassadors for LSST:UK, with the skills to talk about the global significance of LSST:UK.

The Communications Officer will implement this Communications Plan, working with members of the LSST:UK team to enhance our reach and impact. Liaising with the Rubin-LSST Communications Team and as well as other international partners will also help to deliver greater awareness of LSST:UK.

2 Introduction

By defining our audiences and how we will reach them, and setting out the style and modes in which we communicate, we ensure we are clear, consistent and focused when talking about LSST:UK. The plan ensures our activities support our communication goals.

This Communications Strategy sets out our aims and serves as a roadmap for engaging audiences in LSST:UK and Rubin-LSST. It is designed to enable us to build awareness of the UK's important role in global research and innovation, and highlight the benefits of investing in science and technology.

2.1 Purpose of the Communications Plan

This plan intends to set out the way LSST:UK will communicate its activities and significance. It is a roadmap for promoting the project within the content of Rubin-LSST.

3 Key audiences

- Science/Astronomy community
- General public
- Schools / Education
- Business sector
- Government / Policymakers
- Funders
- US Rubin Team and international LSST partners
- The media

3.1 Content angles and engagement for key audiences

3.1.1 Science/Astronomy community

- Reach academic and non-academic audiences, e.g. Royal Astronomical Society; Royal Society, Institute of Physics
- Share key steps in the lead up to first light as well as discoveries
- Address subjects of interest in major press releases

Note: Key LSST:UK scientific and technical content will continue to be available via the LSST:UK Wiki.

3.1.2 General public

- Complement the outreach work by the Engagement and Public Outreach (EPO) Coordinator
- Engage with the public via the press across different platforms, e.g. The Guardian, New Scientist, BBC Radio 4;

3.1.3 Schools / Education

- Reach via the website, which will have a landing page for education resources; this will contain useful links and act as a springboard to external resources

Note: The Engagement and Public Outreach (EPO) Coordinator will be the main point of engagement for this audience however it is expected that there maybe some crossover / collaborative activity, for example when with the Communications Officer uploads and maintains the EPO materials on the website or to advise on appropriate materials for an outreach activity. It is noted that the schools audience requires specific materials and approaches, for example to align with the STEM curriculum.

3.1.4 Business sector

- Highlight how the LSST:UK programme can benefit a range of UK sectors through the innovation and transferable skills associated with the programme.
- Create a LinkedIn page for LSST:UK as an efficient way to communicate messages relevant for the business community.

3.1.5 Government / Policymakers

- Highlight the value of investment in LSST:UK and how the project supports new skills and knowledge and boosts the UK's reputation for technical innovation.
- Target via press releases and can support any targeted engagement by the Project team

3.1.6 Funders / STFC

- Highlight the value of investment in LSST:UK for the UK.

- Target via press releases and can support any targeted engagement by the Project team

3.1.7 US Rubin Team and international partners

- Highlight the value of the LSST:UK contribution.
- Collaborate to amplify project-wide output and impact
- Target via internal comms, newsletter and website

3.1.8 The media

- Target via relationship building and press releases

Note: As a gateway to all target audiences, the media is a key audience. Key publications include general national titles (e.g. broadsheets, The Economist), as well as important science publications e.g. New Scientist, and digital press, e.g, The Conversation

4 Key LSST:UK messages

Note: these are key themes rather than final wording. When used in different activities the tone of voice and language will be more dynamic as well as appropriate for the audience and medium.

- LSST:UK signifies the significant role that the UK is playing in one of the most exciting and important science projects of the decade. Participation in Rubin-LSST (as LSST:UK) reinforces the Global Britain brand, reinforcing the UK's position as a science superpower.
- Experts based in UK institutions are addressing some of the biggest scientific and technical challenges posed by the Rubin: LSST project.
- The investment in LSST:UK will have positive impacts for the UK at many levels, for example by enabling greater public engagement with science, building research capacity, and highlighting the UK as a leader in high-priority science areas.
- There is substantial value, from a UK perspective, in key discoveries and new knowledge that result from the Vera C. Rubin Observatory, with an LSST:UK perspective where relevant.

5 An inclusive and accessible Communications Plan

On 19 May 2016, the LSST:UK Consortium Board approved the following statement: *"The LSST:UK Consortium is firmly committed to promoting the principles of equality and diversity in all its work, meetings and dealings with project partners, employees, applicants and the general public."*

The success of LSST:UK requires the talents of a diverse pool of employees and stakeholders: we should reflect our inclusive values in our internal and external communications. An inclusive approach will help us engage with a wide range of audiences and amplify our messages, which should result in greater impact.

We aim to increase and widen participation in the project by:

- Using language and ideas that engage a diverse audience.
- Showing diverse representation and avoiding perpetrating stereotypes.
- Seizing opportunities to increase our awareness and identify gaps in our approach.
- Ensuring all LSST:UK team members who have communications responsibilities take an inclusive approach.
- Reflecting on, acknowledging and addressing blind spots and errors.
- Drawing on the expertise of partners and stakeholders who are helping to widen participation in astronomy/STEM.

In our communications outputs, we will

- Always use clear language and readable fonts.
- Share messages across different platforms and in a range of materials to meet our audiences where they are.
- Employ accessibility best practice, for example using [W3C](#) guidelines for website design and copy.

6 The responsibilities of the Communications Officer

The Communications Officer will drive activities to disseminate the key messages. The schedule for these activities is outlined on the final two pages of this document.

6.1 Key outputs and activities

- Manage communications platforms, including:
 - social media
 - website
 - newsletter
 - press outputs
- Create and curate content for platforms, e.g. social media posts, news stories, press releases, imagery, infographics etc.
- Develop and manage media and stakeholder relations.
- Act as the main media contact.
- Work with the Rubin:LSST team (US) and international communications partners to co-ordinate and share project communications.
- Develop communications skills within the project team.
- Create and curate an LSST:UK communications toolkit for the team.
- Create and curate LSST:UK media resources for a) UK media and b) for Rubin-LSST to disseminate.
- Support internal LSST:UK communications to staff and Consortium members.
- Monitor and measure communications impact and outputs.

6.2 Additional notes on specific activities for 2024

6.2.1 Social media (D1.9.3)

Period	Social channel	Details	Comments
Q1 2024	X account	Username: Rubin-LSST UK Handle: @LSSTUK ¹	This username as. This follows the French format: UK Rubin-LSST France / @LSST_France
Q1 2024	Identify active social media users across the LSST UK community and hashtags to help build momentum		
Q2 2024	Instagram	@LSSTUK	
Q3 2024	Launch a Mastodon account	@LSSTUK	

Q1 2025	Launch a LinkedIn account	@LSSTUK	
Q1 2025	Create a <u>BlueSky</u> account	@LSSTUK	

6.2.2 Website

- Refresh the LSST:UK website – Q2 2024.
- The Communications Officer and Project Leader will determine a host, theme and timeline.

6.2.3 Media and stakeholder relations

- Plan and co-ordinate press activity. They will act as an internal point of contact for project staff and Consortium institutions/institutional press teams.
- Act as the first contact for the media.

6.2.4 Development of communications skills within the project team – D1.9.2

- Plan and deliver training for a group of team members to be the face of LSST:UK. We will create a diverse and engaging group that promotes the expertise within the project and showcases the value of LSST:UK.
- The Communications Officer will work with the Consortium institution press teams to maximise training opportunities for staff.
 - Areas to cover include:
 - What journalists look for
 - How to develop your key messages
 - Best practice for engaging audiences – e.g. writing blogs, social media posts, web pages, LinkedIn articles, writing for *The Conversation*
 - Free resources to help your communications skills
 - Media interview skills²

6.3 The LSST:UK communications toolkit

An internal communications toolkit will ensure the Communications Officer and other staff have quick access to a range of resources, e.g.

- Social media graphics.
- PowerPoint slides for non-technical audiences.
- Brand resources – logos, graphics and image library.
- Press release template with boilerplate information.
- Database of team members available for press opportunities.
- Style guide outlining formats for common spellings, acronyms etc.
- LSST:UK media resources for a) UK media and b) Rubin-LSST, made available on the website

² The Communications Officer will work with the EPO to delivery media training