Plan for Dissemination and Communication

8th May 2024

Deliverable 10.1

Work Package: 10 – Sustainability and Dissemination

NEOLAiA – Transforming Regions for an Inclusive Europe
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Executive Summary

NEOLAiA (youth in Greek) is an Alliance of nine young and dynamic European universities, which was established in 2019. In the European Commission 2023 Call within the Initiative of European Universities, NEOLAiA was financed for the period 2024-2027. NEOLAiA, with its motto “Transforming Regions for an Inclusive Europe”, intends to transform regional connectivity by embracing digital transformation, through inclusion and diversity in a context of enhanced mobility. In fact, these are the 3 key NEOLAiA pillars that support the Alliance. To achieve this end, NEOLAiA is based on ten lines of action, organized in ten work packages (WPs):

WP1 Project Management
WP2 Improving Teaching and Learning
WP3 Diversity and Inclusion - Overcoming barriers to participation
WP4 Enhanced Mobility
WP5 Increasing Regional Research Impact
WP6 Entrepreneurship - Capacities for the society of tomorrow
WP7 Towards a plurilingual and intercultural European university
WP8 Adopting and sustaining Open Science
WP9 Digital Transformation
WP10 Sustainability and Dissemination

Strategic communication is vital for the success of NEOLAiA, as communicating the results of actions within each WP will be a key factor in order to reach our common objectives as a European University. In this vein, a Plan for Dissemination and Communication (hereinafter – PDC) has been developed to ensure effective communication and dissemination of NEOLAiA project news and of the results of the work packages. This document includes strategic communication guidelines and a communication process flow, which are designed to bring communication objectives to life for the entire duration of the project. The PDC will be available to all project partners. The aim of the PDC is to become a daily tool for the project partners to help them to create effective communication strategies directed to the targeted groups and through the appropriate channels in each case.

The PDC identifies the communication goals, target audience, roles of partners and communication process so as to maximise awareness of the project’s objectives and activities within the NEOLAiA communities. In this line of thought, the PDC gives an overview of all dissemination opportunities identified through traditional communication channels i.e., official website (www.neolaiacampus.eu), social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Youtube), event attendance (conferences, seminars, workshops etc.), project publications (reports, press releases, articles in professional journals, etc.) and project presentations to all the target groups specified in the plan.

The PDC also provides clear information about the NEOLAiA project's brand, which is essential for building the brand's reputation.
1. Introduction

1.1 Description of the NEOLAiA Project

The NEOLAiA Alliance of European Universities, co-funded by the European Union, brings together 9 young universities across Europe that intend to address global challenges from a regional perspective, empowering the regions where the university members are located. As an Alliance of European Universities, we will also play an important role in transforming the European higher education system from a bottom-up perspective. Our vision draws upon a set of values as an Alliance of European Universities, which are firmly supported three core missions:

1. educating our citizens for an informed, inclusive and diverse union of nations;
2. researching for new knowledge creation with regional impact,
3. engaging with our societies, giving them voice in a context of increased social challenges

NEOLAiA strive to materialize this vision by (i) transforming higher education for students, academics and staff, through innovative and interactive experiences that are relevant to our regions, their interconnectedness and improved ability to face shared challenges. We will achieve this by (ii) working collaboratively towards a fully integrated and inclusive alliance of regions based on novel transnational European legal entities and by (iii) enacting our activities on regionally-rooted education, research and societal engagement to improve our community’s mutual collaboration, understanding and well-being.

Our current and future endeavours will lead NEOLAiA to experiment and collaborate to build a truly integrated European University that best meets the current and future needs of its communities.
1.2 Purpose of the Plan for Dissemination and Communication

The purpose of this document is to become a daily tool for the project partners regarding communication processes in relation with NEOLAiA as an Alliance of European Universities. Therefore, its aim is to help increase awareness about the project actions and results among the target audiences and the wider society. The PDC provides project partners with information about communication goals, tasks, partners' roles, target audiences and communication channels that will enable a coordinated, active and effective communication and dissemination procedure.

This document is an integral part of Work package 10, Sustainability and Dissemination. The specific objectives of the WP10 according to the Grant Agreement (GA) (2023) in relation to communication and dissemination procedures are the following:

- Developing a plan for dissemination and communication activities (PDC) (T10.1).
- Facilitating communication among NEOLAiA alliance members (researchers, faculty, students, alumni communities) and society as a whole, focusing on the alliance’s mission statement, activities and achievements (T10.2).
- Raising awareness towards society at large, businesses and regional governments on the pace of ongoing projects and collaborations through the use of inclusive communication channels (digital fora) with a particular focus on a strong digital presence and branding (T10.3).
- Ensuring the continuity of the NEOLAiA alliance beyond the European Universities funding, through a periodical and transparent financial and sustainability reporting (T10.4) (2023: 40).

This PDC will also be a reference framework for evaluating the impact of communication and dissemination activities regarding the results of NEOLAiA as a project and will be updated and adjusted as the project progresses.
1.3 **Scope of the Dissemination and Communication strategy**

The primary objective of the communication and dissemination activities is the timely provision of appropriate and reliable information about the NEOLAiA project to all end users and target groups and build its reputation as a brand.

The PDC covers the communication of the NEOLAiA brand and identifies the channels, forms and directions through which it can be implemented. However, this document does not have a prescriptive spirit: all partners should maintain a certain coherence in the ways of communicating on the results of the project to their academic and non-academic communities, but the PDC also allows a certain degree of flexibility concerning how it should be implemented locally, according to the university partners’ idiosyncrasies and necessities.

The PDC includes a description of the NEOLAiA brand to be used on its own and in relation to the partner brands of other members of the Alliance or external stakeholders.

As mentioned above, in this vein, it is fundamental to observe that as the project progresses, the PDC will be updated and adapted to meet the needs that arise to deliver the best possible dissemination and communication for NEOLAiA throughout the life of the project.

The communication strategy will be implemented in two phases (start-up and transformation), with specific objectives and targets.

- **Start-up phase** (M1-M24) (First two years)
  1. Create the communicative foundation and the necessary tools for NEOLAiA so they can be used as a basis for the partner universities’ communication strategy regarding NEOLAiA.
  2. Start building the brand NEOLAiA in selected channels.
  3. Communicate the results of the projects to selected target groups.
  4. Involve Alliance members in the effective implementation of the communication strategy, encouraging the development of content for communication.
  5. Communicate Alliance news, initiatives, expert content externally to selected target groups.
  6. Produce and maintain a common activity calendar to be internally used within WP10 to ensure an adequate work pace regarding communication and dissemination activities.
The PDC to be developed before the end of the start-up phase (M20).

• Transformation phase (M25-M48) (Last two years)

During this second phase, as previously noted, as the project advances, the PDC will be updated and adapted to address emerging needs, ensuring optimal dissemination and communication for NEOLAiA throughout the project’s duration. Consequently, this PDC will serve as a reference framework for assessing the impact of communication and dissemination activities.

2. Dissemination and Communication strategy

The purpose and goal for the communication strategy for NEOLAiA is to build and strengthen the brand NEOLAiA as a young, digital, regionally based, inclusive, diverse European University, connecting partners from various countries and contributing to the transformation of the higher education system in Europe. This will also strengthen the brands of the partner universities.

Communication and dissemination are two important components of the NEOLAiA project: they are essential to ensure awareness of its results and impact among the main target audiences and the wider society, thus maximising the project's potential.

The topics around which the Communication and Dissemination strategy will revolve are the following:

• Main actions and outcomes within each WP
• Events at local, regional, national and transnational levels
• Impact of the project on internal and external stakeholders within the partner’s regions, as well as their wider communities
• Results regarding greater synergies and reinforcement of collaboration between NEOLAiA partners

Dissemination

The dissemination strategy for the NEOLAiA project aims to ensure the timely dissemination of all project activities and results to all stakeholders (e.g., regional researchers outside NEOLAiA, citizens, local authorities, regional companies, associations and NGOs, policy-makers, local and regional media) during the project lifetime. Dissemination will be the joint responsibility of all project partners at all levels. The key objective of the NEOLAiA dissemination activities is to ensure that all partners appropriately present and sufficiently communicate project progression and achieved results with the aim of optimising their impact and value. Each partner is, therefore, committed to fully maximise their networks, contacts, and capabilities for the effective dissemination of project progress and results by raising awareness, creating interest and disseminating results.
Communication

Successful communication is the key to successful dissemination. The communication pathways for this project will be divided into two main actions: **internal** and **external**.

**Internal**: internal to the project, which is aimed at the project management team (WPLs, WPDs, EC, SC, GB) and internal stakeholders (students, academics, staff, researchers of the NEOLAiA universities as well as associated partners). This will include operational functions and related activities. The **internal** communication will ensure successful communication related to the project within the diverse sectors of the NEOLAiA partners.

**External**: targeting various types of external stakeholders (researchers outside NEOLAiA, other higher education institutions (HEIs), other European Universities Alliances (EUAs), local and regional public governments, citizens, regional and local media etc.). In **external** communication, attention will especially be given to external stakeholders’ engagement in the implementation of the project. In this sense, communication is mainly intended to keep the target audiences updated about project activities and results.

With the aim of achieving maximum involvement and consistent public communication, the PDC provides project partners with fundamental information about information flows.

**Communication process for the Work packages:**

1. The communication process starts within each Work package, gathering the necessary information about the event, outcome, result, etc. that needs to be advertised.

2. WP10 delegates at each partner university (in collaboration with their WPL and/or their local coordinador) provide information about the project activities (at least 1 week before the upcoming activity) to WP10

3. In its role as Communication Steering Group (CSG), WP10 filters and publishes the information/material through a relevant channel, depending on the target group.

![Figure 1. Communication process](image)
2.1 Responsibilities

The WP10 Leader is the ultimate responsible for the dissemination of NEOLAiA’s results and its impact through the channels mentioned in section 5 of the PDC. The partner universities are individually responsible for gathering all the necessary information about the event, outcome, etc. of the project. However, the information that is planned to be disseminated through social media or any other relevant channel should be filtered and approved by WP10. WP10 has a WPL who works in collaboration with 8 delegates (one from each partner university). For a successful flow of information, each delegate from the different partner universities (in collaboration with their WPL and/or local coordinator) will gather information about activities and results of the different WPs at their local communities throughout the life of the project and deliver such information to WP10 leader. Then, the team of WP10 will filter the information received on the activities and will decide what information goes through which channel (internal or external).

WP10 will design an online document to monitor the flow of communication activities. The WP10 Leader will also provide a calendar where details of the activities to be disseminated will be uploaded (information will include which WP is organising the activity, objectives and content of the activity, visual material, etc.).

Here is the list of all Work packages, their leaders and the delegates to the WP10 communication team from each partner university:

**Table 1. List of WPs, WP leaders and WP10 delegates in each partner university**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WP</th>
<th>WP title</th>
<th>WP10 delegate (comm. team member) of each university</th>
<th>WP leader responsible for liaising with the Comm. Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WP1</td>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>Daniel López</td>
<td>Beatriz Valverde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP2</td>
<td>Improving Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>Anne-Sophie Laure</td>
<td>Stéphanie Germon, Cécile Chapon, Hanan El Khadir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP3</td>
<td>Diversity and Inclusion – Overcoming barriers to participation</td>
<td>Julia Bömer</td>
<td>Michaela Vogt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP4</td>
<td>Enhanced Mobility</td>
<td>Tomáš Drobík</td>
<td>Kamila Daníhelková</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP5</td>
<td>Increasing Regional Research Impact</td>
<td>Marie Brodin</td>
<td>Magnus Kristofferson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP6</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship – NEOLAiA Capabilities for the Society of Tomorrow</td>
<td>Carmen Chasovsch</td>
<td>Carmen Nastase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP7</td>
<td>Towards a Plurilingual and Intercultural European University</td>
<td>Daniel López</td>
<td>Marisa Pérez-Cañado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP8</td>
<td>Adopting and Sustaining Open Science</td>
<td>Vittorio Scarano</td>
<td>Vittorio Scarano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP9</td>
<td>Digital Transformation</td>
<td>Nasia Leonidou, Julia Nicolaides</td>
<td>George Giaglis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP10</td>
<td>Sustainability and Dissemination</td>
<td>Gina Zdanavičienė</td>
<td>Gina Zdanavičienė</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Partner roles and acting principles

In order to have a successful dissemination of the information it is necessary to clearly define the roles within NEOLAiA as an Alliance, the role of each partner university and also of WP10 (WP10 leader and delegates).

The NEOLAiA logo is versatile and can serve various roles depending on the needs of each partner university in different scenarios. For instance, the University X logo may be led by the NEOLAiA one or may feature NEOLAiA as an equal partner in its brand hierarchy. The Work Package 10 group acts as steering communication group and owner of the Plan for Dissemination and Communication including annexes, e.g. tools and guidelines.
4. Target groups for strategic communication

In order to build and strengthen the NEOLAiA brand, as explained above, the communication of relevant information about the project is carried out in two directions: first, **internally** within the ecosystem of the Alliance members: staff, academics and students at the partner universities, as well as associated partners, who at the same time are the main agents responsible for the effective implementation of the project’s tasks and the fulfilment of its objectives. In addition, **externally**: a number of groups were identified as external target groups: researchers outside NEOLAiA; other HEIs; EUAs; regional and local businesses, start-ups and SMEs; regional and local authorities; policy-makers at the national and EU levels; regional and local associations and NGOs; and the wider society.

Table 2. NEOLAiA’s Target Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>WHO</strong></th>
<th><strong>WHY</strong></th>
<th><strong>HOW</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within NEOLAiA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TG1</td>
<td>Students at the Bachelor, Master and Doctoral levels</td>
<td>To interest the audience in the project and invite them to actively contribute to its successful implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TG2</td>
<td>Academic staff, administrative personnel</td>
<td>To interest the audience in the project and invite them to actively contribute to its successful implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TG3</td>
<td>NEOLAiA’s researchers</td>
<td>To introduce project news and opportunities to make a personal contribution to research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outside NEOLAiA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TG4</td>
<td>Researchers outside NEOLAiA</td>
<td>Present the project and ongoing research, strengthen the brand, raise interest in cooperation opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TG5</td>
<td>Regional and local companies, including spin offs, start-ups and SMEs</td>
<td>To present the project, its activities and encourage to see the possibilities of cooperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TG6</td>
<td>Local authorities, regional authorities and policy-makers at the national and EU levels</td>
<td>To present the project and its expert opinion on the challenges and perspectives of the higher education system; NEOLAiA can help the surrounding society/regional stakeholders with solving societal challenges, issues that may appear on experts’ agendas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Citizens, associations and NGOs</td>
<td>To interest the audience in the project and build NEOLAiA brand reputation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Strategic use of communication channels

In order to successfully create and strengthen the NEOLAiA brand through communication means, all communication and dissemination activities must be carried out in targeted channels, i.e., those that will most likely reach the target audience. NEOLAiA intends to reach out to these target groups through a variety of channels. At the same time, communication through multiple channels will contribute to greater brand awareness. It is important to note that channels might vary depending on effectiveness when reaching the selected target groups.

5.1 Digital channels

- **Website** ([https://neolaiacampus.eu](https://neolaiacampus.eu))

The project website is the main communication and dissemination platform to allow the formerly described target groups to have access to the project, its activities results and impact on the community. The majority of NEOLAiA outputs are planned to be made public. In order to assure that project contributions in all areas are transparent and accessible, all the activities will be open to relevant stakeholders. This includes the development of guides, methodological support materials, e-platforms or databases, as well as other tools and materials published online. During the project, the Alliance will develop open educational resources (multimedia resources) which will be made accessible to other universities, academic staff and students via the NEOLAiA website (e.g., Open data website ([http://openscience.neolaiacampus.eu](http://openscience.neolaiacampus.eu)) and NEOLAiA Gateway). These learning tools will contain educational material from all the partners that will help promote and support universal access to knowledge. All contents will follow national and European intellectual property rights and regulations. The website will also contain other kind of material, such as a newsletter, calls for expressions of interests, contact details, etc.

**Digital Newsletter**

An effective way to reach the target audiences and convey information regarding the project that can be of interest to them is creating a digital newsletter. This tool will be used to offer up-to-date information to various target groups on the progress of the project and the results of the work done in the different WPs. To appeal to different audiences, there will be two main kinds of newsletters, one with a more academic editorial line and another one with a design that is more appealing to non-academic audiences.
Both types of newsletters will be distributed by Work package 10, through the newsletter distribution procedure.

- **Social media**

  Social media provides an extremely direct online impact on targeted audiences. News, updates, innovation in the teaching-learning process, case studies, activities led by members of NEOLAiA, etc. In the starting phase LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube will be the preferred but not exclusive channels for the communication of activities and results. These channels will also help to draw the attention of the audience to the NEOLAiA website.

### 5.2 Offline

- **Media Outlets**

  The media (TV, radio, newspapers, news agencies) can be reached via press releases. It means that by publishing a press release, we can get the news out to different channels and thus effectively inform the public about the progress of the project.

  Each Alliance member can write press releases on NEOLAiA’s outcomes and events for their local media. The Alliance itself and its partners may disseminate press releases about NEOLAiA’s events (co-creation, achievements, engagement, etc.) and share their views as experts on topics relevant to higher education, for example.

- **Academic conferences, education fairs**

  Participation in target events is critical for building partnerships and introducing NEOLAiA to potential partners, institutions and potential students. Some examples are:

  - **Education fairs.** Alliance members can present NEOLAiA related activities, increasing the impact and visibility of the project, at the same time that they establish contacts with relevant target groups.
  
  - **Academic conferences.** Alliance members can present the research done within the NEOLAiA communities on different topics, increasing the impact and visibility of the project.

- **NEOLAiA Events**

  Work packages will hold events related to the main pillars of the project, such as the CEOlife events that will be organised by each NEOLAiA partner institution and coordinated by Work package 3, Diversity and inclusion. These events will contribute to the dissemination of NEOLAiA’s activities and outcomes to the communities as a whole, since they will be open to the general public.
6. Strategic use of hashtags

In order to long term build the brand and messages of NEOLAiA hashtags can be used that will increase engagement and outreach; act as tags that categorize content, allowing users to find exactly what they are looking for; and provide context beyond captions, making your message clearer and more engaging. This will help connect with the public and present project’s messages on digital media channels in an effective manner. Hashtag symbol before a relevant keyword or phrase in the post categorize posts and helps to find all posts using the same hashtag easily. Clicking or tapping on a hashtagged word in any message shows other posts that include that hashtag, it is therefore important to use accurate hashtags and to have unique hashtag variations. See in the Annex No. 3, Hashtags.

7. NEOLAiA Brand Features

All actions taken in the field of communication must be visually linked directly and unambiguously to NEOLAiA's brand identity, which is why it is necessary to use graphic elements so that the public can make a psychological connection between the project and the ideas and messages it communicates. Visual material designed for the brand will be used to present the project and to communicate its identity, objectives, activities and results. All visual representation of the project is described in Annex No. 1, Corporate Identity Manual.

7.1 Character of the Brand

NEOLAiA is a brand that represents a young, digital, regionally based, inclusive, diverse European university with a strong sense of mobility between countries and fields of expertise that will contribute to the transformation of the higher education system in Europe. More information in the Corporate Identity Manual Annex No. 1

7.2 Tone of voice for the brand

The project and the alliance can be described as open minded, flexible, modern, forward leaning and responsible. See in the Annex No. 1: Corporate Identity Manual
7.3 Logo

The NEOLAiA logo represents the 3 pillars of the Alliance. The bright colours are clearly linked to Diversity and Inclusion as well as to the international character of the Alliance. The lowercase 'i' as well as the dots (by way of prompt) at the end of the lines in the letters are related to digital transformation, while the rolling "O" refers to mobility as a journey that brings participants back to their original destination but having had a life-changing experience. The full version includes the shields of the institutions that emphasize the institutional character and long-term commitment of the Alliance.

During the funding period by the EU, the NEOLAiA logo will be associated to the EU funding statement to comply with the visibility requirements.

“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.”

The EU emblem, in conjunction with the funding statement, must be prominently featured on all communication material, such as printed or digital products or websites and their mobile version, intended for the public or for participants.

7.4 Corporate Identity Manual

Paper and digital publications of all kinds for all NEOLAiA activities and communication and advertising materials will adhere to the guidelines established in the Corporate Identity Manual (see Annex No. 1) and its templates.

7.5 Basic templates

In order to present the NEOLAiA project and disseminate its identity, core values, goals, activities and results, a series of materials will be created and distributed. NEOLAiA will provide members with digital templates that reflect the visual identity and core values and should be used for project communication. See the Corporate Identity Manual Annex No. 1.
7.6 Social media visual design

The NEOLAiA project will be communicated in social media. For that, the project has its own social media design that will effectively represent the brand and make it more visible in feed and thus increase brand awareness and engagement of social media users. See in the Annex No. 1: Corporate Identity Manual

7.7 Graphic element

In addition to the logo, the NEOLAiA project also has its own graphic element, which reflects the values of the brand. It is in bright colour to grab the public’s attention. It can be used to create additional digital content.

The graphic element is formed from parts of the logo using. Episodic letter elements of the logo have been used, breaking them down, rotating, flipping, duplicating them. Additionally, the graphic element be shaped freely to create direct associations with the logo’s symbolic meanings. The coloured graphic element can be of any brand colour, monochrome, or gradient.

7.8 Brand promise and Key message

The key message provides a brief introduction to the brand, reflects the brand's main characteristics and helps to shape its image. This message reflects the image the project aims to create in the minds of the target audience. This key message is useful when posting content in the media, on social networks or at events.

Key message: NEOLAiA is an alliance of nine young and dynamic European universities. NEOLAiA’s goal is to transform regional connectivity by embracing (i) digital transformation, through (ii) inclusion and diversity in a context of (iii) enhanced mobility. These are the 3 key NEOLAiA pillars that support our Alliance.

The short version of the key message is the brand promise of the project: “Transforming regions for an inclusive Europe”, which reflects the geography of NEOLAiA partners, its regions and one of its essential values, that is, inclusion.
Annexes attached to the document:

- Annex No 1: Corporate Identity Manual
- Annex No 2: Tools and Templates
- Annex No 3: Hashtags